

## **ERRATUM**

Page 5, **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The second sentence should read:

There are strengths to the leadership and some aspects of monitoring the school's work that could be improved.

---

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **SPRINGWELL VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Springwell Village, Gateshead

LEA area: Sunderland

Unique reference number: 108800

Head teacher: Mr P McCarron

Reporting inspector: Miss K Manning

20267

Dates of inspection: 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2001

Inspection number: 189518

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Springwell Village Gateshead Tyne and Wear
Postcode:	NE9 7RX
Telephone number:	0191 219 3790
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Foster
Date of previous inspection:	September 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

OIN	Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20267	K Manning	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it?
			Music	How high are standards?
			Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
			Religious education	What should the school do to improve further?
1234	T Bradley	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
28037	P Smith	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Geography	
			History	
			Children in the Foundation Stage	
			Equal opportunities	
23375	A J Hicks	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			Information and communication technology	
			Art and design	
			Design and technology	
			Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

Eclipse (Education) Limited  
14 Enterprise House  
Kingsway  
Team Valley  
Gateshead  
NE11 0SR

Tel: 0191 487 2333

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE.

## REPORT CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>5</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>9</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>24</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Springwell Village Primary is an average sized, community school, with 90 boys and 90 girls in classes from reception to Year 6. The school has increased in size in the last three years and about a fifth of pupils travel to school from the surrounding area. All pupils are of white ethnic origin and speak English as their first language. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average. So is the proportion of pupils who have special educational needs; twenty pupils have learning, physical or emotional difficulties though none have statements. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds. A nursery class takes ten boys and 12 girls, who attend part-time. They start in the term after their third birthday and move on to the reception class in the September after they are four. When they start in the reception class, children have good social skills and do well in mathematics. Their skills in other areas of learning are typical of four-year-olds.

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

This is an effective school. There are strengths to the leadership although some aspects of monitoring the school's work that could be improved. Most of the teaching is good. Standards have improved in English, gymnastics and information and communication technology, although they are not as high as they could be in mathematics, design and technology and religious education. Pupils' are keen to learn and behave well. The school has a higher than average income and provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Pupils make good progress in English and achieve standards that are well above expectations for their age by the time they leave the school.
- Just over half of the teaching is good or better.
- Pupils' attitudes to the school, personal development and relationships are good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good.

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

- Standards in mathematics are not high enough.
- Pupils' knowledge of the religions they study.
- The way teachers keep a check on teaching and learning in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs.

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

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

The school has improved at a steady rate since its last inspection in September of 1996. Teachers and governors set about tackling each of the key issues identified in the last report in a systematic way. The school day was extended to ensure that pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught for about the same length of time as most other schools. The head teacher gave teachers responsibility for managing subjects. Co-ordinators responded to concerns about the curriculum by adopting good quality guidelines to help teachers plan in most subjects. The way the school plans for improvement has changed considerably. There is now a purposeful plan, which sets realistic targets for improvement and takes account of what it will cost the school to achieve them. It also makes clear what training teachers will need and who is to check that each goal is met. Over the last four years, there have been several changes to how teachers use the information from tests to plan work. Subject co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science analyse the results of National Curriculum tests in order to identify gaps in teaching and learning. The next step is to extend this to other subjects. The school's results in national tests are increasing at a similar pace to the national trend. The targets set for raising



standards in English and mathematics by the end of 2001 are realistic and likely to be achieved.

### STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	A	A	A
mathematics	A	A	C	E
Science	C	B	B	D <sup>1</sup>

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

By the end of the Foundation Stage, standards are above average in communications, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children also have good personal and social skills. In creative and physical development, children's skills are typical for their age.

By the end of Year 2, pupils are doing well in reading and really well in writing, in many cases exceeding the levels expected nationally for seven-year-olds. This is a result of the good teaching of literacy. They also do well in science because the work they get is challenging. However, teaching is not strong in mathematics and standards are not as high as they could be. By the end of Year 6, standards in science are higher than in most other schools and they are much higher in English. In mathematics, standards are about the same as in most other schools. Comparisons with similar schools show that pupils' performance in English is well above average and they are very close to average in science. However, pupils are doing poorly in mathematics.

Standards are improving steadily in English and science but this is not the case in mathematics, where they have fluctuated considerable over the last four years. The school exceeded its target in English by a long way and matched the target it had set for raising standards in mathematics. In National Curriculum tests in English, girls have performed better than boys in each of the last five years. There are no patterns to the achievements of boys and girls in mathematics or science.

Standards are typical of seven and 11-year-olds in information and communication technology and all other subjects except design and technology and religious education. By the time they leave the school, pupils have not gained enough skills in designing, making and evaluating models in design and technology and do not have a wide enough knowledge of the religions they study in religious education.

### PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to work are good. They bring great enthusiasm to lessons and other activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good. Pupils listen to what teachers' say and concentrate on their work. Lunchtimes and breaks are happy, social occasions.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good. Pupils show high levels of initiative and willingness to take responsibility.
Attendance	Attendance is well above average.

<sup>1</sup> Results show that similar numbers of pupils reach the expected and higher level; it is the school's average score that brings the grade down.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	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.*

There is more good teaching than at the time of the previous inspection. Forty-four per cent is good and a further seven per cent is very good. The remaining 49 per cent is satisfactory.

**Strengths in teaching and learning:** teaching of basic skills of literacy is good and consequently standards are well above average in English ~ lessons are interesting to pupils and this improves their concentration and effort ~ teachers share the aims of lessons with pupils and this helps pupils see how well they are doing ~ respectful relationships between teachers and pupils means that pupils try hard ~ teachers are good at questioning pupils to find out what they remember from previous lessons ~ thorough marking of work helps pupils improve their performance.

**What could be improved:** work is not always pitched at the right level for some groups of pupils ~ teaching is not very strong in mathematics and this slows pupils' progress ~ in most subjects, the procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment are weak, and where there is no recorded evidence of what pupils can do, teachers cannot be certain of what pupils know ~ in some lessons, teachers do not use the time or talents of classroom assistants effectively enough.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a curriculum that is broad and balanced and extends it with the addition of a residential visit for older pupils and a small number of after-school sports activities. Children in the Foundation Stage are provided with an appropriate curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This could be better. Pupils' individual programmes of work are not detailed or specific enough. Although pupils are given good support in small groups, the work they get in classrooms is sometimes too difficult.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social education. Provision for their cultural development is satisfactory and supported by the school's strong links with the community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes appropriate care of its pupils. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainments in English and mathematics are good. More work needs to be done to improve assessment in other subjects.

The partnership between the school and parents is generally close. Parents are kept informed about their children's progress through detailed written reports and in less formal ways, for example, teachers write the results of spelling tests in pupils' reading diaries. However, the parents of pupils with special educational needs are not as involved in setting targets for their children or reviewing their progress as they should be and this is one of the areas of the school's work that needs improving.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The head teacher provides clear educational direction for the work of the school. Existing systems to check the quality of teaching and learning are limited to English and mathematics and are in need of improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors do a good job for the school and fulfil their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a satisfactory view of what needs to be done to improve its performance.
The strategic use of resources	There are sufficient teachers and support staff to teach the curriculum. Accommodation is good and there are enough resources to teach all subjects and areas of learning.

Governors make thorough comparisons of pupils' performance in tests with local, similar and all other schools. They are particularly good at challenging the school to improve by setting targets for raising standards and in contributing to the school's policies. They try hard to ensure that they get the best possible value for money from spending, particularly when it is large amounts, for example, on replacing computers. Parents' views about the school are sought on important matters, such as homework.

## 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>Parents are pleased that their children like school.</li> <li>Most parents feel that their children are making good progress in school.</li> <li>Parents think that most of the teaching is good.</li> <li>They are glad that their children are expected to work hard and do their best.</li> <li>The school helps their children become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some parents would like a more interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>Some parents are not happy with the amount of homework their children get.</li> <li>Parents would welcome more information about how their children are getting on.</li> <li>Some parents would like the school to work more closely with them.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents about the school. Inspection findings are that there is only a small number of after-school clubs and that these are aimed mostly at older pupils. Pupils are given homework regularly, whether it is reading in the Foundation Stage or learning tables and spellings in junior classes. The work pupils get is sufficient to extend their learning in school. The school provides parents with the right sort of information about school events and annual reports to parents give them enough information about what their children can do. Parents of children in the Foundation Stage get more information about the curriculum than those of pupils in the infants or juniors. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are not sufficiently involved in reviewing their children's progress or setting targets to help them improve.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 Children make good progress during their time in the Foundation Stage. The school's tests show that when children start reception class they have good personal and social skills and do better than most other four-year-olds in mathematics. Standards are typical in communication, language and literacy but, by the time they are ready to start in Year 1, they have made considerable gains and are working at a level beyond what is expected for their age.

2 The results of National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds show that pupils do well in reading and science and really well in writing. Last year, almost every pupil reached the expected level in reading and good teaching of writing ensured that far more pupils than in most schools achieved a higher level. Pupils do not do as well as they should in mathematics. Last year, not enough pupils reached the expected level and this brought results down, despite the fact that similar numbers of pupils as in other schools achieved a higher level. In science, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected level was above average but fewer pupils achieved a higher level. Pupils did particularly well in science tests about life and living processes.

3 The results of National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds show that pupils do well in science and really well in English. In mathematics, standards are about the same as in most other schools. Last year, the school far exceeded the target it had set for raising standards in English and good teaching ensured that by the end of Year 6, pupils were working at nearly a year ahead of those in most other schools. This success was not repeated in mathematics, where not enough pupils achieved a higher level and too many failed to reach the expected level. Despite this, the school matched the target it had set for raising standards.

4 When judged together, standards in all three subjects are improving at a similar rate to the national trend.

#### **Comparisons with similar schools**

5 By the end of Year 2, pupils do well in reading and very well in writing but they perform poorly in mathematics tests. Of particular concern to the school is the fact that many children have a good knowledge and understanding of mathematics when they start in reception class and these results suggest that they have lost this early advantage. This is an area of teaching and learning that the school has identified as a priority for improvement if they are to raise standards.

6 By the end of Year 6, pupils had made very good progress in English since they were last tested in 1996 and were doing far better than those in similar schools. Although the picture does not look so good in mathematics, with pupils seeming to perform poorly, the school's own results show that they have made steady progress. A concern here is that pupils who do well in English fail to achieve the same high standards in mathematics. In science, pupils have made steady progress since they were last tested and are almost doing as well as those in similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected and higher level is just about the same as in similar schools, it is only the average score of pupils that makes it look as if they are not doing as well as they should be.

#### **Standards of work seen during the inspection**

7 Inspection findings mostly reflect the results of National Curriculum tests. In English, standards are above average by the age of seven and well above average by the age of 11, and this is

one of the successes of the school. Pupils' handwriting is neat and stylish, they use grammar and

punctuation properly and their writing is imaginative. Their love of reading is evident in the books they choose and most pupils read well for their age.

8 In mathematics, some groups of pupils fail to achieve the standards of which they are capable. Better teaching in infant classes has resulted in pupils reaching standards that are typical of seven-year-olds by the end of Year 2, but they have still not maintained the advantage they had at the end of the Foundation Stage. By the end of Year 6, standards are typical of 11-year-olds but higher attaining pupils are not doing as well as they could because their work lacks the challenge to move them on to a higher level.

9 Standards in science are above expectations for both seven and 11-year-olds. This is because of the many opportunities teachers, throughout the school, plan for pupils to experiment and investigate science. It is no longer the case that higher attaining pupils in infant classes are not being challenged, the work they are given meets their needs and as a result more pupils achieve a higher level.

10 In information and communication technology, standards have improved since the last inspection and are typical of what is expected of seven and 11-year-olds. Standards are also higher in gymnastics, although overall standards in physical education are in line with what is expected for pupils' age. Standards have been maintained at an appropriate level in art and design, geography, history and music. In design and technology, standards are high enough by the end of Year 2 but not high enough by the end of Year 6. This is because pupils do not evaluate or improve their models and are unsure about using computers to help them design and plan or make models move. Standards in religious education do not meet those prescribed by the locally agreed syllabus because pupils' have only a limited knowledge about the religions they study.

### **Comparisons of different groups of pupils**

11 The results of National Curriculum tests in English show that for the last five years, girls have performed better than boys. However, the gap between boys and girls' attainment has been closing since the school provided a wider range of books that appeal to boys' interests. Last year, for the first time, boys performed slightly better than girls did in mathematic tests. There are no trends to performance in science, in some years boys do better than girls and in others girls outperform boys. In lessons, girls and boys perform equally well in all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education.

12 Pupils with special educational needs make steady progress in English because the targets in their individual education plans are almost always based on reading or writing, for example, improving spelling, or reading frequently used words. In addition, they benefit from working in small groups with a classroom assistant. The progress they make in other subjects is not always as fast as it could be, especially when the work in some lessons is too difficult for them and when they do not get the extra support they need.

13 Lower attaining pupils get a good deal in English. This is not the case in mathematics, where fewer pupils than in most other schools reach the level expected for seven-year-olds.

14 Higher attaining pupils do not always get a fair deal from the school. The work they are given is not always challenging enough and this is one of the reasons why fewer pupils in Year 6 reach a higher level in mathematics.

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

15 As was noted in the last inspection, pupils' attitudes to school are good and this makes a positive contribution to their learning. Children under five begin their school day happily with bright

smiles and an eagerness to start their day in the nursery and reception classes. Older pupils appear happy to see their friends. They come into school sensibly, hang up their coats quietly and settle into their classroom routines in a mature manner.

16 Throughout the school, pupils behave well; justifying parents' views that it is as good as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and are aware of the impact their actions have on others. Pupils, of all ages, respond well to their teachers' expectations of good behaviour in the classroom, enjoy lunchtime as a sociable event and generally behave well out on the playground. Pupils in the reception class help to agree the class rules, and when asked say what they are and why they are important, for example, being kind to others.

17 When pupils behave inappropriately the school's behaviour policy is effective. There are procedures for notifying parents and working with them to encourage pupils' good behaviour in the future. The head teacher and governing body have formally excluded pupils for short periods during the past year and this action has reflected the school's insistence on good discipline and acceptable behaviour.

18 Since the last inspection, the good personal development of pupils continues. Pupils grow in confidence as they progress through the school and build up good relationships with their teachers and friends. A feeling of mutual respect and friendship, between teachers and pupils, motivates pupils to do their best and is a significant factor in the happy atmosphere of the school. Pupils approach their teachers, or the head teacher, to discuss their work and their problems. They accept responsibilities and are keen to take part in the extra-curricular activities the school provides. Those pupils elected to be president or vice-president of house teams are proud of their position and their keen competitive spirit shows in their eagerness to be the best house. Other pupils take responsibilities to help their teachers prepare for lessons, tidy the classrooms; or to work in the nursery. These responsibilities contribute to good relationships in school and promote new friendships with the younger children.

19 Attendance is very good and well above average for primary schools across the country. Punctuality is also good. Almost all pupils arrive on time and are settled in class promptly for the start of lessons. Some pupils are taken on family holidays during term time but the overall pattern of attendance has a positive effect on pupils' learning.

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

20 Teachers' knowledge of the curriculum has increased. As a result of training and clear guidelines to help plan lessons, weaknesses in teaching gymnastics no longer exist, and teachers' increased confidence is evident in the satisfactory standards achieved by pupils throughout the school. Teachers have also had training in information and communications technology and are now teaching all aspects of the subject with greater enthusiasm, which in turn motivates pupils to greater effort.

21 Teachers' knowledge of how to teach the basic skills of literacy continues to be good and this is a significant factor in why pupils do so well in English. This was evident in a good lesson in Year 4, when close attention to the use of adjectives helped pupils write a scary start to their stories. While their understanding of how to teach the basics of numeracy is satisfactory, teachers often miss opportunities to develop pupils' mathematical reasoning. This happens when teachers fail to give pupils the chance to say how they have worked a sum out in their heads or explain to them what it is they have done wrong. This is one of the reasons why pupils are not making fast enough progress in this subject. Another reason is that teachers encourage pupils to use their literacy skills in other subjects, for example, they write about the periods they study in history and use computers to draft and word process. This is not done to the same extent with mathematics and pupils do not get the opportunities to apply their knowledge.

22 A strength of the teaching for children under five, which underlies the good progress they make, is the thorough knowledge that teachers have of how to develop the early skills of reading, writing and mathematics and ensure that activities planned for children under five are practical and interesting. As a result, children are often absorbed in their work, particularly when activities are of a practical nature, such as exploring the feel and texture of materials and objects. Areas of learning are linked together in planning. This works successfully and helps the children to make sense of what they are taught. For example, they understand the need to hold musical instruments properly and put them back in the box carefully because they are not toys.

23 A further strength of the school lies in the good relationships between staff and pupils. Teachers treat pupils with respect and staff and pupils like one another. Their high expectations of sensible behaviour are reflected in pupils' responsible attitudes to learning and good behaviour in lessons. Teachers also share the aims of lessons with pupils and this helps pupils to see how well they are doing. This is a good feature of lessons in all subjects and results in pupils talking confidently about what they have learned.

24 The methods teachers use are appropriate and teachers' plan activities that are interesting to pupils, which means that they enjoy learning and put a lot of effort into their work. In the Foundation Stage and very often in Years 1 and 2, tasks are of a practical nature and involve pupils exploring and working things out for themselves. For example, in the nursery, children learn about measurement and volume as they play in sand water and in Year 1 pupils discovered the effect of forces by pushing and pulling objects. Older pupils are encouraged to ask questions and lessons often include time for discussion about what they have learned. At these times, teachers' good use of questioning helps draw out pupils' views and deepens their thinking. This was evident in a good science lesson in Year 6, when pupils realised that the results of their experiments into gravity might alter because of human error and were able to try to prevent this.

25 Teachers' do not always pitch work for pupils with special educational needs at the right level. Sometimes, the work that pupils do in whole-class sessions is difficult for them to follow. While some teachers include them by asking specific questions at their level, this is not always the case. The work they are asked to do in their books is generally planned at the right level in English and mathematics but in other subjects they do not always get the extra support they need to help them with their reading and writing. Teachers make good use of the work of classroom assistants to provide closer supervision in small groups for the learning of pupils with special educational needs. Their time is not used as efficiently in those lessons where they have no part to play for long periods. However, the additional support in literacy, which pupils get in small groups, is beginning to have an effect on raising standards in English. Booster classes, to help older pupils improve their mathematics have not been so successful. In addition, very few pupils have targets for mathematics in their individual education plans, despite the fact that more 11-year-olds fail to reach the expected level in mathematics than in English or science.

26 A weakness to teachers' planning is that some groups of pupils do not get enough opportunities to progress. In mathematics, lower attaining pupils in infant classes and higher attaining pupils in junior classes do not always get work that is pitched at the right level. This is a factor in why standards in this subject are not as high as they should be and have not improved since the previous inspection. In science, work is not always challenging enough to help higher attaining pupils in infant classes achieve a higher level.

27 Throughout the school, teachers' mark work conscientiously and provide a wealth of purposeful comments that help pupils know where they have gone wrong and how they can improve. Homework is always marked and the results of spelling tests shared with parents. This good feature does not extend to giving parents the results of mental mathematics tests. In English and mathematics, the use of regular tests and the systematic recording of what pupils can do strengthen this day-to-day



assessment. However, teachers have not extended this good practice to other subjects and co-ordinators have highlighted this as an area that needs further work in the coming year. At the moment it prevents teachers from being certain about what pupils know or whether their knowledge is deep enough. This was evident in discussions with pupils who could remember very little about the religions they had studied.

28 Teachers make good use of homework to extend pupils' learning in school. From the nursery onwards children are expected to take books home to read with their families and reading at home has a strong effect on pupils' interest in books.

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

29 Since the last inspection, the school has worked steadily to ensure that all of the recommendations made in the previous report have been addressed. The school day for the juniors has been extended. Schemes of work are now in place for all subjects. Information technology has been considerably developed and now meets statutory requirements. Time has been distributed more thoughtfully so that there is a more appropriate balance of subjects within the curriculum. Literacy and numeracy have sufficient emphasis and a fair amount of time is devoted to other subjects. As a result of these efforts, the curriculum is now more balanced than previously. An appropriate curriculum is in place for children of the Foundation Stage that covers all areas of learning.

30 Strategies for the teaching of literacy are more effective than those for teaching numeracy. The implementation of the Literacy Strategy has been particularly effective and can be seen to be making a positive impact on the standards achieved throughout the school. The schools' strategy for teaching numeracy has yet to show a significant impact on standards. Literacy skills are successfully reinforced across other curriculum areas, but teachers sometimes miss opportunities to develop numeracy skills within other subjects.

31 The school uses good quality guidelines to help teachers plan in all subjects apart from physical education. The locally Agreed Syllabus guides the teaching of religious education. The school has worked hard to implement National Curriculum 2000. Care is taken to organise the curriculum so that pupils' learning opportunities successfully build on what has previously been taught.

32 Parents' views that there are few activities after school are justified. Older boys and girls get the chance to play sports, such as football, basketball and rounders and a choir and recorder group meet in the lunch hour. A drama club, funded by a grant from the New Opportunities Fund has been recently introduced for all junior pupils, and is proving popular. All of these are aimed at older pupils and there is very little for those in infant classes.

33 Most, but not all of the pupils in the school are getting a fair deal. Children in the Foundation Stage get a curriculum that is suited to their age and needs. In other key stages there are shortcomings in meeting the learning needs of higher attaining pupils because their work is not always challenging enough. In contrast, pupils with special educational needs are sometimes given work that is too difficult, for example, during sessions that involve the whole class. Both boys and girls have the same opportunities to take part in activities and make progress. Parents' concerns that planned curriculum opportunities are biased towards girls' interests are unfounded.

34 Although the school does not designate time specifically for personal, social and health education it is successfully interwoven through planned and unplanned opportunities. Sex education is not formally taught, but pupils learn about human growth and development as part of their science studies. Health education, including the misuse of drugs is also included within science, with some aspects reinforced through the physical education curriculum. Year 6 pupils also attend a *drugs'*

*prevention* presentation organised by the Local Education Authority. Teachers give support and encouragement to develop personal and social skills on a day-to-day basis. The religious education programme, and assemblies make a significant contribution in helping pupils to develop respect and consideration for others. Visits made out of school extend personal and social experiences, particularly when they are made jointly with other schools. The residential visit made by pupils in Year 6 helps pupils gain independence and form new friendships.

35 The school has many links with the community and pupils gain first-hand experiences in science, history and geography through these. Members of the community are welcomed into school on special occasions such as Christmas and harvest. Visitors, such as a local author and a theatre group help to enrich the curriculum. Older pupils benefit from visiting Washington library and use their multimedia facilities. Productive liaison has been established with a local firm, which two years ago, supplied the school with several computers. Strong links have been made with other primary schools. This is particularly important for older pupils and helps them feel confident about the transfer to secondary school.

36 The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Pupils are given good opportunities to reflect on the wonders of life and to develop their own sensitive opinions and feelings about people and nature. Pupils in one infant class wrote and drew their perceptions of snowflakes and *sunflakes*. Another example of how pupils take and maximise the opportunities to reflect and write creatively occurred in Year 6. After two minutes of silence on Remembrance Day pupils wrote powerful poems commemorating soldiers and civilians who died for their country. The school's daily act of collective worship and its teaching of religious education also contribute effectively to pupils' spiritual experiences.

37 The aims and ethos of the school ensure good provision for pupils' moral development. The school promotes a strong moral code with an emphasis on care and respect. The school's behaviour policy is successful and echoes the school and parents' expectations of good behaviour with appropriate sanctions, including exclusion. Lessons and assemblies are used to stress good moral values. Assembly themes are often stories chosen to help pupils distinguish between right and wrong behaviour. Class rules, in Year 2, focus on the benefits of caring and sharing and contribute to pupils' understanding of what is right and wrong.

38 Teachers use the curriculum to focus on events taking place in and out of the classroom and to discuss moral and ethical issues. For example, in Year 6, pupils debate the relevance of international, national and local news. They have considered the implications of the spread of disease in animals used for human consumption; how major accidents happen around the world, such as a recent ski resort disaster, or the effects of the delay in the American presidential elections. Such opportunities to debate current affairs make a very good contribution to the personal development and maturity of the older pupils in understanding a need for honesty, fairness, respect, truth and justice.

39 The school also makes good provision for pupils' social development. Teachers and adults in the school are effective role models for the children. Their good example encourages pupils to be courteous and respectful. In the nursery, pupils begin early to develop initiative, in planning their own learning activities and taking responsibility for clearing away equipment. Older pupils spend time in the nursery helping the teacher and building friendships with the younger children.

40 Geographical field trips provide valuable and sometimes new experiences for pupils to work and play together away from school and home. The school's house system enables pupils to democratically elect house presidents and vice-presidents each year. To do this, the older pupils, need to work together well and organise the elections to include the participation of the younger children. Whilst pupils are also involved in successful fundraising events for charity, there are some missed opportunities, in the middle school years, for pupils to fully develop a wider sense of social awareness

and citizenship.

41 Provision for pupils' cultural development varies in strength throughout the school. Generally, pupils' cultural development is satisfactory with some class teachers providing stronger cultural experiences for pupils than others. Studies of past societies in Egypt and of contemporary ones, in Jamaica for example, help older pupils to broaden their knowledge and to compare other cultures with their own. Children in the nursery learn and enjoy their own culture through traditional nursery rhymes, stories and songs.

42 The appreciation of art, literature and music plays a positive role in pupil's cultural development. Pupils in Year 4 talked about how art made them feel. For example they have seen how artists such as Leonardo da Vinci were inspired by religion to interpret their feelings. These pupils were also encouraged to listen to classical music and then to interpret their feelings through their paintings. In this way pupils were successful in creating pictures, which reflect their calm and relaxed moods.

43 Multi-cultural learning is mainly found in the school's teaching of religious education. Pupils in Year 5 have compared different religions, including Catholicism and Muslim faiths. Their work on the Islamic faith has produced a very good display of relevant items including an English translation of the Koran and a beautiful prayer mat. In Year 6 pupils are learning about Sikhism and beginning to build up an interesting display of traditionally used objects. Through the curriculum pupils are learning to consider and understand the differences of people living and working within their own society.

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

44 The school has maintained satisfactory standards of care for pupils and made improvements where they were necessary. For example, a problem with the surface of the playground was dealt with quickly. The head teacher and governors continue to assess potential risks and ensure that all statutory requirements are met. A suitable health and safety policy is in place and the day-to-day working practices adopted by all staff are good. The only exception to this is that no one keeps a record of records of fire drills. Pupils are supervised carefully throughout the day and lunchtime routines are managed well. A small number of parents expressed concerns about their children's safety in the playground because the school gate is left open for part of the day. Governors and the head teacher are aware of these concerns. As a result of all this, pupils are confident of being well looked after and know who to go to if they have an accident or feel unwell.

45 Child protection arrangements reflect local authority guidelines and the head teacher has designated responsibility for liaising with outside agencies. Although the training for teaching and non-teaching staff is not up-to-date, staff know to inform the head teacher if they have any concerns.

46 The school has very good levels of attendance, class teachers and the head teacher keep a careful check on absence, and any concerns are followed up with parents and when appropriate referred to the education welfare officer. The school has a range of effective systems to monitor and promote good behaviour. The school's behaviour policy and guidance on bullying are known by all staff and are operated consistently.

47 High standards of behaviour and discipline are promoted in school and the school's behaviour policy is effective. The school's house system encourages good behaviour and pupils confirm that they take a pride in acquiring house points. Bullying is not a problem, but effective measures, supported by the policy, are in place to deal with any incidents that arise.

48 Procedures for checking on and supporting pupils' personal development, although informal, are good. Procedures are effective because teachers know their pupils well, have good relationships

with them and keep a close check on their development and maturity as they move through the school. However, this knowledge is not always used effectively to raise the standard of pupils' academic achievements.

49 The school has an appropriate range of procedures for assessing pupils' attainments in English and mathematics. An issue from the previous inspection involved teachers in improving the way they use assessment to plan the next stage of pupils' learning. Although the school has worked on this area for development and teachers are successful in guiding and directing pupils' learning in English, there is still more work to be done before assessment forms a natural part of teaching and learning and records of attainment are kept in a formal and consistent way. Teachers check the progress made by pupils with special educational needs regularly, but do not always involve parents in reviews or setting targets. In addition, the individual education plans for these pupils do not always say how attainment or progress will be assessed or when.

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

50 Parents' have positive views about the school and are pleased with the efforts made on behalf of their children. They believe that good teaching helps their children do well and that part of this is because teachers expect children to work hard. Parents say that their children enjoy school and this is born out by the good attendance figures and pupils' own comments. They also feel that the school helps their children become mature and sensible. Inspection findings are that these positive views are justified.

51 The school provides a satisfactory range of information for parents; some of it is good and some could be improved. The annual reports for parents are good and filled with helpful information. They tell parents the level at which their children are working in English, mathematics and science and set useful targets for pupils to increase their knowledge. Similarly, parents of children in the Foundation Stage get plenty of information about the curriculum that their children follow but the parents of children in infant and junior classes do not get the same amount of detailed information about their children's work. However, the school has provided workshops to help them keep up-to-date with national initiatives, such as the literacy hour.

52 Many parents add to their children's achievements in school by helping them with extra work at home. Others make a significant impact by raising funds or getting involved in the work of the school. Parents are encouraged to attend school concerts and special workshops and are also invited to enter into a home-school agreement. A group of parents are active, both socially and in raising funds. Their efforts have a significant impact on pupils' learning because the money they raise is spent wisely on resources and to help pay for educational visits.

53 Parents of pupils with special educational needs are not always invited to meetings where their children's progress is reviewed. This prevents them from having a clear picture of how well their children are doing and limits their involvement in setting targets and helping at home.

54 The school has established a close partnership with parents of children in the nursery. This begins with visits to the child's home and is extended through the daily opportunities that parents have to talk informally with the teacher when they bring their children into the nursery. Teachers of older pupils make themselves available at the start and end of the day and most parents said that they find them very approachable if they want to talk about their children.

55 Some parents expressed concern about the amount of homework given to pupils. The inspection finds that the quantity and quality of homework are satisfactory and it is used well by teachers to support work in school. Forty-two per cent of parents who responded to the questionnaire

said that they are concerned at the lack of extra-curricular activities. They are right that there is only a limited range of activities, these are mostly sports clubs, led by the head teacher and aimed at older boys in junior classes.

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

56 Since the previous inspection, the head teacher and governors have strengthened the leadership and management of the school by giving greater responsibility to teachers for managing subjects and aspects of the school's work. In the short term, the effectiveness of this improvement to the school's leadership is already felt, because co-ordinators have adapted good quality guidelines to help teachers plan work in most subjects. This has resulted in a broader curriculum and better teaching. In addition, subject co-ordinators are far more focused than they were when responsibility was shared and consequently, in the long-term the school is in a sound position to be able to continue to improve.

57 The head teacher leads the school well and has built a team that shares the intention to extend pupils' learning in subjects across the curriculum. For example, although high standards have been maintained in English over recent years, careful analysis has pinpointed weaknesses to the teaching of mathematics and this has been identified as a priority for development in the present year. This thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school does not extend to all subjects. Co-ordinators have begun to monitor the quality of teaching in English and mathematics, but this is not happening in other subjects and this is the weakest aspect of the school's management. Consequently, co-ordinators cannot be sure of what is happening in their subjects and gaps in teaching and learning have not always been picked up in this way. In addition, the school has been without a deputy head teacher for some time and monitoring by senior teachers has been reduced. This has led to important gaps in the provision for different groups of pupils not being identified, for example, that pupils with special educational needs are not always getting work that is pitched at the right level.

58 Governors do a good job for the school. They tackle the challenges of their role, despite not having a full governing body. Established governors are well-informed about all aspects of the life of the school and have a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses. By working in committees, governors keep a close check on how well the school is doing, monitor the budget and spending and play a full part in deciding policy. They are justifiably proud of the school's policy for behaviour, which they decided was necessary to ensure that poor behaviour was dealt with more effectively by all staff. Since its introduction parents and teachers have worked in partnership to ensure that sanctions are applied consistently and pupils have become more aware of the consequences of behaving badly. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met and that parents are kept well-informed about the work of the school through their annual report. Governors take their responsibilities seriously when annually appraising the work of the head teacher and setting suitable targets for his performance.

59 The school's plan for development is much improved since the time of the previous inspection. The head teacher and governors were too ambitious in their expectations of how long it would take to achieve the targets in the action plan drawn up after the previous inspection. Consequently the school was not able to meet all of the deadlines it had set. Having learned from their mistakes the current plan sets realistic targets for improvement and takes account of what it will cost the school to achieve them. The head teacher and governors also set targets for attainment in National Curriculum tests. Appropriate targets for English and mathematics, based on information of pupils' achievements, were exceeded in English and met in mathematics in 2000. More ambitious targets have been produced for 2001, with the intention of raising standards. Target setting is beginning to become a useful part of the school's practice, a pilot scheme, where pupils are given the aims of each lesson as W.I.L.F. (*what I*

*learned from*) is working very well in the Year 2 class and giving pupils a greater knowledge of how well they are doing.

60 Teachers have begun to monitor the quality of teaching in English and mathematics, but this is not happening in other subjects. Because co-ordinators cannot be sure of what is happening in their subjects, gaps in teaching and learning have not always been picked up.

61 Financial planning and control continue to be efficient. Administrative systems are computerised and the school's secretary uses new technology competently. Most of the recommendations in the last report by the school's auditors have been tackled. Governors, regularly apply the principles of best value and always try to make the best use of money. The finance committee examines and discusses budget proposals before the full governing body approves and sets the final budget. They work with the head teacher to make regular checks on spending and have saved money for major building work to the hall. Governors ensure that all additional funding is used for its intended purpose. Funds for training teachers is used effectively to increase their knowledge, evident in the improved provision for information and communication technology. The appropriate use of funds to provide *booster classes* has helped raise standards in English but has not raised standards in mathematics to the same level.

62 The school has sufficient teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum. They are all suitably qualified and there is a good balance of experience and expertise. The distribution of curriculum responsibilities means that some teachers have a heavy workload. Teachers who do not have responsibilities are eager to take on their share of the work, which reflects the strong team spirit that is evident in the school. Teachers receive regular training to allow them to meet new initiatives and to update their skills and knowledge and staff morale is high. There is an appropriate number of non-teaching support staff but teachers do not always make best use of their time and talents. This happens in lessons where the teacher works with the class and the assistant has no part to play for long periods.

63 Accommodation is good. Inside, there is a hall and good-sized dining room. Outside there is a large field and the playground has been improved since the previous inspection. The area housing computers has reduced the size of the library considerably and neither area is used often enough. The school continues to be scrupulously clean and tidy.

64 The school now has sufficient resources to teach most subjects. More equipment, including computers and software, has been bought to remedy the shortages identified in the previous inspection. The only gap in provision is that many books, particularly those in the library, are shabby and out of date. Teachers make good use of visits to places of educational interest in the local area to increase pupils' understanding of subjects such as geography and history, but this is not the case with religious education.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65 The governors, head teacher and staff should

**(1) raise standards in mathematics by**

- a. increasing teachers' knowledge of how to teach mathematics by providing training and guidance,
- b. giving greater emphasis to areas of mathematics, where pupils' understanding is weak,
- c. planning activities that help pupils see the pattern and relationship in number,
- d. monitoring the quality of teaching in order to ensure that weaknesses are being remedied,
- e. monitoring teacher's planning and pupils' books in order to ensure that work is pitched at the right level for pupils of different ability.

*(paragraphs 95 – 101 of the main report)*

**(2) raise standards in religious education by**

- a. finding ways to ensure that pupils remember what they have learned,
- b. establishing procedures for assessing and recording what they know.

*(paragraphs 152 - 157 of the main report)*

**(3) make better use of monitoring to raise standards in all subjects by**

- a. establishing formal procedures for the systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching and its impact on standards and learning,
- b. using the information from monitoring to plan further training for teachers,
- c. incorporating aspects of teaching and learning into the school's plans for improvement.

*(paragraphs 60, 101, 108, 114, 120, 126, 135, 145, 151, 157 of the main report)*

**(4) improve the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs by**

- a. ensuring that the targets in individual education plans are specific to each child's needs,
- b. planning work that meets the needs of these pupils in all parts of lessons,
- c. using assessment to ensure that pupils make fast enough progress,
- d. using the time and talents of support staff more efficiently,
- e. encouraging parents to play a greater part in termly reviews of their children's progress.

*(paragraphs 25, 33, 49, 53 of the main report)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	7	44	49			

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 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	11	180
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	20

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
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
	2000	13	16	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	16	15	14
	Total	28	27	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97% (79%)	93% (83%)	90% (86%)
	National	84% (82%)	85% (83%)	90% (87%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	16	15	16
	Total	28	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97% (81%)	93% (86%)	97% (87%)
	National	84% (82%)	88% (86%)	88% (87%)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	3	12	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	* <sup>2</sup>		
	Girls	12	10	12
	Total	15	12	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	94% (70%)	75% (79%)	94% (78%)
	National	75% (70%)	72% (69%)	85% (78%)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	14	15	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88% (67%)	94% (69%)	94% (75%)
	National	70% (68%)	72% (69%)	79% (75%)

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

<sup>2</sup> Numbers are omitted because there were fewer than ten boys in the group.  
Springwell Village Primary School - 22

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	161
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	4	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 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.7
Average class size	25.7

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	20

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.3
--------------------------------	-----

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	348,290
Total expenditure	327,000
Expenditure per pupil	1,652
Balance brought forward from previous year	12,000
Balance carried forward to next year	33,290

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	191
Number of questionnaires returned	114

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	36	0	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	32	4	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	49	3	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	42	10	4	1
The teaching is good.	57	39	2	2	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	45	13	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	30	6	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	35	0	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	36	46	16	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	41	47	7	4	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	50	2	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	29	23	19	10

### **Other issues raised by parents**

A small number of parents made written comments about the school. Alongside praise for the school they voiced their concerns about the following;

- ~ teachers do not set homework in a consistent way,
- ~ their children have been bullied or received minor injuries at school,
- ~ children with special educational needs do not always get the help they need.

## **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**

66 The Foundation Stage is made up of the nursery and reception class. Children start nursery in the term after their third birthday and attend each morning. At the time of the inspection 12 of the 25 children were still aged three. Children move to the reception class in the September of the year in which they are five, and attend full-time. There are currently 18 children in the reception class. None of the children in the Foundation Stage have special educational needs.

67 When children start nursery, they have skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. The school's records show that they make good progress during their time in the Foundation Stage. By the time they begin the Year 1 class, standards are above average in communication, language and literature, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children also have good personal and social skills. Children make steady progress in developing physical and creative skills and their achievements are typical for their age.

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

68 Good teaching helps children to gain confidence and independence. Children's personal development is seen as an important part of teaching and staff constantly encourage children to get the things they need and try new activities. In both classes, the activities planned encourage children to want to learn and explore. For example, children in the nursery were very keen to explore treasure chests and to find out how binoculars worked because these were part of their topic on pirates.

69 Children are helped to become independent because staff encourage them to make their own decisions. In the nursery, making their own choice sometimes results in children moving from one activity to another without settling to anything but staff are reviewing the structure of the day in order to solve this problem. In the reception class, children learn quickly to follow instructions to sit on the carpet and to organise themselves into a circle so that everyone can see.

70 Teachers encourage children to form good relationships with adults and other children. Staff expect children to be friendly to one another, to share equipment and behave well. When children argue they are reminded gently of the rules and occasional outburst of temper from children in the nursery are sorted out quickly and without fuss. A good feature of teaching is that teachers know each child well and are able to respond to their needs.

#### **Communication, language and literature**

71 This area of learning is taught well and children get a good start to reading and writing. A strength of the teaching in the Foundation Stage is that staff plan many opportunities for children to talk about themselves and their work. Every activity involves asking questions and emphasising words and names. This was evident in the nursery as talking to children about the activities they had chosen and in reception class in the way that children were asked to give their opinions. Teachers try hard to extend children's vocabulary by using words that children copy; for example, in the reception class the teacher used the words *transparent* and *see-through* to describe cellophane paper and in doing so helped children understand what the harder word meant. Children grasped the idea and by the end of the session, several were using *transparent* in their descriptions.

72 Another good feature of teaching is that teachers tell and read stories to children every day.

Consequently, children in the nursery learn to enjoy books and to handle them with care. By the time they are in the reception class, children use pictures and their knowledge of the sounds of letters to help them read unfamiliar words. The brightest children read simple stories and talk about the characters in their favourite books. In both the nursery and the reception class children are given many opportunities to write. As a result, most write short sentences by the time they leave the reception class and the brightest children write about their news or something they have done. Because the teacher in the reception class insists that letters are formed correctly, children's handwriting is generally good.

### **Mathematical development**

73 This area of learning is also taught well. A strength of the teaching is the emphasis staff give to language and vocabulary. They constantly reinforce children's understanding of mathematical language by asking questions such as *how many pencils are there altogether?* Children respond by using the same language in their descriptions and quickly learn to use the right terms of adding and subtracting. This language is further reinforced when children learn to sing number rhymes that involve number.

74 Teachers ensure that children learn about number, pattern and shape through practical activities such as sorting objects into sets, counting and playing games. This helps children make good progress in understanding numbers and concepts, such as adding and taking away. Teachers also encourage children to record their mathematics; in the nursery they do this as pictures and then, as they get older, as sums with symbols for addition, subtraction and equals. Most children can work out sums to ten by the time they leave reception classes and brighter children use much bigger numbers and can easily work things out in their head.

75 Another feature of the teaching, that helps children make good progress, is that teachers make it fun. For example, children in the reception class counted *liquorice allsorts* and pasta and then recorded their findings as pictures using a wide variety of materials. Similarly, when teaching the concept of numbers being more or less than others, children quickly grasped the idea because they liked the coloured stickers used by the teacher to show which numbers were more and which were less than a given number.

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

76 Good teaching helps children widen their understanding of the world. Teachers do this by planning activities that are based on first-hand experiences. For example, in the nursery children experiment with sand, water and play dough and in the reception class they explored the different textures of a wide range of materials by touching them and describing what they felt. These types of activities fascinate children; those in nursery were extremely keen to play in the *slime* tray and children's delight at touching strangely shaped pieces of bark and wood was evident in their smiling faces.

77 One of the strengths of teaching in this area of learning is that children are encouraged to find things out for themselves and to ask why things happen. This was evident in a good science-based activity, when children in the reception class explored the properties of different materials. Children laughed when they found that their classmates looked a different colour when viewed through some of the papers and wanted to know if the same thing was happening to them.

78 Teachers encourage children to talk about their families and use stories to help children learn about the significance of special festivals, such as Christmas. In the nursery, activities linked to the theme of pirates helped children learn about the wider world and thoughts of treasure inspired them to think about maps and islands. In both nursery and reception class, children are encouraged to use

computers and other information and communication technology to listen to stories and read books. Consequently, children are confident at using computers and enjoy playing games and activities where they have to make things happen on the screen.

### **Physical development**

79 Teaching is satisfactory and children make steady progress in the development of physical skills. Regular opportunities to use the hall for dancing, games and gymnastics help children in both classes move with confidence and control, though there is still a bit of good natured bumping when children in the nursery run around. Children in the nursery get plenty of opportunities for robust play outside and they enjoy climbing, jumping and playing with wheeled toys. By the end of the reception year children have achieved many of the early learning goals. They are co-ordinated when travelling under, over and through apparatus and when dancing they curl and stretch their bodies to create interesting shapes. Children's confidence was evident when they choose to set new challenges for themselves by raising the height of apparatus or altering its position to make it more difficult to climb or get over.

80 At a different level, teachers also teach skills such as cutting and gluing, to help children gain control of these types of movement. Having regular opportunities to use small tools helps children hold pens and paintbrushes correctly, though a few children in the nursery still struggle with scissors that are too blunt to cut.

### **Creative development**

81 Teaching is satisfactory and children make steady progress as they explore colour, texture shape and music. Consequently, by the time they leave the reception class, they achieve many of the skills expected for their age. In the nursery, staff ensure that children have daily opportunities to experiment with the sounds made by musical instruments. The teacher in reception class builds on what children already know. Children learn to hold percussion instruments properly and to play loudly and softly. Because the teacher reminds them of the names of instruments they are able to identify tambourines, drums, triangles and wood blocks. In both classes, children learn to sing a wide range of songs and rhymes and enjoy joining in with the actions even if they do not know all of the words.

82 Teachers encourage children to paint, draw and be creative in making models and pictures. Children in the nursery learn to recognise colours as they experiment with paint. Older children are taught how to mix paint to get a wider range of colours. Children create imaginative pictures and the portraits they draw of themselves and other people contain greater detail as they get older. Children's work is valued and there are attractive displays of snowmen, shapes and childrens' paintings in classes.

83 Teachers encourage children to be imaginative by setting up situations where they can engage in role-play. Children enjoy playing and dressing up and acting out the part. This was evident when a small group of nursery children played for a long time with toy ships and when boys and girls played in the pirate ship and pretended to be making the dinner for the crew.

84 Teaching is not better because staff sometimes miss opportunities to extend children's knowledge and vocabulary by leaving them to get on with painting activities by themselves.

### **ENGLISH**

85 Standards in English have improved since the previous inspection. They are above average

for seven-year-olds and well above what is expected of 11-year-olds.

86 Results in the 2000 national tests show that by the end of Year 2, standards were above average in reading and well above average in writing. Standards of speaking and listening were judged to be in the top five per cent of all schools, making this a real strength of the school. By the end of Year 6, standards were well above average and far more pupils than in most schools achieved a level that was higher than expected for their age. Comparisons with similar schools confirm that standards are high by the time pupils leave the school and that pupils in junior classes make very good progress. Test results have risen over the past four years and the school far exceeded its targets for 2000. In both key stages, girls achieve higher results than boys.

87 The quality of teaching is good overall. It is based on the National Literacy Strategy and is used to good effect on raising standards, particularly in writing. Good teaching is also based on teachers' firm knowledge and understanding of the subject. Teachers provide many opportunities for speaking and listening and as a result, standards are high throughout the school. By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils express themselves clearly and confidently in a range of situations. Higher attaining pupils use an extensive vocabulary when discussing the meaning of texts during the literacy hour and when giving their opinions in other subjects. Lower attaining pupils use a wide range of vocabulary to discuss their ideas with both classmates and adults.

88 A strength of teaching, which underlies the good progress pupils make, comes from teachers' ability to teach the basic skills of reading and writing. Direct teaching of reading during the literacy hour has a good effect on all pupils' learning and homework helps encourage pupils' love of books and is also a factor in high standards. There is a very clear focus to the teaching of skills and strategies to make sense of new texts. Teachers encourage pupils to think about the words and phrases being used and in response pupils enjoy the challenge of new language in the books they read and try hard to make sense of words and phrases they do not understand. For example, pupils in Year 2 tackled difficult words by sounding out the letters and those in Year 6, did very well to explain what Shakespeare meant in speeches from Macbeth and other plays. As a result, average and high attainers read with good or very good levels of understanding. Lower attaining pupils read at or just below the expected level. They understand the ideas, characters and main events of texts and make reference to the text when explaining their ideas. Pupils throughout the school have a wide knowledge of authors and even the younger pupils have their favourites. Most pupils use contents, index and glossary pages to research information. They know how to use library classification systems to find reference books for their work but because of changes to the accommodation the library is much smaller than it was and hardly used by pupils. In addition, many of the books are very old and shabby.

89 Teachers are good at questioning and use this as a way to assess what pupils know. For example, in history pupils in Year 2 discussed the great fire of London and by asking specific questions pupils were helped to understand the meaning of eyewitness accounts. Positive relationships between teachers and pupils give pupils the confidence to join in and get the maximum benefit from all activities. This was evident in a lesson in Year 6, when pupils were asked to act part of a poem they were reading. By dramatising the poem the teacher helped pupils to understand what made it funny.

90 Standards in writing are high because of the many opportunities teachers provide for pupils to produce interesting writing for a variety of purposes. Ideas are fully explored and great emphasis is placed on the use of adventurous vocabulary. Pupils in Year 2 used adjectives such as *she looked miserable* to describe characters in their story. Because of the importance given to grammar and punctuation most pupils use capital letters and full stops. More capable pupils are beginning to use speech marks in their writing. As they get older, pupils learn to plan and draft their stories. In a lesson in Year 4, the class and teacher spent a long time setting the scene for a spooky story and average attaining pupils went on to produce imaginative and atmospheric phrases, such as *clouds like a puff of smoke*, in their opening paragraphs. The chance to work together and to share ideas and

vocabulary helps pupils to develop the quality of the expressive language in their stories and poems. The imaginative use of language is particularly evident in pupils' poems about the second World War where one pupil wrote *remember the poppy, the sign of war*. High and average attaining pupils punctuate their work to a high level with commas and apostrophes and speech, exclamation and question marks. Their spelling is mainly accurate. Lower attaining pupils work at just below the expected level for their age while pupils with special educational needs punctuate sentences and sometimes use speech marks. By the time they leave the school most pupils' handwriting is stylish and extremely neat. This has the added effect of making all of their written work more attractive.

91 Pupils with special educational needs, whose attainments in reading and writing are below expectations for their age, make steady progress. They respond well to the extra attention and specific work they get when working in small groups with the classroom assistant. The tasks provided for pupils with special educational needs in the classroom are usually matched carefully to their needs but sometimes the whole-class activities and texts used are too difficult for them.

92 A good feature of the teaching throughout the school is that teachers mark and discuss pupils' writing regularly to explain how it can be improved. This is done particularly well in Year 2, where the teacher and pupils use the phrase 'what I learned from' to provide an excellent record of what pupils can do. In general, the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress are better in English than in any other subject. Teachers also make better use of the information. The co-ordinator analyses the results of national tests and makes good use of what they tell her. For example, girls have performed better than boys for the last five years. To help boys catch up the co-ordinator bought more books that would be of interest to boys. This has paid off and the gap between the attainment of girls and boys is now much narrower.

93 Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their reading and writing in other subjects. Pupils' use of word-processing to present their work is reasonably well-developed but they do not use information and communication technology often enough.

94 The co-ordinator manages the subject well. Systematic and regular checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning and the setting of challenging targets to improve standards place the school in a good position to continue to develop its provision for English.

## **MATHEMATICS**

95 Standards in mathematics are not as high as they should be. Not enough pupils reach the expected level by the end of Year 2 and fewer pupils, than in most other schools, achieve a higher level by the end of Year 6. This is confirmed by the results of national tests in 2000 and by comparisons between the school's performance and that of pupils in similar schools.

96 The school has been aware of this weakness for some time and has tried hard to remedy the situation. The head teacher has put teachers into different year-groups and this is already having a positive effect. Pupils in classes in the infants are now working at levels that are better suited to their age and their previous knowledge and teachers' records suggest that results in tests for seven-year-olds are likely to be better this year.

97 The co-ordinator has analysed the results of National Curriculum tests very carefully in order to identify gaps in learning and now has a clear idea of what aspects of mathematics need more work if pupils are to succeed. Throughout the school, pupils do not have a strong enough grasp of shape and space. In junior classes pupils do not use what they know about number operations to help them solve mathematical problems. These areas have been identified as priorities for further development if pupils are to do better in tests. However, in order to monitor that this is being done sufficiently, the co-ordinator needs to monitor teacher's planning more thoroughly than at present. In addition, the head



teacher and advisers from the local education authority have made a thorough review of teaching. This revealed some gaps in teachers' knowledge that were also evident in some of the lessons seen during the inspection. One of the most significant weaknesses is that teachers do not always reinforce the mathematics sufficiently well for pupils to grasp the concept they are aiming to teach or to see the relationship in numbers. For example, in a lesson in the class in Year 3, the teacher did not emphasise the association between multiplication and division. Consequently, when pupils were asked to record equations to a given number they failed to understand that if they could record  $5 \times 4 = 20$  then they could also record  $4 \times 5 = 20$ .

98 There are other minor weaknesses to the teaching that prevent pupils from learning as well as they should. Teachers do not always encourage pupils to explain their reasoning and say how they have worked things out. Consequently pupils are not learning to use alternative methods of solving problems. This was most evident in mental mathematics sessions, when the fast pace of the lesson meant that there was not the time to listen to pupils' reasoning or help them see where they had gone wrong. At other times in the lesson, teachers are good at using questions to assess what pupils know. For example, in a lesson in the class in Year 6, the teacher helped pupils to understand about cube and square roots by asking questions that led them to the right answers.

99 The final reason why standards are not as high as they should be is that work in pupils' books shows that teachers are not planning work at the right levels for different groups of pupils. Too often, in infant classes, lower attaining pupils are asked to do the same work as average attaining pupils. On the other hand, in junior classes, higher attaining pupils are often asked to do the same work as average attaining pupils. This means that lower attaining pupils are sometimes doing work that is too difficult and higher attaining pupils are not being challenged sufficiently. During the inspection, teachers were much better at planning work for different groups of pupils. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, the teacher ensured that pupils with special educational needs were given extra help from the classroom assistant. As a result, they were able to make steady progress in their work on adding numbers to ten. Similarly in a lesson in Year 3 the teacher provided *extension* activities for pupils who had completed their work. This motivated pupils to get on with their work quickly and also gave them the opportunity to practise addition and subtraction as they solve problems involving money situations.

100 There is much about the teaching that is good. Teacher's planning has improved since the previous inspection because they now use the National Numeracy Strategy as a framework for planning. The activities they plan are generally interesting to pupils, and they respond by being keen to have a go and learn. This was evident in a class in Year 1, when the teacher used games and *Sid the Spider* to help pupils understand tens and units.

101 The subject is managed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator has rightly identified that changes to the way the subject is taught and monitored are necessary before the school can move on. This has already begun, the co-ordinator has monitored teaching in all classes and talked to teachers about what works well. The next important step is to monitor teachers' short-term planning and pupils' books more rigorously, in order to ensure that pupils of different abilities are given work that is pitched at the right level.

## SCIENCE

102 Standards in science have improved since the previous inspection and are now above average for seven and 11-year-olds.

103 The results of national tests in 2000 show that, by the end of Year 2, far more pupils than in most other schools reached the level expected for their age. By the end of Year 6, standards were above average and more pupils than in most schools reached the expected level. Comparisons with similar schools confirm that pupils have made steady progress during their time in junior classes. Test

results have risen over the last four years. There are no patterns to the achievement of boys and girls; in some years girls do slightly better and in others boys outperform girls. Inspection findings confirm that standards in the present Year 6 are above those expected for their age.

104 Teaching is better than it was at the time of the previous inspection and most of it is now good. Teachers are more confident and knowledgeable about teaching science. They encourage pupils to express their ideas using the correct terminology, and encourage scientific thinking. This was evident in a class in Year 5, when pupils said that a squashed balloon was an example of *compressed air*. It was also evident in pupils' recorded work, when they labelled plant diagrams using specific terminology such as *stigma* and *stamens*. Younger pupils classify material using terms natural and man-made. Year 5 pupils could clearly explain the relationship between the gas produced by plants and animals. Similarly, in Year 6, pupils investigated balanced and unbalanced forces, and used precise language when sharing conclusions, for example, one pupil said, *the heavier the object is, the longer the elastic band stretches*. Teachers use probing questions to help pupils understand and interpret data, this supports their thinking and helps them to understand the reasons why data can vary.

105 A good feature of the teaching is that teachers put a strong emphasis on scientific investigation. This helps motivate pupils and arouses their curiosity. Recorded work is of a good standard. Investigational findings are appropriately presented using text, graphs, tables and charts and effectively supports learning in literacy and numeracy. The use of the computer for recording their findings is underdeveloped. Teachers' planning is guided by a new scheme of work based on Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's recommendations. Weekly lesson plans are checked by the co-ordinator who gives written comments to support colleagues. All aspects of science are addressed with high levels of interest shown in life and living processes. Teachers plan visits to enhance learning effectively. The visit that pupils in Year 2 made to a local butterfly farm stimulated learning in the classroom. Pupils studied the life cycle of the butterfly, closely observing changes. The junior curriculum is enhanced by activities carried out in the Lake District as part of the Year 6 residential week. The local environment is a rich resource for scientific enquiry and effectively used, pupils gain knowledge and understanding of living things. Activities such as these contribute to the standards pupils achieve.

106 Teachers involve pupils successfully in their own learning by sharing learning objectives with them at the beginning of the lesson, and asking pupils to check at the end of the lesson if these have been achieved. At the beginning of lessons, and during lessons most teachers thoroughly check that children have understood before moving on to new learning. Good organisation and a thorough approach by the Year 2 teacher allowed her to check on pupils' progress and understanding very systematically, she extended learning successfully as she circulated amongst groups. Year 1 pupils individually investigated forces in the classroom, thoughtfully labelling objects. This strategy clearly highlighted which pupils had successfully grasped the concept. During topics, teachers of the older pupils check their understanding through simple recorded tests. Pupils note their own achievements. Pupils with special educational needs respond orally. All pupils are given the same test, and whilst higher attaining pupils answer more fully, the level of challenge is not high enough to fully meet their learning needs.

107 Teachers expect pupils to work hard and to behave well. As a result pupils show respect for one another when carrying out tasks together. Pupils in Year 6 enthusiastically worked harmoniously in groups of three to investigate the relationships between weight and gravity. They displayed good organisation and negotiation skills, quickly dividing the work. During the course of the activity they re-organised themselves efficiently and maturely so all had a turn at each task. Pupils concentrate well because lessons are so interesting. Year 5 pupils were absorbed because the lively lesson was delivered at such a brisk pace, using a range of interesting resources. They responded to probing questions, and reached clear conclusions, demonstrating good levels of scientific thinking. Behaviour is good because teachers have high expectations and manage pupils well. Good management of Year 2

pupils restless after the lunch break sensitively but swiftly restored full concentration. Pupils are excited by investigational tasks and eager to learn. They collaborate well in pairs, and readily shared equipment and ideas. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, show a good level of interest and they sustain concentration well. This has a positive impact on the standards they achieve.

108 Although new to the role, the co-ordinator has worked hard to support and advise colleagues. She has worked in close liaison with colleagues from a neighbouring school to develop management skills. She is currently developing effective ways of checking on the teaching and learning in the classroom and will carry out this invaluable task in the near future. Currently the checking of teachers' planning is effective but opportunities are missed to look at the quality and range of work in pupils' books. The co-ordinator has devised a manageable and useful form of record keeping, which summarises pupils' achievements and tracks progress, including notes to inform future planning. Opportunities are currently missed, however to analyse pupils' response to trial statutory test questions in order to pinpoint aspects of the curriculum where there are gaps, or to see where there are weaknesses in individual pupils knowledge and understanding. There is a shared commitment to continue to raise standards in science. Resources for the subject are at a satisfactory level.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

109 Pupils throughout the school attain the standards expected for their age and enjoy their work in art and design. Standards in painting have improved since the previous inspection when they were judged to be below average in infant classes. This is because more time is given to painting and, from the Foundation Stage onwards, pupils are taught to mix colours and to try and include detail in their work.

110 Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to look closely at the objects they draw. Teachers show pupils how to achieve tone and texture in their drawings and this helped pupils in Year 6 produce good drawings of training shoes. A good feature of this work was the way that pupils had developed their final drawings from sketches. The effort and time taken to produce these drawings was obvious in the detail in their preliminary work.

111 Another improvement to teaching and standards, is that pupils, throughout the school, make far greater use of computers to create graphics and designs than they did previously. Pupils in both key stages learn to use software programs to create attractive and colourful pictures and designs. However, while teachers have made a good start at using computers in art and design they have not extended this sufficiently and few pupils know how to combine graphics.

112 Standards in craft and design have been maintained. Teachers provide some opportunities for pupils to work with clay and other materials but there is little evidence that pupils use specialist techniques such as printing in their work. Pupils in Year 2 produced interesting prints using tiles and there were some clay models on display in the Year 5 class.

113 Teachers establish good links between art and design and other subjects. Pupils in Year 6 produced detailed portraits of Tudor men and women as part of their history topic. Their pictures showed an understanding of how to mix colours and use pastels to create tone and texture. Similarly, those in Year 6 used wax crayons to make imaginative pictures representing the mood of music they had heard. In geography pupils illustrate their work about Jamaica with lively pencil drawings and in science they make careful diagrams of their experiments. Another good feature of the teaching, is that teachers plan sufficient opportunities for pupils to study the works of famous artists. This helps them understand the different approaches used by artists such as Mondrian. Older pupils talk about the artist they have studied and have their favourites.

114 The subject is managed satisfactorily. One of the weaknesses identified in the previous report

was that there was no scheme of work to help teachers plan. The co-ordinator has remedied this situation by providing good quality guidelines that give teachers a clear idea of how to develop pupils' skills. This has increased teachers' knowledge of how to teach art and design and also given them more confidence. However, there is still room for improvement if the school is to teach the new National Curriculum successfully. There are no procedures for assessing what pupils can do and without checking the quality of teaching the co-ordinator cannot have a good enough overview of where the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning lie.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

115 Standards are average at the end of Year 2 but below average by the end of Year 6. While the picture in infant classes is similar to when the school was last inspected, standards have slipped in

junior classes. This is because the subject has not been taught in sufficient depth in the last four years.

116 The situation is better in infant classes because teaching is satisfactory. Teachers use a good quality scheme of work to help them plan lessons that are interesting to pupils and devote more time to the subject. Consequently, pupils have a firm understanding of how to design and then make models and enjoy the tasks they are given. Younger pupils draw and label their designs and by the end of Year 2, they have progressed to writing clear instructions, such as the ones they produced for making a play dough creature.

117 A good feature of the teaching in infant classes is that pupils are encouraged to develop their designs and evaluate the models they have made. This helps them reflect on their work and think about how it could be improved. For example, a pupil in Year 1 said *my cat hasn't got any legs, I should have drawn them* when looking back at the original design. Pupils in infant classes are very keen to show off their work and know that the appearance of a model is important. Those in Year 2 were proud of the good quality glove puppets they had made from felt and other materials and talked about how they had added the finishing touches.

118 Pupils' understanding of the design process was evident as they explained what they were doing. For example, one child offered the advice, *you have to copy your picture on the card, but much bigger* when describing the procedure for making card puppets with articulated joints. Pupils are confident at using a small range of tools such as scissors, glue, and sellotape to make their models and they are beginning to draw on their knowledge of mathematics to try and get measurements accurate.

119 In junior classes, teachers do not plan sufficient work in design and technology for pupils to build on what they know and reach the standards expected for their age. This is the reason why standards are not high enough. In this respect, teaching is unsatisfactory. There is little further development in the juniors where pupils in Year 4 continue to use the same simple planning form as in the infants. Although junior pupils design and make simple items, such as Christmas cards and Tudor houses, their work is very limited in range, quality and technique.

120 Over the last four years, the subject has had a low priority because of the emphasis on English and mathematics. In addition, there has been no co-ordinator to manage or monitor design and technology and it has fallen to the head teacher to give the lead. He has been successful in ensuring that teachers now have good quality guidelines to help them plan work, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The school is only just managing to meet statutory requirements and until there are changes to the way the subject is taught in junior classes it is unlikely that teachers will be able to teach the National Curriculum 2000.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

121 Standards in geography have been maintained since the previous inspection. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, they are typical of seven and 11-year-olds.

122 Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. This is evident in the work planned for pupils, which shows that skills are taught in a logical sequence. This helps pupils develop sound geographical knowledge and understanding as they get older. Pupils in Year 1 begin to develop knowledge and understanding of the areas they study. They make a class survey about how they travel to school, and learn to read simple maps. They know the significance of addresses and the importance of each line and the postal code. They describe their route from home to school and draw a simple map. By the age of eleven, pupils study Jamaica and the Caribbean culture displaying good geographical enquiry skills. They ask pertinent questions and look for the answers from a wide range of resources. They contrast life in Springwell with Jamaica.

Pupils in Year 5 have a sound knowledge of the highland area of Scotland, which they gained from researching good quality photographs. Pupils have an increasing knowledge and understanding of their own village, and by using an 1856 map and a recent map they compare and contrast the differences and similarities between then and now. They study the improvements that can be made to the village, and collect evidence to show how people affect the environment.

123 In the lesson seen, the teacher displayed good questioning skills to ensure that pupils had progressed in their understanding of settlements. She circulated well to extend learning, and support pupils' map-reading skills. She effectively introduced pupils to specific geographical terminology.

124 Teachers' planning closely follows the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidelines. All aspects of the subject are studied. In the lesson and through evidence drawn from scrutiny of books most of the recorded tasks are similar. Year 6 books show differences in the outcomes of tasks quite clearly, but this is not the case in the other junior classes. The challenge for the higher attaining pupils is not always high enough. A strong and effective feature of teachers' planning is the way teachers plan activities to support developing skills in other curriculum areas. Year 6 pupils collect data from their research of the Jamaican climate draw graphs to illustrate monthly sunshine. They calculate the cost of a holiday. Planning of work on settlements in Year 4 links closely with the study of Vikings in history and supports understanding in both subjects. Assessment opportunities are incorporated in the planning process. A consistent form of record keeping has not yet been established which clearly summarises pupil's attainment and tracks their progress through the curriculum. There is an inconsistent approach to marking, however a minority of teachers display good practice.

125 Resources are satisfactory and well used. An effective feature of the subject is the use made of visits to places of interest. Year 6 pupils visit the Lake District where good fieldwork opportunities enhance their learning. Good use is made of the locality to pursue environmental issues such as a pollution, recycling and care. However the use of information and communication technology to support learning is underdeveloped. Time is not always used efficiently, however as seen in the lesson observed when the pace was too slow and a minority of pupils lost concentration. Books in a minority of classes have a limited quantity of work.

126 The co-ordinator has helped teachers use the school's new scheme of work and has reviewed the documentation to take account of the recent national initiatives. She enriches the satisfactory level of resources with her own good quality photographs. She observes the quality of pupils' work on display. She has no opportunity, however to check the quality of teaching and learning within the classroom, neither does she sample pupils' books.

## **HISTORY**

127 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make steady progress throughout the school and reach standards in line with those expected for the age of pupils.

128 Most of the teaching is satisfactory and some is good. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. They plan interesting activities for pupils to enjoy and help them to understand about events that happened in the past. By the age of seven, pupils begin to develop an awareness of the passing of time; for example, they know that the Pilgrim Fathers sailed to America in the Mayflower before the Fire of London in 1666. They identify people from the past from portraits and enthusiastically discuss their roles in events surrounding the Great Fire of London. They know in some detail, for instance that Charles the Second was on the throne in 1666 and Samuel Pepys wrote an eyewitness account, whilst Christopher Wren was the architect who built St. Paul's Cathedral. Pupils display a good level of factual knowledge and understanding.

129 Teachers expect pupils to find information for themselves and pupils know where to search.

They sometimes research the topic themselves at home using books, computer programs and the Internet. They confidently ask and answer questions in the lesson displaying good logical thinking skills. For instance, one boy asked, *when people fled to the church to keep safe for five days, what did they have to eat?* Pupils in Year 1 understand that people live in a variety of styles of homes. They discuss their own homes and accurately identify features of a variety of house styles. They ask and answer questions confidently about the topic and add their own suggestions and comments. They investigate the age of toys by looking at specific characteristics such as *broken, musty, shiny* and *clean*.

130 Teachers question pupils well, and ensure they have gained knowledge and understanding of historical facts. They are careful listeners and allow pupils enough time to share their own ideas and comments. They value pupils' response. They expect pupils to pose their own questions, and develop good enquiry skills.

131 Teachers use a wide range of teaching methods to help pupils make progress. Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of people and events, which took place in Victorian times. They compare the social differences between rich and poor. They understand how people such as Lord Shaftsbury and Doctor Barnardo helped to change social conditions for the poor they successfully interpret the hardships encountered by Victorian children working in the mill in a good drama workshop. They sensitively capture the plight of Victorian chimney sweeps in art and design. Year 5 pupils use a variety of resources to study life in Tudor times including computer programs, portraits of the period and books. Younger juniors successfully depict their growing knowledge and understanding of the Greek and Egyptian cultures through art and design activities. Currently the use of the computer is underdeveloped.

132 In the best lesson the teaching was very thorough and pupils were challenged at an appropriate level. The teacher circulated well to support progress and extend learning, and her expectations were high. Good, subject knowledge, a lively delivery and effective use of resources generated a high level of interest from pupils. They were highly motivated and very enthusiastic. Recorded work in pupils' books does not truly reflect the depth of history learning or level of enquiry observed in the lessons.

133 Teachers' planning closely follows the new Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidelines. All elements of history are addressed. Scrutiny of the junior's books shows that work is well presented with careful and accurate illustrations; however apart from Year 6 there is currently a limited amount of written work. A strength of the planning lies in the way that teachers plan the subject effectively to link with other curriculum areas. Research for information is well represented throughout the school and pupils' good reading and comprehension skills support history learning well. Art and design skills are successfully developed when illustrating historical images. The grandeur of Tudor costumes is depicted accurately in collage pictures with thoughtful choice of colour and texture of materials. Close attention is paid to intricate details such as jewellery and hairstyles. Geography and history are effectively interlinked during a study of the local area. This study helps pupils to reflect on their own history as members of a community. History plays a significant part in the social and cultural development of pupils.

134 A weaker element of the subject planning lies in the match of challenge for pupils of different abilities. Most of the work in books, and recorded tasks in lessons show that identical challenges are planned for all pupils. Research material is provided at an appropriate level for pupils with special educational needs to support their learning. Those pupils of higher ability are not currently being challenged at a high enough level.

135 The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has good subject knowledge. She has worked hard with colleagues to implement the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidelines to support

planning and assessment. She has successfully overseen the necessary changes required to meet the learning needs of pupils now being taught in single age classes. Currently however, there is no consistent form of record keeping summarising pupils' attainment or tracking progress. Neither is there a systematic approach in the use of assessment to inform future planning. The co-ordinator advises staff through informal discussion but has no designated time to check on the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. Resources are satisfactory, and continue to improve. Good use is made of the library service to provide a wide-range of books including texts suitable for pupils with special educational needs.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

136 Standards in information and communication technology at both key stages are now satisfactory. This is a good improvement since the last report when standards were judged to be unsatisfactory. Some areas of the subject such as control, sensing and use of the Internet are still not developed fully but the school is including these in its programme for the remainder of the year.

137 The school has created an information technology suite in the library area using machines passed on from a large, local company. Although this has extended the number of available computer systems and provided an area where whole classes can work together it is not a satisfactory arrangement. This is because the machines are of low specification compared to other equipment in the school and some important programs cannot be shared. To ensure they get a fair deal from the school, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have lessons, each week, in the Rutherglen Centre for information and communication technology. The school plans to replace these computers with new machines within twelve months. Equipment in classrooms ranges in age and quality but there has been a significant improvement overall. All classrooms have at least three modern systems so that access to this technology is satisfactory. In addition, many of the pupils have good access to information and communication technology equipment at home, which they use to practise skills learned at school.

138 By the age of seven, most pupils have developed their skills in word processing so that they write stories and poems, correct any errors and improve work by redrafting. Pupils move text around on the page to improve the layout and change font sizes and shapes to create different effects. They use the keyboard and mouse with assurance to input information or make alterations on the screen. Pupils know that many kinds of equipment are controlled by computers and clearly describe how to program a small robot so that it moves and turns in specific ways. They use an art program successfully when creating different shapes using a range of tools. Junior pupils extend their knowledge so that, by the age of eleven, they use a desktop publishing program to produce calendars and cards. They use a spreadsheet program confidently as when Year 4 pupils use Excel to input data about their favourite sports, produce a spreadsheet and obtain a graph of their results. Older pupils who go to Rutherglen learn to make a presentation on the *Victorians* using multimedia, text, sounds and animation. They understand the function of the *Powerpoint* presentation program and use appropriate technical vocabulary when describing their work.

139 Staff confidence and competence have been much improved by recent training that has focused on the actual teaching they are required to undertake. Teachers have developed their own skills and knowledge so that they use and discuss the subject with increasing confidence. However, existing systems, including the computer suite, were hardly used during the inspection. Some examples of good planning and assessment were observed but this is an area for development. Computers are used in other subjects but it is insufficient because teachers do not include information and communication technology as an integral part of their planning.

## **MUSIC**

140 Since the previous inspection, standards in creating and developing musical ideas have



improved and those in listening to and appraising music have been maintained. Raised standards are the result of more time being devoted to composing and performing music.

141 In both key stages, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers' planning is better than it was at the time of the previous inspection because they now have a good quality scheme of work to help them plan. This means that pupils' work is progressively more difficult as they get older and lessons build on what pupils have already learned. For example, pupils in the class in Year 1 learn about simple tempo of fast and slow music and those in the class in Year 2 extend this knowledge as they begin to follow patterns and rhythms suggested by their teacher.

142 Teachers plan sufficient opportunities for pupils to sing and to perform in concerts and carol services. Pupils say they enjoy these times and talk proudly about the parts they play and the songs they sing. Some of the teachers have musical talents, and put these to good use to support pupils in lessons or accompany them in assemblies or hymn practice. This was evident in a lesson where the subject co-ordinator played piano to accompany pupils singing. Pupils responded well to the music and because the teacher could pause and go back over lines that they had not got right, by the end of the lesson, pupils' singing had improved significantly.

143 A good feature of the teaching is that the activities teachers plan help pupils appreciate a wide range of musical styles. In lessons in Year 1, pupils listen to classical music from famous composers, such as Bach and Vivaldi and are encouraged to give their opinions about which music they best enjoy. This is one of the reasons why older pupils were able to say that the music they had listened to in their topic about Jamaica is called reggae and give their opinion that it is better than opera or classical music.

144 Another good feature of the teaching of older pupils is that they get the chance to use computers to make music. Pupils are very keen to do this and know that they can combine different instruments and elements of music to create their own compositions.

145 The subject is managed more successfully than it was at the time of the previous inspection, when there was no one to lead the way. Since then, the co-ordinator has worked hard to provide teachers with the guidelines they need to teach the subject more effectively. This has paid dividends in the way that standards in composing music are higher than they were. The co-ordinator is right to consider that the next steps are to develop procedures for assessing and recording what pupils can do and monitor the quality of teaching. This puts the school in a sound position to be able to make the changes necessary to ensure that pupils are learning as well as they should and that teaching continues to improve.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

146 Throughout the school, standards in gymnastics are higher than they were at the time of the previous inspection. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in games, dance, swimming and outdoor activities remain typical of seven and 11-year-olds. While boys and girls do equally well at swimming, games and outdoor activities, girls are more graceful at gymnastics and dance.

147 Standards in gymnastics have improved because teaching is better. Teachers have had training, and advice from the local education authority advisory service, and they are now far more confident at teaching gymnastics. This was evident in a lesson for pupils in the class in Year 2. Pupils could see how the moves should look because the teacher demonstrated each one. Consequently, pupils were able to refine and improve their own performance so that by the end of the lesson their balances were graceful and controlled.

148 The school meets requirements to teach pupils in junior classes to swim. Pupils in classes

from Year 3 to Year 6 are taught at a nearby pool, where they are given tuition from trained swimming instructors. Pupils attend lessons until they can swim the recommended distance of 25 metres but many pupils can swim much further than this by the time they leave the school.

149 A good feature of the teaching of physical education is that older pupils get the chance to experience adventurous outdoor activities, such as canoeing and climbing. This takes place during the annual visit to an activity centre in the Lake District. Because pupils stay for several days, the visit is an important aspect of how the school promotes pupils' social and personal development. Younger pupils say they look forward to this trip and are keen to talk about assault courses, night walks and maybe camping out.

150 Teachers have had training through their involvement in the *Top Sports* project and the teaching of games is satisfactory. They make sure that lessons build on what pupils can already do, for example, pupils learn to throw, catch and bat balls in Years 1 and 2 and then put these skills into practice in junior classes, when they play football, basketball and netball. Pupils have some opportunities to improve their skills in after school sports activities and when school teams play in tournaments with other local schools. However, parents are right to think that there are not many after-school sports activities and that they are mostly aimed at older boys.

151 Since the previous inspection, there have been significant improvements to the school's provision for physical education and the way it is managed and led. The co-ordinator has worked extremely hard to tackle the issues identified in the previous report and teachers now have detailed guidelines to help them plan work. The success of this is evident in improved planning and clear progression in how pupils learn skills. The next steps are to devise procedures for assessing and recording what pupils can do and to begin to monitor the quality of teaching. Without monitoring the co-ordinator is unable to spot issues such as the fact that some teachers do not set a good enough example to pupils by wearing appropriate shoes when in the hall.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

152 Standards in religious education are not as high as they were at the time of the previous inspection and do not fully meet those prescribed by the locally agreed syllabus for seven and 11-year-olds. This is because pupils, throughout the school, do not have a wide enough knowledge of the religions they study. In contrast to this they have a well-developed sense of fairness, respect and tolerance and, by the time they leave the school pupils understand that people from all religions express their beliefs through art.

153 The co-ordinator has worked hard to move the school forward over the last four years. The most significant improvement is that there is now a coherent and detailed scheme of work, which supports the broad objectives of the locally agreed syllabus. This has had the effect of ensuring that teachers no longer cover the same work in different years and that there is progression in what is taught from one year to the next. Despite these improvements, teaching is not as effective as it should be and pupils do not make the progress expected in gaining knowledge about the religions they study. For example, pupils in Year 2 were unsure of the religious significance of Easter and those in Year 6 did not know that Jewish people worship in a synagogue.

154 A strength of teaching in religious education is the good use made of discussions where pupils consider social, moral and religious issues. For example, in a good lesson in Year 5, pupils listened to a parable from the Bible and a Russian folk tale that both had the same moral message, then thought about who had helped them and who they had given help to in the last two days. This approach to teaching is working well and is a significant factor in pupils' high levels of maturity.

155 Teachers are confident and enthusiastic about the subject and have a sound knowledge about

the religions they teach. Their teaching about Christianity and the time devoted to answering pupils' questions ensures that by the time they leave the school, pupils know many stories from the Bible and can relate them to the moral teaching of Jesus. This was evident in a lesson in Year 4 when pupils were quick to grasp Christian beliefs about the family extending to all people.

156 Teachers make effective use of resources and provide informative introductions to lessons to gain pupils' interest in the subject. This happened in a lesson about Sikhism, when pupils in Year 6 looked at pictures of the first Guru and of Sikhs worshipping in a Gurdwara. However, teachers are not planning sufficient real-life experiences to help pupils gain an understanding of the religions they study. An illustration of this is that pupils in Year 2 visited a nearby church and followed up their visit by drawing and writing about what they had seen. In discussions they talked enthusiastically about what they had seen and used the words font and altar, which showed how effective the visit had been in giving them a real experience of the religion. In contrast, older pupils are unable to explain the significance of religious concepts and symbolism in faiths such as Judaism and Hinduism.

157 These gaps in provision have not been discovered because the co-ordinator has not had the chance to monitor teaching. Similarly, gaps in pupils' knowledge have not been picked up as a result of the school's policy of not writing about religious education and because there is no system for assessing and recording what pupils know. The co-ordinator recognises that things are unlikely to improve until these weaknesses are remedied and is confident that with some modifications to the way the subject is taught and managed the school should be able to improve standards.