

INSPECTION REPORT

RECTORY FARM LOWER SCHOOL

Northampton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121940

Headteacher: Mrs M Gordon

Reporting inspector: Mrs D Bell
16413

Dates of inspection: 26 – 29 March 2001

Inspection number: 189572

Full inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Olden Road Rectory Farm Northampton
Postcode:	NN3 5DD
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Adam Simmonds
Date of previous inspection:	July 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16413	Mrs D Bell	Registered inspector	Art and Design Music Special Educational Needs Equality of opportunity English as an additional language	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?
19431	Mr J Holmes	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22761	Mrs D New	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Geography History Physical education Religious education	
3240	Mr D Wilkinson	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Information and communications technology	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Rectory Farm Lower School is an average sized school with 205 pupils on roll, 100 girls and 105 boys. Its children are admitted to the reception class in the September prior to their fifth birthday and transfer to a middle school of their choice at the end of Year 4 when they are 9 years of age. The children come from the very socially mixed area surrounding the school and for the majority, their attainment on entry, measured by a nationally approved test, is below that expected for their age. The pupils are taught in a mixture of single and mixed age classes. A higher proportion of pupils (30.7%) is on the register for special educational needs (SEN) than is found nationally and in some year groups is considerably above this. The proportion of pupils with statements of SEN is broadly average. The proportion of pupils known to qualify for free school meals (22.4%) is also above that found in most schools. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is higher than is found in most schools. The percentage for whom English is an additional language (2.4%) is a bit higher than most schools and 3 pupils are at an early stage of language acquisition. There has been a significant turnover of staff and governors since the last inspection and significant changes in the senior management team that have resulted in a period of great instability for the school. Considerable improvements to the accommodation resulted in the opening of three new classrooms in January 2001. The school has clearly stated aims namely: to improve teaching and learning in information and communications technology, music and science; to improve and make better use of the library; to improve attainment in writing and raise the pupils' performance in the National Curriculum tests for 7-year-olds; and to recruit and retain the requisite number of governors.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

School effectiveness is satisfactory. The headteacher, governors and the two key stage co-ordinators have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have worked well as a team and have satisfactorily led the school through a period of considerable instability. Because of good teaching, the attainment of pupils aged 7 has continued to improve. Between the ages of 4 and 7, pupils display good attitudes to school and to learning. However, in two of the three classes in the 7 to 9 age range, behaviour and attitudes have declined, affected by the changes in staff that these classes have experienced. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall in the 7 to 9 age range, although in the Year 4 class, it is consistently good and has a very positive impact on pupils' learning in the year before they leave the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Good teaching in the 5 to 7 age range and in Year 4 keeps pupils motivated, on task and willing to learn.
- The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been effectively implemented and the co-ordinators evaluate well the teaching and learning in these two areas.
- The new governors have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are committed to providing stability and raising standards in all areas of school life.

What could be improved

- In Years 3 and 4, the pupils' below average attainment in mathematics and their well below average attainment in information and communications technology.
- The unsatisfactory teaching in two of the three classes in the 7 to 9 age group.
- Time slippage at key points throughout the school day.
- The unsatisfactory assessment procedures in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- The ineffective procedures for improving attendance.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in July 1996. Since then improvement overall has been satisfactory. However, significant changes in the school's staffing, in the governing body, and staff absence due to illness have resulted in some of the improvements having declined again. The lack of induction procedures for new staff and insufficiently effective monitoring of teaching and learning have contributed to this decline. The written procedures for managing and improving the pupils' behaviour, for example, are not being well enough implemented by all staff. The planned

improvements in information and communications technology have not taken place in Years 3 and 4 because of significant staff changes and the lack of continuity in teaching in 2 of the 3 classes. Improvement has been satisfactory in all other subjects. Assessment procedures are much improved in English and mathematics. The information gained from them is being used effectively to set targets for improvement in English and it is beginning to be used effectively in mathematics to improve the pupils' rates of learning. The roles of the senior managers have been expanded to include two key stage co-ordinators, who are working hard and effectively in their new roles. A new deputy headteacher took up post in January 2001 and has yet to make her impact on the school.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	C	B	C	B
Writing	C	B	C	B
Mathematics	C	D	C	B

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

The majority of pupils enter Year 1 having met the Early Learning Goals for pupils aged five. The standards seen in the work of pupils currently in Year 2 reflect the same pattern as the National Curriculum test results in 2000 and the majority of the pupils **are working at the nationally expected levels for their age**. The school's performance in reading, writing and mathematics over the last three years matches the national trend for pupils aged 5 to 7. The test results are above those found in similar schools. In science, the teacher assessments for 2000 show that the school's performance matched the national average. Although there is no statutory requirement to do so, the school sets itself challenging targets. In 2000, it just missed its target for reading, matched its target for writing and exceeded its target for mathematics. The majority of pupils in the 5 to 7 age range achieve satisfactorily in geography, history and physical education. Their achievement is good in all other subjects, including English, mathematics and science. Pupils aged 7 reach the levels expected nationally for their age in all subjects and in the 5 to 7 age group, standards are as high as they can be at the present time.

The majority of pupils in Year 4 are working at the expected levels for their age in English, science, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education. Their attainment is below the nationally expected level in mathematics and well below the nationally expected level in information and communications technology (ICT). Insufficient evidence was available to inspectors to make a secure judgement on pupils' attainment or achievement in music in the 7 to 9 age group. The majority of pupils achieve well in English, science, art and design, and design and technology. Their achievement is satisfactory in all other subjects where a secure judgement could be made, with the exception of ICT, where it is unsatisfactory. For a significant minority of Year 4 pupils and for all of the pupils in Year 3, their achievement is not as good as it could be because of their unsatisfactory behaviour and their teachers' unsatisfactory management of it. There is a much higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in Year 3 (54%) and Year 4 (45%) than there is in the rest of the school. Pupils with SEN and those for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress because of the good levels of support they receive, mostly away from the classroom.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory: pupils enjoy coming to school. They look after the school building and the many good displays around it.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Unsatisfactory: although no untoward behaviour was observed at breaks and lunchtimes, too many pupils, particularly in the Year 3 class and the mixed Year 3 and 4 class are disrespectful to their teachers, do not listen to them or to each other, talk over others and are not prepared to wait their turn to speak or to receive attention. There have been no exclusions in the last school year.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory: pupils willingly take responsibility when asked, but are not provided with sufficient opportunities to do so. Relationships are satisfactory.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory: it is below the national average and the level of unauthorised absence is above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Inspectors make judgement 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.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 93% of lessons. It is very good in 16% of lessons, good in 37% and satisfactory in 40%. Teaching is unsatisfactory in 7% of lessons. The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory overall, although in both subjects, it is good in the 5 to 7 age range and in the Year 4 class. In the remaining two classes, English teaching is satisfactory but mathematics teaching is unsatisfactory. In good and very good lessons, the teachers' good planning ensures that all pupils are given appropriately challenging work through activities that keep them interested, motivated and working hard. Because the pupils' behaviour is managed consistently well and the teachers always ensure that the pupils listen attentively to instructions, the pupils are secure in what they have to do and their learning proceeds apace. Where the teaching is unsatisfactory, behaviour is not well managed. At worst, the pupils are rude and disrespectful to each other and to the teacher and at best, they talk over each other and do not pay attention to what they are being told to do. In addition, activities are not sufficiently well planned to engage the pupils' interest for long. They are not always pitched at the appropriate level and leave some pupils confused during group work sessions when they are expected to work on their own. Pupils' literacy skills are appropriately reinforced in other subjects but insufficient attention is given to developing numeracy skills across the curriculum. Teachers plan adequately to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and those for whom English is an additional language. However, SEN pupils are mostly taught away from the classroom and while this is generally effective for the middle sessions of the literacy and numeracy lessons, it means that they are not present to learn from others during the final whole class sessions in these two subjects when the teachers discuss and evaluate pupils' work with them.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. Although statutory requirements are met, all areas of information and communications technology are not sufficiently well provided for. There is too much time slippage at key points during the school day and there is no overall curriculum plan to assist the monitoring of breadth and balance in the curriculum. There is an unsatisfactory range of activities outside of the school day, especially in the area of competitive sport.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The good levels of support that these pupils receive help them to make satisfactory progress overall but because they are almost always withdrawn from lessons for additional support, they do miss out on important aspects of other subjects. The effect of the constant withdrawal is not monitored.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. These pupils are well integrated into all aspects of school life and make sound progress both in learning English and in other subjects.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. However, the sound provision for moral and social development is not consistently well implemented throughout the school and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and show initiative for themselves.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. However, not enough is done to improve attendance. In English and mathematics, the pupils' work is regularly and effectively assessed and the information used to inform planning. In other subjects, procedures are very variable, both in terms of the procedures themselves and their use to inform overall curricular planning. There are no assessment procedures in information and communications technology.

The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. However, only very few parents are involved in the school's work and despite the many efforts that the school makes, parental impact on the work of the school is minimal.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall despite the many changes in the last four years. The key stage co-ordinators effectively support the headteacher in managing the school. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has yet to make her mark. Subject co-ordinators are not yet fully involved in monitoring all aspects of their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory; the governing body is very new and there is not yet a full complement of governors. However, governors have a good grasp of strengths and weaknesses and are now effectively involved in, for example, school development planning but not yet in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. All statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory overall because the monitoring of teaching does not lead to effective action for improvement, for example, by helping new staff to manage pupils' behaviour effectively. This impedes pupils' learning.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory; money follows the school's priorities and the school ensures it gains best value from all of its spending.

There is a sufficient number of appropriately qualified and experienced teachers in the school and they are effectively assisted by a high number of support staff. All are satisfactorily deployed. The adequate accommodation is well maintained and well used and pupils in the 7 to 9 age range are now benefiting from their new classrooms, which replaced dilapidated demountable classrooms in January of this year. Learning resources are satisfactory, well organised, easily accessible and used appropriately to support learning. However, insufficient use is made of new technology resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children like school • children make good progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • behaviour • the amount of homework • information about children's progress; • comfortable approaching the school; • expects children to work hard and achieve well; • works closely with parents; • leadership and management; • the school helping children to become more mature; • activities outside of lessons

There was a very small response to the parents' questionnaire (10.24%) therefore views cannot be taken as wholly representative of all parents. Only 3 parents attended the parents' meeting prior to the inspection. They, and the parents spoken to during the inspection were very positive about the school and what it does for their children. The majority did not share the negative views expressed in the table above. The inspection team found that:

- Improvement is needed in behaviour.
- The amount and type of homework is satisfactory and contributes to pupils' progress.
- Parents receive satisfactory information about their children's progress although the annual reports need to report progress better in all subjects and make clear to parents what their children need to do to improve.
- The wider group of parents consulted during the inspection indicated that they found no problem approaching the school.
- The school does expect pupils to work hard and achieve well and this is evident in the work of pupils aged 4 to 7 and also in the work of pupils in the Year 4 class.
- Leadership and management are sound and have satisfactorily brought the school through a period of significant instability.
- There is further scope for enabling pupils to become more mature and responsible as they grow older but currently the unsatisfactory behaviour, well managed in most classes, is a key factor in determining how much and when.
- The range of activities outside of lessons is unsatisfactory because there are no extra-curricular sporting activities or participation in competitive sports, although some are due to start in the summer term.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The performance of pupils aged 7 in the reading, writing and mathematics National Curriculum tests matched the national average and was above the average found in similar schools. The teacher assessments showed that the pupils' attainment in science also matched the national average but was well above the average for similar schools. Since the last inspection, the results have broadly followed the rising national trend. **The majority of pupils currently in Year 2 are working at the nationally expected levels for their age in English, mathematics and science and their achievement is good in all three subjects.** A large proportion of pupils in Year 3 (54%) and Year 4 (45%) are on the register for special educational needs. **The majority of pupils currently in Year 4 are working at the nationally expected levels for their age in English and in science, and they are achieving well. However, their work is below the nationally expected levels for their age in mathematics because of their insecure understanding and use of number.**
2. Achievement in English is good. By the time the pupils leave the school, the majority have developed satisfactory speaking and listening skills. They listen attentively to their teacher and to each other and contribute effectively to class discussions. Most offer sensible suggestions and opinions as they talk about different texts and about their own and each other's work. Pupils achieve well in reading. They readily participate in the different reading activities presented to them and follow their teachers' good examples to read with fluency and expression. They have a sound understanding of how punctuation and differences in print are used to enhance meaning. By the time they leave the school, they have a secure understanding of the features of both fiction and non-fiction texts. Higher attaining pupils in Year 4 accurately select relevant phrases from the text to develop further their knowledge of characters or to illustrate information they are trying to put across. Pupils enjoy reading stories. They show good recall of the main plot and an understanding of the different characters and their roles. The pupils achieve well in writing. By the age of 9, the majority of pupils confidently check and correct their own work, though some still require considerable help from the teacher to do so. Pupils use their literacy skills well in other subjects, applying their sound knowledge of punctuation, sentence construction and spelling in, for example, their work in religious education and history, and in recording their investigative work in science. Although handwriting is taught well from the pupils' entry to the school, some have difficulty using a cursive style outside of handwriting sessions and are not consistently encouraged to do so. Pupils use their word processing skills satisfactorily to enhance and consolidate their English work.
3. In mathematics, achievement is satisfactory overall, although in the Year 3 and mixed Year 3/4 classes, it is not as good as it could be because of the unsatisfactory teaching in those two classes. Pupils in the Year 4 class are working on the appropriate area of numeracy designed for their age but their responses to questions are slow and they are insecure in their understanding of basic number. The good teaching in that class is helping them gradually to overcome this. The pupils achieve well because their activities are well prepared and imaginative resources are used effectively to stimulate their interest, for example, diagrammatic representations of fractions to help pupils work out for themselves a series of fractions that add up to one. The large volume of work in the Year 4 class's books shows that the pupils cover an appropriate range of work across all areas of mathematics. For example, they collect their own data on sandwich preferences and construct their own pictograms to show these. They tell and record time accurately in both digital and analogue form, and their work on shape, space and measure is appropriate for their age.
4. Pupils' achievement in science is good throughout the school. The pupils have a good knowledge of scientific ideas and facts, gained from listening to their teachers and experimenting for themselves. However, pupils are often required to record their work on simple worksheets that do not extend the higher attainers sufficiently well and limit their ability to show the greater depth of knowledge and understanding they possess. There are also too few opportunities for pupils to find information from books or on the computer to broaden their scientific knowledge and understanding. Pupils successfully acquire and confidently use a good range of correct scientific vocabulary as they move through the school. Pupils in Year 4, for example, confidently use words such as 'nutrients' when describing factors that affect the growth of a plant and explain appropriately what they mean. The younger pupils carry out simple test

procedures when, for example, they investigate the effect on their hearing when one ear is covered by a protector. This early work is developed into more sophisticated 'fair testing', seen when pupils in Year 4 described what happened when they tested the effect of withholding water from a plant. By the time they leave the school, the pupils have a sound understanding of 'fair testing'.

5. Children enter the reception classes with a wide range of attainment. However, for the majority, their attainment was below that expected for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy and personal and social development. Strong emphasis is placed on developing these areas and also the children's mathematical skills and as a result, the children achieve well. By the end of their reception year, the majority reach the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals in all six areas of learning.
6. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their individual learning targets. When working in the classroom, learning support assistants help pupils to be fully involved in whole class discussions. This successfully promotes the pupils' self-esteem and enables them to learn and achieve appropriately. When pupils are withdrawn from literacy lessons for specific language development, the activities they undertake are effectively linked to class work. Learning support assistants are well briefed by the class teachers and, working with small groups, manage well the pupils with behaviour difficulties. The practice of not returning to class for the final whole class session, however, means that the pupils lose the opportunity to learn from each other as work is being discussed and evaluated. Pupils are also taken out of lessons in other subjects for extra reading and for literacy support. The school does not keep a sufficient check on this to ensure that the pupils are not missing out on important aspects of these other subjects. The few pupils for whom English is an additional language are appropriately supported. They make good progress in their learning of the English language and sound progress overall. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls in the National Curriculum tests and assessments and none were noted in school.
7. Although not statutorily required to do so, the school sets targets for reading, writing and mathematics for pupils aged 7. Last year, it just missed its reading target, met its writing target and exceeded the target it set for mathematics. There are no statutory tests for pupils aged 9 but the school does set challenging targets in reading, writing, spelling and mathematics for them to reach in the optional tests for that age group. None of the targets were reached in 2000. Realistically challenging targets have been set for the pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 4. These take account of the large number and range of special educational needs in Year 4. In English and mathematics, the year group targets are supplemented by targets for the different groups of pupils in each class but these do not yet extend to targets for individual pupils, based on the assessment and marking of their work. The school has a high level of support staff, whom teachers are using effectively to help the pupils reach the targets set, especially in English.
8. In information and communications technology (ICT), the pupils' attainment matches the national expectation at the age of 7 and their achievement is good. However, pupils in Year 4 are working well below the nationally expected levels in this subject and achievement between the ages of 7 and 9 is unsatisfactory. There has been insufficient improvement in this subject since the previous inspection due to staff instability and lack of expertise, and the unreliability of some hardware. While some appropriate work was seen in English, art and design and design and technology, pupils do not use their ICT skills frequently enough across all subjects because they are not encouraged to do so and such work is not an integral part of the teachers' planning. Attainment is sound in religious education, art and design, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on attainment or achievement in music by the age of 9, although attainment at the age of 7 is satisfactory. The majority of pupils achieve well in art and design, and design and technology, and satisfactorily in geography, history, physical education and religious education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. The majority of pupils have a satisfactory attitude towards school and they enjoy coming. Sound induction procedures, which include home visits prior to entry and close liaison with parents and carers while they are in the reception classes, enable children under five to settle quickly into school routines. They quickly learn to listen, to take turns and to share equipment and help each other.
10. The majority of pupils throughout the school have a satisfactory attitude to learning. However, in some lessons, the poor listening skills of a small but significant minority of pupils impede the learning of all

pupils because these pupils make inordinate demands on their teachers. Where such behaviour is managed well, the disruption to learning is minimised. In the Year 3 and mixed Year 3/4 classes this is not always the case. In one religious education lesson in the Year 3 class, for example, the pupils were very rude and disrespectful to their teacher and severely disrupted the lesson. Pupils' behaviour is too often unsatisfactory in class. The pupils display poor levels of self-discipline and when they are not sufficiently well managed, or the activities they are presented with are not sufficiently interesting or appropriately challenging, this leads to inappropriate behaviour and disruption to learning. The school's sound procedures for managing behaviour are not being sufficiently well implemented. However, no oppressive behaviour was observed and the pupils are confident that if it did occur, it would be dealt with appropriately. There have been no exclusions in the past year.

11. The pupils' personal development is satisfactory as are relationships throughout the school. Up to Year 2 and in Year 4, the trust and respect between staff and children are good. The pupils willingly take on minor responsibilities such as helping in class by being 'monitors' but there are few opportunities for them to take on more major responsibilities or to show initiative. The majority of pupils, and especially those in Year 4, communicate easily with adults, showing appropriate levels of confidence and maturity.
12. Attendance is below the national average and is therefore unsatisfactory. This represents a decline since the previous inspection and reflects the fact that, according to the school, attendance is recorded much more meticulously now than it was then. The level of unauthorised absence is above the national average because parents do not always notify the school of the reason for their child's absence. Punctuality is satisfactory but lessons do not always start promptly at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is very good in 16 per cent of lessons; good in 37 per cent; satisfactory in 40 per cent and unsatisfactory in the remaining 7 per cent.
14. The quality of teaching is good in 22 per cent of lessons in the Foundation Stage. It is satisfactory in the remainder. The teachers plan effectively together and all staff know, understand and interact well with the children. This enables the children to feel secure and they respond well to the individual attention they receive at regular times throughout the day. Occasionally, however, the supporting activities do not provide sufficient challenge for all pupils, as in mathematics where it was clear that higher attaining pupils need to do more than count to and from 10. Work is regularly marked but the information gained is not always used effectively when planning further work. Both teachers are new and one is a temporary appointment. Nevertheless they have worked hard and have successfully improved the children's personal and social skills by teaching them to share and take turns and to listen attentively to each other and to the adults who work with them. The very experienced nursery nurse provides high quality assistance for the teachers and creates a good link with Year 1, preparing the children well for their move into that year group.
15. In the 5 to 7 age range, teaching is very good in 33 per cent of lessons, good in a further 45 per cent and satisfactory in the remaining 22 per cent. In this age group, very good teaching was seen in English, science, design and technology, music and religious education. A key feature in the very good teaching is the range of carefully planned, interesting activities that build on the pupils' prior learning and take them progressively through the lesson with harder and harder work to do. This motivates the pupils. They concentrate hard, listen carefully and as a result, improve their learning. This was particularly evident in a very good religious education lesson in the Year 1 class, where the teacher's very effective use of role play led pupils to a much deeper understanding of the events leading up to the death of Jesus as they explored the meaning of the Easter story for Christians. The teachers make very good use of the learning support assistants and other adults to help pupils learn well. In a very good design and technology lesson, for example, the very effective organisation of their work ensured that all pupils received some individual attention and could see how well they were doing and what they needed to do to improve in relation to their original designs and ideas. Teachers in this age group manage very effectively the pupils' behaviour, some of which is very challenging. The teachers wait for all pupils to listen and pay attention, insist that they put their hands up to answer questions and keep them working hard on activities that are short enough to maintain motivation but long enough to promote good rates of learning. For example, in two music lessons, very effective opening activities such as passing a tambourine silently around a circle, focused the pupils' minds immediately on their tasks and avoided the uncontrolled playing of musical instruments. This was followed by passing a beanbag around a circle in time to music, as a refreshing alternative to clapping

hands. Both activities resulted in the pupils listening well and being able to participate fully in composing the sound effects to accompany their musical story as they followed a graphic score.

16. Teaching is very good in 6 per cent of lessons in the 7 to 9 age range. It is good in 38 per cent; satisfactory in 37 per cent but unsatisfactory in the remaining 19 per cent, representing two mathematics and one religious education in this age group. In the Year 4 class, teaching is predominantly good and occasionally very good. In a religious education lesson, for example, the pupils were encouraged, through very effective, carefully constructed questioning, to think carefully and empathise with the way Mary must have felt to see Jesus on the cross. The very good range of strategies used in this lesson, for example, short discussions with a partner prior to presenting thoughts to the class, gave the pupils time to develop their own ideas and to value those put forward by others. The main feature in the unsatisfactory teaching, which occurs in the Year 3 and mixed Year 3/4 classes, is the teachers' ineffective management of the challenging behaviour of a significant minority of pupils. This behaviour severely disrupts learning for the whole class.
17. The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory overall, although in both subjects, it is good in the 5 to 7 age range and in the Year 4 class. In the remaining two classes, English teaching is satisfactory but mathematics teaching is unsatisfactory. Overall, the teachers' good understanding of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy ensures that pupils are given appropriate work to do that is relevant to their ages. In mathematics, however, the work is not always as effectively planned to meet the needs of all levels of prior attainment. This causes disruption to learning as pupils become confused and make high demands on the teacher's time because they are not sure of what they are doing during group work sessions. This was seen in a mathematics lesson on fractions in the mixed Year 3/4 class, where teaching was unsatisfactory both for this reason and because the pupils' behaviour was not well managed. In the Year 3 class, the planned activity did not sustain the pupils' interest and even when the teacher tried unsuccessfully to address the whole class to bring them back onto task, a significant number of pupils continued to talk, sharpen pencils and bang chairs. Teachers are careful to reinforce literacy skills in other lessons, for example, in religious education and history but less attention is paid to the development of numeracy skills throughout the curriculum.
18. Throughout the school, an appropriate amount and range of homework is regularly set and helps to consolidate the pupils' work in class. Pupils' work is regularly assessed and marked but the teachers do not use the information gained from this as effectively as they could, to plan further work.
19. Teachers provide satisfactory support for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) through carefully targeted group or individual teaching and the effective use of the learning support assistants. All teachers meet with the special educational needs co-ordinator to ensure that appropriate targets are set in the pupils' individual education plans (IEPs). Currently most of the IEPs contain appropriate targets for literacy. Few targets are set to improve numeracy or pupils' behaviour. These are areas in which further development is needed. Appropriate support is also given to the few pupils for whom English is an additional language. The input of the 'Flexible Learning Service' ensures that the teachers understand the stages in developing English and appropriate records are kept of the children's good progress in learning English.

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

20. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage adequately covers all six areas of learning and prepares pupils appropriately for their work in Year 1. Appropriately strong emphasis is given to developing the children's skills of communication, language and literacy, and to their personal, social and emotional development, the areas found to be particularly weak when they start school. Good attention is also given to their mathematical development.
21. In the rest of the school, the curriculum, in its individual subjects, meets statutory requirements. While there is no overall curriculum plan to assist the monitoring of breadth and balance, this is assured in the teachers' medium term planning and their use of the nationally recommended schemes of work. In information and communications technology (ICT), however, although planned for, not all areas of the National Curriculum programme of study are given enough attention for the pupils to make adequate progress. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are appropriately established. The National Literacy Strategy has had a positive impact on the pupils' attainment and achievement in English but the full effect of the National Numeracy Strategy on the pupils' learning and attainment is still to be seen. There are policies and schemes of work for all subjects but some, such as those for science and for geography, still need updating to take

full account of the most recent National Curriculum. Geography and history are taught in alternate blocks of time but there is currently no way of checking that pupils develop their skills in these subjects in a systematic and progressive manner. In the 7 to 9 age range, art and design and design and technology are similarly taught in alternate blocks of time. Work in these two subjects is much further advanced in terms of ensuring pupils' continuous learning throughout the school. In the 5 to 7 age range, the pupils benefit from a creative afternoon in which art and design and design and technology are effectively linked, while ensuring that the relevant skills are taught in each. The good planning for religious education takes due account of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

22. While the amount of time allocated to each subject falls within the ranges found nationally, there is too much time slippage at key points during the school day. Some teachers allow pupils to drift in first thing in the morning and after lunch and do not start lessons as promptly as they could after break. Registration sessions are sometimes too long. Lessons occasionally finish too early before lunch and at the end of the afternoon. In one mathematics session, for example, work ceased after 45 minutes because, the teacher explained, the school followed the National Numeracy Strategy recommendation to have a 45 minute mathematics session each day. The remaining time in the lesson was used as story time. However, there is no whole school policy for the use of this time and teachers use it in different ways from day to day and week to week. This is an ineffective use of valuable learning time in the morning.
23. There is a sound policy for equality of opportunity (EO) that places appropriate emphasis on the value of each individual in the school. This is also successfully fostered through an appropriately planned programme of personal, social and health education, which incorporates sex education and teaching pupils about the use and misuse of drugs.
24. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is sound and supports the learning targets identified in the pupils' individual education plans (IEPs). The targets, most of which are for literacy or behaviour, are clear, measurable and manageable, and show the small steps in learning required for the pupils to make progress. There are very few pupils with numeracy targets although it is clear that some pupils struggle with number. Appropriate procedures are in place for identifying SEN. All staff are involved in the process and parents are informed at the earliest stage, first verbally by the class teacher and then, at Stage 2, by a letter inviting them into school to discuss their child's IEP with the teacher. All statements and reviews are clearly documented and up to date. The recommendations of the nationally accepted Code of Practice are fully covered and statutory requirements are met. Learning support assistants give good support to pupils during the whole class sessions at the beginning of the literacy hour. However, most of the provision for SEN takes place away from the classroom and the pupils do not return for the final whole class session. They therefore miss out on a valuable opportunity to learn from other pupils when work is being discussed and evaluated. The practice of withdrawing pupils from lessons other than literacy, for literacy support, is not sufficiently well monitored to ensure that the pupils do not miss out on other subjects or important aspects of learning within them. Information and communications technology is not used effectively to support pupils with SEN.
25. Provision is satisfactory for those pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) and enables them successfully to participate in all subjects and school activities. These pupils, too, have individual education plans with targets to help them improve their language skills and the targets are regularly reviewed with the EAL support teacher.
26. There are few activities for pupils outside of the normal school day. At present the school does not participate in competitive sporting activities with other schools, although rounders and tennis are scheduled to start in the summer term. Its links with the wider community are satisfactory. Good links with the Voluntary Reading Helpers group helps to improve the pupils' achievement in reading. The school supports various charitable organisations and this gives pupils a sound understanding of the need to care for others as well as for themselves. There are few visitors to the school to enhance the curriculum although the school makes good use of visiting theatre groups to bring history alive for the pupils. There are satisfactory links with other schools in the area, especially those to which the children transfer at the end of Year 4.
27. Appropriate provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. A strong policy statement provides well for a coherent approach to all four areas. However, in practice, as at the last inspection, the school is less successful in providing for moral and social development than for spiritual and cultural development.

28. Spiritual development is effectively fostered through religious education and in the daily acts of collective worship, all of which meet statutory requirements. As the whole school prepares for the Christian festival of Easter, spirituality is developed in all year groups at a level appropriate to the pupils' levels of understanding, through the exploration of the wonder of new life and growth, of why Jesus was a special person and of the thoughts and feelings of the different people involved in the Easter story and in particular, in the crucifixion. Pupils are successfully encouraged to explore their own thoughts and feelings and arrive at their own conclusions with regard to different religious beliefs, mostly in an atmosphere of mutual respect. For example, in one class assembly, with pupils in Year 3, the teacher very effectively created a sense of awe and wonder through the very expressive use of her voice. The pupils gasps and quiet comments showed that they felt the happiness in the story and the sadness at the death of a kitten. Some offered their experience of the death of a pet and the teacher sensitively explored with them how they felt when it happened before equally sensitively bringing them back to the theme of hope of new life in the Easter story. Subjects such as art and design and music also make good contributions to the pupils' spiritual development as they explore the works of famous artists and composers and learn for themselves how to use similar techniques to express their thoughts and feelings. In some assemblies, however, the development of spirituality is sometimes spoilt by the inattentiveness of a small number of pupils who cause disruption for the teacher leading the assembly.
29. The provision for moral development is satisfactory. The pupils are taught right from wrong and a strong moral code is evident in the school's work. However, a significant minority do not have a sufficiently well developed understanding of the effect of their actions on others. Pupils are expected to demonstrate respect for each other, for their teachers, and for other people's points of view, and they are encouraged to express their own views. All staff present positive role models for the pupils and try hard to implement the school's clear procedures about dealing positively with all forms of behaviour. This is a significant improvement on what was reported at the time of the last inspection. In most classes it works and the teachers manage the pupils well. There are inconsistencies in the implementation of the procedures in two of the three classes in the 7 to 9 age range, where both teachers are new to the school, and this adversely affects the pupils' learning.
30. The provision for social development is satisfactory. Again, in most classes, the pupils are successfully encouraged to take turns when speaking and to share the learning resources available to them. Relationships are sound, the majority of pupils accepting the school and class rules and working together to help each other. A sense of their place in the wider community is appropriately fostered through the distribution of harvest gifts, carol singing in a local shopping centre, in a Christmas concert for senior citizens and in fundraising for a range of charitable organisations, including one to help families in Bosnia. Few opportunities are afforded to pupils to take responsibility or to show initiative in the daily life of the school, although simple monitoring duties are willingly carried out in classrooms.
31. The school continues to teach pupils to appreciate the richness and diversity of their own and other cultures. Art and design and religious education make particularly strong contributions to this provision as pupils study the work of famous artists and create their own, and as they learn about the major world religions and celebrate religious festivals from around the world. It sponsors a child in India and the pupils have received letters from the boy and from the sponsoring organisation. Through this, and through the study of Africa in geography, and of African art, the pupils gain awareness of how people live in different parts of the world and how their culture and religious beliefs affect their way of life. The pupils are appropriately prepared for life in a culturally diverse Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The working environment is safe and secure and pupils of all ages are adequately supervised at work and play. The school is clean and well maintained and it carries out all statutory safety checks on equipment. The staff know the pupils well as individuals and have satisfactory procedures for monitoring and supporting their personal development and progress. For the majority of pupils, the support they receive helps to develop their self esteem and their sound attitudes towards school and thereby impacts positively on their achievement. The school has an appropriate induction policy for children starting in the reception class, which informs parents and carers of the school's expectations and suggests a range of appropriate ways in which they can help their children. Effective child protection procedures are in place. The headteacher is the designated officer and liaises as appropriate with the relevant agencies. The head has

trained the staff in child protection procedures and the school complies with the local recommendations. The situation is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection.

33. There is a sound behaviour policy, drawn up in response to the key issue from the previous inspection. Following that inspection, all staff participated in training in positive and assertive discipline and most do now deal appropriately with some of the very challenging behaviour they face. However, there have been several staff changes in the past two years as some teachers retired and others left the school for posts elsewhere, including for promotion and several new members of staff started in the school in January 2000. Two of them have not yet developed successful strategies for dealing effectively with the adverse behaviour of the small but significant number of challenging pupils in their classes. This is adversely affecting the pupils' learning in two of the three classes in the 7 to 9 age range.
34. The school monitors attendance weekly. Parents who fail to notify the school of the reason for their child's absence are contacted but not until the analysis is done at the end of each week. This system is not tight enough or rigorous enough to improve attendance. There are not, for example, any strategies for making early contact with parents when pupils fail to arrive at school and the parents have not contacted the school to say why. The school tries to encourage pupils to attend regularly by rewarding them with, for example, good attendance certificates. However, the range of strategies to encourage good attendance are limited.
35. The children are well supervised at lunchtime in the dining hall as they eat either their own sandwiches or the sandwiches provided by the external caterers. The lack of hot meals provision means that opportunities are missed, not only to provide a choice of nutritious meals, but also to help the pupils develop their personal and social skills, including table manners, and to take responsibility by assisting others in the dining hall.
36. All statutory requirements are met with regard to the National Curriculum tests and assessments for English and mathematics. There are good overall procedures for assessing pupils' progress in mathematics and satisfactory procedures in English, design and technology, geography and history. The outcomes of assessment are used satisfactorily to plan further learning in English, mathematics and design and technology. In other subjects, including science, the procedures are either unsatisfactory or not yet fully in place, as in art and design. In information and communications technology, they are poor. Despite these weaknesses, the teachers do evaluate each week's work and most plan work for the following week based on what the pupils have previously learned. The issue lies around the big picture of assessment and its use to inform and if necessary adapt overall curricular planning to meet the needs of the school.
37. Procedures for assessing and monitoring the progress of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are sound. The targets set in the pupils' individual education plans are reviewed termly. Their work is regularly assessed and adjusted to suit their individual rates of learning. The statements for special needs are reviewed annually in accordance with statutory requirements. Support is sought from the relevant external agencies to ensure that pupils receive as much help as possible to enable them to make better progress. As well as learning support, the school has received support and guidance from the inclusion and pupil support unit and the behaviour management service to help it address the specific behavioural problems of a small number of pupils. Similarly, there are satisfactory procedures for assessing the work of the pupils for whom English is an additional language and adequate records are kept of their progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. The school's relationship with parents is satisfactory. The attendance at the parents meeting was poor with only three parents attending. The questionnaire had a low response (10.24%) with only 21 returned out of 205 sent out and in several cases, being returned from the same family regarding different children. The majority of responses indicated support for the school, that the children enjoyed school and that they were making good progress. A significant number of the responses indicated concerns about the provision of activities outside of lessons. The inspection team found that these are limited, though rounders and tennis training is due to start in the summer term. A small number of parents and volunteers help in the school and there is a small but active group, the Friends of Rectory Farm, who organise social and fundraising events. There are currently three vacancies for parent governors.
39. The information sent to parents about their children's progress is satisfactory. Monthly newsletters keep parents informed as to what is happening in the school and termly newsletters provide them with relevant

information about the topics their children will be covering each term. Parental opinion was canvassed by a questionnaire during the drawing up of the home/school agreement and the majority of parents were very supportive of the agreement. The school has worked hard to involve parents in joint parent/child and other learning initiatives run by outside agencies. However, parental response was poor and not all participants completed the course. An evening to raise awareness about the numeracy strategy was better supported. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved from the earliest stage of concern and are invited to be involved in the setting of targets to help their children improve. The induction pack for children starting school contains good information about the school and its policies plus information about the Local Education Authority. The pack also contains information on reading in the early years, on numeracy and how parents and carers can help their children at home.

40. The school provides appropriate homework and children and parents are able to access resources from the library to help with this. The school has an informative prospectus and the governors' report to parents fulfils requirements although the attendance at the annual meeting is poor.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. There have been considerable changes in the leadership and management of the school since the last inspection. The senior management team has been expanded to include the two key stage co-ordinators, both of whom are very effective in their clearly defined roles and provide very good support for the headteacher and for the staff. They have provided a large degree of stability for the school through two changes of deputy head, two periods of time when the headteacher was absent due to illness, and a high degree of staff turnover. Despite the many challenges the school has faced, leadership and management are satisfactory and the school has continued to run smoothly. This is nevertheless a less positive picture than the one reported at the last inspection. The new deputy headteacher took up her post in January 2000 and has yet to make her mark on the school and contribute effectively to its management. She is currently coming to terms with some very difficult pupils in her class. The school faces yet another period of uncertainty as it looks for a new headteacher due to the present headteacher's imminent retirement.
42. There has been a complete change of governing body since the last inspection and the school still does not have its full complement of governors. Although in place only a short time, the new chair of governors has rapidly acquired a good knowledge of the school. Both he and the chair of finance are very committed to it and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They are providing strong leadership for the new governing body as it settles into its role and exercises its responsibilities. The governors have been appropriately involved in drawing up the current school development plan. Their very clearly articulated action plan includes amongst other things, the correctly perceived need for greater stability in staffing and in the governing body and for a strategic view of the school's development so that all concerned are clear about what the school stands for and how it will move forward. The governors understand the need to have systematic procedures for gathering information about provision and assuring its quality but these are not yet in place. The special educational needs (SEN) governor is currently the only parent governor. She is very involved with the school and works with SEN pupils on a day-to-day basis. She has a good understanding of the range of special needs in the school and is clear about the differences between whether a child has learning needs when it starts school or has simply lacked pre-school experiences such as different kinds of play, access to books, or using pencils to write and draw.
43. The school satisfactorily evaluates its performance by analysing test and assessment results but it does not yet use the information gained from these exercises to inform overall curricular planning. The governors do not have an overall curriculum plan to assist them in monitoring the school's provision and although teachers work effectively from the subject schemes of work, there are few procedures in place, other than in English and mathematics, to check whether the pupils' learning is continuous as they move through the school. Effective monitoring of literacy and numeracy teaching was carried out as the national strategies were introduced. There has been some monitoring of religious education teaching this term and music is the focus for the summer term. There are plans to release curriculum co-ordinators to check on teaching and learning in their subject, as it becomes a priority in the school development plan. Co-ordinators currently review work in their own subjects by sampling pupils' work and building portfolios of moderated work. The headteacher currently does most of the monitoring of teaching and provides feedback for teachers. She sees staff planning files and their weekly evaluations. Together, the curriculum co-ordinators and the headteacher monitor the teachers' medium term planning. Satisfactory performance management procedures are in place and all statutory requirements are met. However, despite the number of staff new to

the school, there is no induction policy or identified member of staff to help new teachers settle into the ways of the school. The lack of such procedures are evident in the fact that the new teachers in the Year 3 and the mixed Year 3/4 class lack the support needed to help them deal with the difficult pupils in their classes. All staff are committed to raising standards in all areas of school life. The capacity to succeed in doing so in every class is not secure.

44. The management of special educational needs is sound. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) provides appropriate support for colleagues, parents and pupils. Pupils on the SEN register are well supported by designated support staff whose work is appropriately monitored by both the class teacher and the SENCO. The procedures for identifying needs are effective. The school makes efficient and effective use of the SEN funding it receives and adds to this considerably by providing a good number of support staff to assist both teachers and pupils. The management of the provision for English as an additional language (EAL) is also satisfactory. In the case of both SEN and EAL, the school uses appropriately the range of external help available to enable the pupils to make appropriate progress.
45. There is a sufficient number of appropriately qualified teachers to teach the National Curriculum and religious education effectively. They and the high number of support staff are adequately deployed and contribute appropriately to pupils' learning. The accommodation has improved considerably since the last inspection. New classrooms were put into use in January 2001, finally enabling the school to have some unsuitable demountable classrooms removed. All rooms are of adequate size and enable the curriculum to be taught effectively. The accommodation is attractive and well maintained. It is enhanced by good displays of pupils' work. Resources for learning are good in mathematics and in art and design, and satisfactory in all other subjects. They are well organised, easily accessible and used appropriately to support learning.
46. Sound systems are in place for planning, managing and monitoring the finances available to the school. Spending follows the school development plan's clearly stated priorities and there are satisfactory procedures for checking that money is being spent wisely. The school is very aware of its falling numbers and prudent financial planning has enabled it to maintain its level of staffing so far. The school spends its money wisely and the headteacher and governors have a satisfactory understanding of the principles of best value. Money allocated from specific grants is appropriately spent and accounted for. The school does not yet make effective use of new technology in all of its work. For example, large sections of the school development plan continue to be handwritten. Daily administrative routines are well established and the school secretary provides good support for the teachers in their work.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

1. Improve attainment in mathematics in Years 3 and 4. To do this:
 - require all teachers to give sufficient attention to the daily practice of mental skills at the start of mathematics lessons to help pupils recall number facts more quickly and accurately;
 - require all teachers to provide more opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in problem solving situations;
 - check that all teachers consistently use the outcomes of their marking to determine what individual pupils are to learn in order for them to make the best progress

(Paragraphs: 1, 3, 7, 14, 17, 22, 62-67)

2. Improve attainment in information and communications technology (ICT) in Years 3 and 4. To do this:
 - ensure that the planned training is effective in increasing the competence and expertise of all staff;
 - check that the teachers consistently plan for the use of ICT in all subjects and that they make more effective use of the computers now available in school;
 - draw up and implement effective procedures for assessing pupils' prior learning in this subject;
 - use the information gained from assessment to plan pupils' learning in the small steps required for them to make consistent progress as they move through Years 3 and 4.

(Paragraphs: 8, 21, 25, 36, 61, 65, 69, 78, 81, 83-86, 89, 96)

3. Address the unsatisfactory teaching in the 7 to 9 age range. To do this:
 - use more effectively the strengths of the best teachers in the school by providing opportunities for the two new teachers in that age group to observe and learn from their colleagues' management of the pupils' behaviour;
 - evaluate teaching and teachers' planning more rigorously to establish that activities are always well matched to the pupils' prior attainment to avoid pupils becoming restless because they find the work too hard or too easy;
 - establish and implement effective induction procedures for all staff new to the school so that new staff are better prepared to deal with the diverse range of pupils' attitudes and behaviour

(Paragraphs: 3, 16, 17, 84, 95)

4. Rigorously monitor the use of time throughout the school day with a view to ensuring that all time is used effectively for teaching and learning. To do this:
 - ensure that teachers bring pupils into class promptly to avoid time slippage in the morning, after break and after lunch;
 - carry out registration procedures quickly and efficiently especially at the start of the morning sessions;
 - ensure that teachers plan to fill all teaching and learning time and therefore avoid using fill-in activities before break, lunchtime, and towards the close of the school day;

(Paragraphs: 22, 60)

5. Following on from the sound procedures already in place for English and mathematics, draw up and implement manageable procedures for assessing pupils' work and recording their progress in all other subjects. Use the information gained to plan appropriately challenging work for all pupils and check that their learning is continuous as they move through the school.

(Paragraphs: 36, 43, 54, 74, 86, 89, 92, 96)

6. Improve the procedures for monitoring and improving attendance by:
 - checking attendance more frequently than the current weekly analysis in order to respond more quickly to emerging issues;
 - establishing a system of early contact with parents when a child is absent and the school does not know why.

(Paragraphs: 12, 34)

Key issue number 2 (ICT) is already identified in the school development plan.

In addition to the above, the governors should consider the following more minor issues in their action plan:

- more challenge for higher attaining pupils in mathematics and science (*Paras: 4, 63, 69*)
- monitoring the effect of withdrawing pupils from lessons other than literacy for literacy support (*Paras: 6, 24, 59*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	16	37	40	7	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	205
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	46

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	63

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.9
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	23	23	46

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	18	22
	Girls	20	21	21
	Total	39	39	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (89)	85 (96)	93 (89)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	22	21
	Girls	20	21	22
	Total	39	43	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (94)	93 (89)	93 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	6
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	3
White	163
Any other minority ethnic group	5

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.5
Average class size	25.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	183.75

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	383411
Total expenditure	381893
Expenditure per pupil	1736
Balance brought forward from previous year	8190
Balance carried forward to next year	9708

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 10.24%

Number of questionnaires sent out	205
Number of questionnaires returned	21

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	29	5	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	24	9	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	43	5	4	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	48	19	9	0
The teaching is good.	57	29	9	5	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	43	14	9	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	24	9	9	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	24	5	9	0
The school works closely with parents.	43	33	9	9	0
The school is well led and managed.	57	19	5	14	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	29	5	9	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	24	9	38	5

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

47. Children in the Foundation Stage enter one of the two reception classes in the September of the school year in which they are five, attending part time for the first half term, during which time a nationally approved baseline assessment is carried out to ascertain their attainment on entry to school. This assessment shows that the 33 children currently in the reception classes entered the school with a wide range of attainment. However, for the majority, their attainment was below that expected for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy and personal and social development. Strong emphasis is placed on developing these areas and on developing the children's mathematical skills. The combined work of the teachers and the very experienced nursery nurse means that the majority of children achieve well. They meet the Early Learning Goals for physical education and are well on the way to meeting them in the other five areas of learning by the end of their reception year.

Personal, social and emotional development

48. Satisfactory teaching ensures that all children achieve well in this area of learning. Good induction procedures, which include home visits prior to entry and close liaison with parents and carers, enable the children to settle quickly into school routines. The staff work hard to create a warm, welcoming atmosphere and an attractive learning environment where all children are valued and feel safe. As a result, the majority of children develop appropriate social skills. They learn to concentrate, show respect for and value others and the contributions they make during lessons. The majority of children listen attentively to their teachers and other adults. However, a small minority find it difficult to concentrate when in a whole class situation and the staff constantly have to remind them to take turns and to listen. Many opportunities are provided for the children to develop independence. For example, children register themselves as they arrive by pegging their photograph onto a number line. They follow the rules for the number of children working in a given area and tidy up at the end of each session. They quickly get themselves ready for and line up to go to physical education lessons and assemblies. They wash their hands for lunch and generally behave well in the dinner hall. The majority of children are on target to reach the nationally expected Early Learning Goal for this area of learning by the end of their reception year.

Communication, language and literacy

49. Given the below average attainment on entry to the reception class, the achievement of the majority of children is good. They are well on the way to reaching the Early Learning Goals by the end of their reception year. Speaking and listening skills are well fostered and the children are successfully introduced, through good teaching, to the correct vocabulary in each area of learning, for example, when describing how babies grow and develop and what they need. The higher attaining children express themselves confidently as they talk about their work or discuss things that are important to them. They clearly and confidently explain what they have to sell in the 'Garden Centre', how much items cost, and where to go in the shop to find them. The children also develop their vocabulary well through supported role play. They are secure in the knowledge that all adults take time to listen to them and that their contributions are valued. This also enables the children to make satisfactory progress in acquiring sound reading and writing skills. Staff give the children time to try and form their letters correctly, for example, when writing their names. They encourage the children to use the many opportunities around the room, including the writing area, to practise their writing skills by, for example, tracing and stencilling work. The children know how to handle books correctly and turn the pages carefully, looking at the pictures to help with the meaning. They enjoy listening to stories from big books and through good teaching the higher attaining children know that words have meaning and are able to form their own simple sentences using word cards. Phonic skills are effectively taught through a wide range of practical activities including alphabet snap and matching initial sounds. The higher attaining children are beginning to match simple words and can identify the names of the characters in the reading scheme books. Lower attaining children receive good support because the staff understand their needs, give them the opportunity to attempt work and help them to make improvements to their work. The children are successfully introduced to the appropriate parts of the literacy hour. This prepares them well for their work in Year 1. Both classes have a welcoming book corner where the children can go and enjoy reading alone or with another child. During the first half term they are encouraged to take

home a picture book to share with an adult and this further stimulates their interest. As they make progress, reading scheme books are taken home together with word lists and games to enhance their learning.

Mathematical development

50. Children achieve satisfactorily in mathematics and most are well on the way to attaining the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals by the end of their reception year. Sound teaching introduces them to a wide range of experiences and practical activities that generate enjoyment of number work and an appropriate understanding of shape, space and measure. The registration method involving pegging their photographs onto a number line helps them to sequence numbers at least to 17. The majority of tasks are well matched to the needs of most children but are not always sufficiently challenging for the higher attainers. For example, in one activity the children were asked to identify numbers to 10 and place them in the correct order. Higher attaining children did this swiftly and easily. They could accurately count forwards and backwards to 10 and were ready for harder number work, which they did not get. Most children correctly add one more to numbers up to 10 and the higher attaining children successfully identify missing numbers in a given sequence. The children's knowledge and understanding of measurement is successfully fostered through practical activities using good examples of objects around the room to reinforce correct mathematical vocabulary of 'longer' and 'shorter', and 'the same as'. The children's independence is promoted well with the teacher allowing them to make mistakes and to learn for themselves. The children's work becomes more structured as the year progresses and they are successfully introduced to appropriate elements of the National Numeracy Strategy, preparing them well for their work in Year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

51. Children achieve satisfactorily in this area of learning and the majority are well on the way to reaching the Early Learning Goal by the end of their reception year. Good teaching with interesting activities encompassing a wide range of experiences effectively stimulates the children's interest in the world around them. They are successfully taught how to use the computer and the majority show sound mouse control as they use the computer to discover more about numbers, drag and drop pictures or choose the correct initial letter for an incomplete word. All children use listening centres to listen to stories as part of their work in literacy. In the topic 'Spring and Growth', the children talk confidently about how babies develop and during group activities the higher attaining children demonstrated good understanding of this as they sequenced a set of pictures to show growth. This work was well reinforced during a whole class session when the teacher stressed the words 'then' and 'now' to introduce an understanding of chronology and change. The frog spawn displayed in the classroom gives the children first hand experience of the nature of growth. The outside area is used well to enhance children's knowledge of what is needed to help plants grow and this is again reinforced in the Garden Centre role play area, which also promotes the children's understanding of shopping and the use of money. Following the observation of their immediate environment, the children successfully build model houses to reproduce a street, using, for example, cardboard boxes and tubes. Pictures and labelling the activities and articles related to each room have a positive impact on their literacy work. The school is somewhat isolated on an estate with no immediate access to police, post office, fire station or church. The school overcomes this by arranging planned visits by these members of the community.

Physical development

52. Children achieve well in this area of learning and reach the Early Learning Goals for the end of the reception year. It was evident from the one lesson seen during the inspection that they are successfully taught to take turns, to skip and run safely, to follow instructions carefully and to curl and stretch their bodies in preparation for physical activities. Regular access to the outdoor play area enables the children to use appropriately the large wheeled and climbing apparatus. The majority of children tried hard to carry out the teacher's instructions and meet the clear expectations for their behaviour, set out at the beginning of the session. The constant reinforcement of good listening skills during the session, while sometimes interfering with the pace of the lesson, does help the children gain self-control. The previous inspection judged the outdoor play area to be inadequate. Although space remains limited, the school compensates by timetabling each reception class in the hall for 'big toys' when children are able to explore and move over and under apparatus. Effective teaching enables the children to improve their fine motor skills, for example as they use the computer mouse and as they cut up pieces of an animal jigsaw and re-assemble the pieces, pasting them correctly in their books. Most children use scissors, pencils, brushes and crayons safely and

accurately. They are also competent when using small jigsaws and successfully undertake threading activities that require a good level of manual dexterity.

Creative development

53. Displays of the children's work show that they are given appropriate opportunities to use a wide variety of media to explore colour, texture and shape. They show good observational skills as they use pastel crayons to draw plants and they successfully paint pictures of daffodils using stalks instead of brushes to create the effect of thin leaves. They cut and stick materials to create recognisable three-dimensional robots. In music the children enjoy and memorise a good range of simple songs and rhymes related to counting, and hymns learned for assemblies. The children are particularly keen to use instruments and play accurately and at the right time, a variety of untuned percussion instruments to accompany 'Old Macdonald Had a Farm'. They use their imagination well in the effective role play situations set up for them. An elevated area in one class provides a good resource to promote their knowledge of traditional stories by reinforcing their work on Jack and the Beanstalk, while in another room the 'Garden Centre' is used successfully to introduce the children to how businesses work. The children achieve well in this area of learning and most are well on the way to reaching the Early Learning Goals by the end of their reception year.
54. The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory and is good in about 1 in 5 lessons. The teachers plan appropriately and all staff know, understand and interact well with the children. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory overall. However, the school has recently been through a period of instability. The department currently lacks an effective co-ordinator and this has resulted in the postponement of the sound improvement plan for the Foundation Stage. Nevertheless, the curriculum covers all areas of learning. It takes appropriate account of the recent guidance for the Foundation Stage and the small steps in learning identified therein. All staff are very clear about what the children are to learn in adult-led small group work, although at times the supporting activities do not provide sufficient challenge for all children or have a clear focus for learning. The staff plan together as a team and the children's work is regularly assessed. The information gained from assessment is not always used effectively when planning future work and does not focus closely enough on the learning needs of individual children in order for them to improve. The very experienced nursery nurse makes a valuable contribution to the children's development but due to small class numbers is only working part-time in the Foundation Stage. She provides good support for the two class teachers, both of whom are comparatively new to the school, and creates a good link with the Year 1 teachers.

ENGLISH

55. In the National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 7 in 2000, the pupils' performance in reading and writing matched the national average and was above the average for similar schools. In reading, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level was above the average for similar schools and in writing it was well above. In writing, it was also above the national average. Since the last inspection, the school's reading and writing results have followed the national trend overall. However, both sets of results rose sharply between 1998 and 1999, reflecting the attainment of that particular year group. **The majority of pupils currently in Year 2 are working at the nationally expected levels for their age and their achievement is good.** Just over half of the pupils in Year 3 and just under a half of the pupils in Year 4 are on the register for special educational needs. The school puts a great deal of effort into supporting their language work and as a result, **the majority of pupils currently in Year 4 are working at the nationally expected levels for their age. Over time, all pupils in the 7 to 9 age group achieve well.** There were no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls in the tests for pupils aged 7 and none were noted in the school.
56. Pupils quickly respond to the many opportunities given to them to present, discuss and evaluate their work. By the age of 7, the majority listen carefully to their teachers, to other adults and to each other. They learn to speak clearly and confidently to and in front of others. In the Year 3 and mixed Year 3 and 4 classes, a significant minority of pupils display inappropriate behaviour and have poor attitudes to learning that is not always sufficiently well managed by their teachers. They find difficulty taking turns to speak and do not readily listen to what others have to say. However, pupils in Year 1, 2 and 4 respond to the teachers' firm management and high expectations and make good progress. All pupils have the same opportunity to participate fully in discussions and readily do so, responding well to the way in which their teachers skilfully adapt questions to suit the pupils' prior learning. For example, in a very good Year 1/2 lesson, the teacher's effective questioning and the use of carefully directed paired work successfully challenged pupils

the pupils to analyse the content of an extract from Cinderella's Diary. Higher attaining pupils offered many sensible suggestions and quickly realised that Cinderella had left out lots of detail about the day, while lower attainers offered suggestions about the sequence of events in the day, demonstrating their sound recall of the story. The pupils also successfully extended their knowledge of other cultures by comparing this version of Cinderella with the Chinese version, recognising the similarities and differences in the settings and understanding that the glass and silk slippers were each special to the identified culture because of the materials from which they were made.

57. Pupils achieve well in reading. They readily participate in shared reading and guided group reading sessions and learn to experience and enjoy a wide variety of texts. An improvement since the previous inspection is the inclusion of non-fiction books within the literacy hour. The majority of teachers use their voices well when reading stories aloud and provide good role models for pupils who then read with a satisfactory level of fluency and expression. Pupils in Year 1, for example, demonstrate a good knowledge of how punctuation helps with understanding and how differences in print help suggest expression. Their teacher reinforces this well in the way she reads the text, by drawing the pupils' attention to how the author uses punctuation and how the words are printed to indicate how to express them. As the pupils progress through the school, texts are often successfully linked to other areas of the curriculum. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, the teacher's effective use of a basic information story book on the Big Blue Whale successfully develops the pupils' understanding of large mammals while consolidating their knowledge of features that denote non-fiction texts. This was then used for a more challenging written task. Pupils enjoy reading stories. They successfully identify the important characters both from the text and from pictures and when questioned, show good recall of the main plot. Higher attaining pupils in Year 4 accurately select relevant phrases from the text to develop further their knowledge of characters. The majority of children show good attitudes during lessons and this has a positive impact on their learning as they listen well, answer sensibly and try hard to improve their work. The school has a suitably wide variety of reading books that pupils take home regularly to read with an adult. The higher attaining pupils know the differences between fiction and non-fiction and are beginning to use confidently the content and index pages in books to find information quickly. However, the library, which is under-stocked, is insufficiently used to promote the pupils' library skills or independent learning and remains an issue from the previous inspection.
58. The pupils achieve well in writing. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 build well on their reception work and are soon writing accurately in sentences that demonstrate a sound knowledge of spelling and punctuation. Sentence work is successfully promoted and skilfully reinforced by the Year 1 teacher both in literacy lessons and in other subjects, for example, religious education. The pupils become more confident at checking and correcting their own work and develop a sound understanding of how to improve it. The effective teaching in the 5 to 7 age range provides many good opportunities for the pupils to develop the relevant vocabulary to make their writing more interesting. This contributes to the pupils' good performance at the higher levels in the national tests. For example, in a Year 2 class the teacher used a wide range of visual resources to motivate the pupils to use imaginative language. The higher attaining pupils responded well by using phrases such as 'rustling leaves', 'birds pecking' and 'bats swooping' when thinking about the rainforest. Pupils write lists, re-tell familiar stories, compose poetry and create their own stories, the higher attainers logically sequencing events. The Year 4 pupils develop a good awareness of the audience for whom texts are written. This was seen when they were required to write their own non-fiction text about the 'Big Blue Whale', to suit their own age group. Pupils use their writing skills satisfactorily in other subjects as they write accounts of well known historical characters and events and label diagrams and drawings in science. Good practice in handwriting is developed from the pupils' entry to the school. Some pupils have difficulty using a cursive style outside of handwriting sessions and are not consistently encouraged to do so. Pupils use their word processing skills satisfactorily to enhance and consolidate their English work.
59. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their individual learning targets. When working in the classroom, learning support assistants help pupils to be fully involved in whole class discussions. This successfully promotes the pupils' self-esteem and improves their learning. When withdrawn from literacy lessons for specific language development, activities are effectively linked to class work. Support assistants are well briefed by the class teachers. Their good management of the pupils with behavioural difficulties helps these pupils to make good progress during the well-focused sessions. The practice of not returning to class for the final whole class session, however, means that the pupils lose the opportunity to learn from each other as work is being discussed and evaluated. Pupils for whom English is

an additional language make good progress in their learning of the English language. This enables them to participate fully in all subjects and to make satisfactory progress overall.

60. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and there is some good and very good teaching in the 5 to 7 age range and in Year 4. The majority of teachers successfully use their good subject knowledge and their sound understanding of the National Literacy Strategy to plan and prepare stimulating activities that effectively challenge pupils of all levels of attainment. Where the teaching is very good, the teachers ensure that all pupils listen carefully, understand what they have to do and how this helps them improve their previous work. This enables the pupils to undertake confidently the tasks they are set. Because they are secure, both in what they are doing and in how well they are doing, their concentration levels are high, they work hard, behave well and their achievement is good. The teachers form good relationships with the pupils and the majority consistently and successfully use an appropriate range of strategies for managing behaviour. The teachers in the Year 3 and 3/4 classes, both new to the school, are less skilful in keeping the pupils working hard throughout the lesson. The amount of time then spent trying to get pupils back to their work slows down learning for the whole class.
61. The leadership and management of English are good. The National Literacy Strategy is well established and planning and record keeping are good. The analysis of assessment data and the monitoring of the pupils' progress from the time they enter the school, though relatively recent, is now successfully under way. Targets are set for groups of pupils and help to give them some knowledge of their own learning and what they need to do to improve. The quality of marking is satisfactory and most teachers encourage pupils to present their work in a tidy fashion. An action plan identifies appropriate areas for improvement in teaching and learning, with further classroom observations for staff new to the school. It is soundly based on the co-ordinator's effective evaluation of teachers' planning and pupils' work. However, the teachers' own evaluations of their weekly planning are not yet being used consistently well to inform future work. Additionally, there is insufficient use of information and communications technology other than for word processing.

MATHEMATICS

62. In the National Curriculum tests for mathematics in 2000, the performance of pupils' aged 7 matched the national average and was above the average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels was close to the national average. Over the last five years, the pupils' performances in the tests have fluctuated slightly but overall have followed the improving national trend. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Pupils aged 5 to 7 achieve well. **The majority of pupils currently in Year 2 are working at the nationally expected levels for their age.** Attainment remains similar to that reported at the previous inspection and overall improvement since that time issatisfactory. The teaching of pupils aged 5 to 7 is consistently good. The pupils learn effectively in well-prepared and interesting mathematics lessons.
63. **Pupils aged 9 are working below the nationally expected levels for their age.** This represents a fall in attainment since the previous inspection. However, almost half of the pupils in Year 4 and just under half of the pupils in Year 3 are on the register for special educational needs, a significant minority with behavioural problems. Consistently good teaching in the Year 4 class ensures that the achievement of the vast majority of pupils is at least sound. In the Year 3 and the mixed Year 3/4 classes, pupils do not achieve as well as they could because the teaching is unsatisfactory. The many recent changes of staff in these two classes has not helped in raising standards. The current teachers, both of whom are new to the school, do not handle well enough the unacceptable behaviour of the significant minority of pupils who disrupt learning, and the pupils' learning is insufficiently productive. Some mathematical activities fail to keep them interested and are inappropriate for the pupils' current levels of understanding. The pupils are then confused by what they have to do in the group work session following the whole class input. For example, in both classes, the pupils were very insecure in their knowledge of halves, quarters and compound fractions and made insufficient progress in understanding them. They then make high demands on the teacher's time. To deal with this, the teacher either leaves other pupils without the necessary support for them to achieve appropriately or insists that the pupils seeking attention carry on with their work as required even though they do not understand what they are doing. In addition, insufficient attention is given to meeting the learning needs of higher attaining pupils in these two classes. In contrast, teaching is good in the Year 4 class. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and behaviour management is very good. Well-prepared resources effectively support the pupils' learning of fractions and group work is well matched to the needs of the

pupils. For example, the pupils used effectively the diagrammatic representation of fractions that the teacher had prepared, to work out for themselves a series of fractions that add up to one. Pupils in Year 4 are working on the appropriate area of numeracy designed for their age but their response to questions is slow and they are insecure in their understanding of basic number. While group targets have been set to help pupils improve, there are no specific targets for individual pupils, based on the assessment and marking of their work and this limits overall achievement.

64. The consistently good teaching of pupils aged 5 to 7 has a positive effect on the pupils' learning. Teachers demonstrate and explain mathematical ideas and methods well. Pupils are encouraged to share with others how they have arrived at their answers. Their good response to this means that they develop an appropriate range of strategies for solving number problems. Teachers plan their lessons well so that the pupils' build up their knowledge in small steps of learning. Pupils in Year 2, for example, used their knowledge of counting on in fours to position multiples of the four times table on a number line. Teachers pay good attention to the vocabulary associated with problem solving. In a mixed Year 1/2 lesson, for example, the various ways of expressing one hour later, such as, 'in one hour's time' and 'one hour after' was effectively introduced to and understood by the pupils. In this age group, the teachers plan a good range of activities that maintain the pupils' interests and they manage their classes very well. In most lessons, teachers have to work hard to maintain good levels of behaviour because a significant minority of pupils have poor levels of self-discipline.
65. Throughout the school, lessons are successfully based on the National Numeracy Strategy. In all classes, teachers pay good attention to increasing pupils' knowledge of number facts through addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The pupils' exercise books demonstrate that they use effectively a range of mental methods to increase their understanding of number. However, pupils do not recall these facts quickly. The teachers give too little attention to the daily practice of these skills at the beginning of the numeracy lesson. In addition, teachers give insufficient attention to teaching pupils how to apply their numeracy skills in problem solving situations. The marking of pupils' work is more consistent than at the time of the previous inspection. All the teachers regularly mark the pupils' books, assess the pupils' understanding of the work and record their findings. Most, but not all teachers, use this information successfully to plan their future teaching. The pupils present their work neatly, which leads in the main to accuracy of working. The use of information and communications technology to support the teaching of mathematics is underdeveloped in the majority of classes. For example, apart from in the Year 2 class, the teachers do not use computers well to teach data handling.
66. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. The teachers often give the additional support needed with either extra contact time or through the deployment of other adults to support individuals and groups. The enthusiastic support assistants in the Year 4 lesson were particularly effective in helping to maintain the motivation and interest of pupils with SEN. The large volume of work in the Year 4 class's books shows that the pupils cover an appropriate range of work across all areas of mathematics. For example, they collect their own data on sandwich preferences and construct their own pictograms to show these. They tell and record time accurately in both digital and analogue form, and their work on shape, space and measure is appropriate for their age.
67. The subject is very well led by a committed co-ordinator. She has analysed test scores, collected samples of pupils' work and identified areas for improvement within the subject. She has also watched colleagues teach and given written feedback as to how teaching and learning might be improved. This has led to improved test results for pupils aged 7 and to the good teaching seen in the 5 to 7 age group and in Year 4. The co-ordinator is also very keenly aware of the weaknesses in the Year 3 and the mixed Year 3 /4 class and is currently working on strategies to support the two teachers concerned, both of whom are new to the school.

SCIENCE

68. Pupils aged 7 and 9 are working at the nationally expected levels for their age. The results of the teacher assessments for pupils aged 7 in 2000 match those found nationally and are well above average when compared to similar schools. Standards are similar to those reported at the previous inspection and improvement since that time has been satisfactory. The pupils' past work shows that all elements of the science curriculum are adequately covered.

69. The pupils have a good knowledge of scientific ideas and facts and their achievement is good. In all classes, they gain scientific knowledge from listening to their teachers and experimenting for themselves. The weakness now lies in the low number of pupils reaching the higher levels. Often pupils record their work on simple worksheets that do not sufficiently extend the higher attaining pupils. Similarly, these pupils have too few opportunities to find information from books or on the computer to broaden their knowledge. Pupils are acquiring a good range of correct scientific language because their teachers pay careful attention to this aspect of the work. Pupils in Year 4, for example, confidently use words such as 'nutrients' when describing factors that affect the growth of a plant and explain appropriately what they mean. This work successfully builds on topics undertaken by the younger pupils where they have studied the habitats of creatures in the school grounds.
70. Teaching and learning is good throughout the school and occasionally, it is very good. Pupils get plenty of opportunity to test out their ideas, to observe at first hand and to work together. Resources are well prepared for pupils to use in order to enrich their experiences. The younger pupils carry out simple test procedures when, for example, they investigate the effect on their hearing with one ear covered by a protector. This early work is developed into more sophisticated 'fair testing', seen when pupils in Year 4 described what happened when they tested the effect of withholding water from a plant. The teachers' planning is good and is securely based on the National Curriculum programme of study. Half-termly topics form the focus of the teaching and because of this, the school has overcome the lack of continuity in learning highlighted in the last report. Teachers are good at building on the pupils' previous learning. They often begin lessons by recapping on previous work to focus pupils' attention. Through good questioning skills such as, 'How far away do you think ---? ', the pupils are encouraged to reason and predict experimental outcomes for themselves. Work is regularly and effectively marked. The teachers regularly give positive comments and add challenging comments to help increase individual pupils' achievement. The pupils respond well to this by presenting their work neatly and showing enthusiasm for and enjoyment of scientific activities. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. They often have work specially prepared for them, for example, well-designed worksheets that support them when they come to record what they have investigated. Teachers throughout the school work hard to manage the behaviour of some difficult pupils.
71. The new co-ordinator has only been in post since January 2001. Prior to her appointment, there had been no effective leadership of the subject for some time. Consequently, the school policy for science has not been updated and there has been no evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching or provision in order to raise standards further. In addition, the lack of a whole school approach to the assessment and recording of the pupils' progress means that there is no effective way of checking that learning is continuous as the pupils move through the school.

ART AND DESIGN

72. It was possible to see only one art and design lesson, observed as part of a creative afternoon for pupils aged 5 to 7, involving art and design and design and technology. It is therefore not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, discussions with staff, perusal of the art portfolio containing samples of pupils' work, pupils' books and work on display around the school show that attainment is as expected nationally for the pupils' ages. All pupils achieve well. Teachers support well those pupils with identified special educational needs (SEN) in other subjects, who show that they are talented in art. For example, for one SEN pupil, art is often successfully used as a way into learning in other subjects. Pupils for whom English is an additional language also achieve well in art.
73. By the age of 7, the pupils produce carefully detailed observational drawings of fruit and vegetables and in their portrait work show that they are beginning to observe facial features closely and place them accurately on their paintings and drawings. This work is extended in the 7 to 9 age range, when portraits begin to include details such as nostrils and eyelashes. Pupils throughout the school are effectively introduced to the elements of art, such as line, space, colour and texture through an appropriately wide range of valuable learning experiences in two and three-dimensional work and in textiles. A good range of well planned activities are offered to the pupils in well chosen themes such as 'Can Buildings Speak?' and 'Mother Nature Designer'. Work in the pupils' art books and folders, and on display throughout the school, shows that they have the ability to carry a project through different stages to completion, working creatively and imaginatively from their detailed observational drawings. They successfully produce, for example, brick rubbings showing texture, repeated pattern in printmaking using polystyrene tiles, and three dimensional

clay tiles representing the buildings they have studied. The pupils make very good attempts at colour washes and they use space effectively with a sound understanding of fore/mid/background in, for example, their pictures of 'two people in a picture'. The very effective displays in the hall demonstrate the appropriate use of information and communications technology (ICT) through, for example, digital photography (daffodils). The work on daffodils is of high quality and the pupils are proud to explain how they carried it out using the leaves from daffodil to paint the leaves in their pictures. As they move through the school, pupils develop a sound knowledge and understanding of the work of famous artists, for example, Mondrian, van Gogh and Matisse. Art makes a very good contribution to the pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They learn to handle tools and equipment safely, share with each other and work together to produce large-scale pieces of art, for example, in preparation for their work in design and technology, relating to movement. Related to geography, the pupils successfully explore hot colours in their interpretation of African landscapes. As they study Islam in religious education, the related art work ensures that they also learn about the symbolism of colour and pattern in Islamic art.

74. The subject is well led and managed. Although only in draft form, the updated policy and scheme of work provide good guidance for teachers, who are also effectively supported by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. The curriculum is well planned to include successful links to other subjects through art topics, while maintaining the progressive development of discrete art skills as pupils move through the school. There are no formal assessment procedures but these are already under discussion as part of the advanced work on a portfolio of exemplar work, which is now ready for moderating and relating to the levels of the National Curriculum. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

75. All pupils aged 7 and 9, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are working at the nationally expected levels for their age. This is similar to the previous inspection and improvement since that time has been satisfactory. The school has effectively adopted and combined much of the advice in the most recent national guidelines for the subject with additional support material from the Local Education Authority. This works well and provides the pupils with a range of worthwhile experiences that enable them to achieve well.
76. The common approach to the teaching of the subject as pupils move through school contributes to the good achievement. The variety of topics enables pupils to work with a wide range of materials. Topic planning in the 7 to 9 age range is on a two-year cycle to take account of the two age groups in one class. The current topic for that age group, to make pencil cases, has reached the stage where pupils have successfully pinned and cut out the materials they selected for their pencil cases, having discussed and considered whether or not their chosen material would suit the purpose. A small group of pupils with special educational needs in Year 3 found this work very demanding. However, the perseverance and patience of the teacher kept them on task. The Year 4 group found the task easier but nevertheless challenging. The teacher's skilful injection of a wide range of ideas motivated them to work imaginatively. This, combined with skilful demonstration of techniques ensured pupils made good progress and, in the Year 4 class, they quickly moved on to creating attractive designs to decorate the pencil cases using imaginatively, a wide range of decorative materials such as sequins. Designing, cutting and sewing skills are secure for the pupils' ages. In the 5 to 7 age range, the school arranges the groups so that the different year groups are taught separately during a creative afternoon that links the subject effectively with art and design. Additional adult helpers, including classroom assistants and parents, provide good assistance for the teachers in these activities. This helps keep teaching groups small and ensures pupils receive a considerable degree of individual support. This is very helpful when pupils are learning new skills such as sawing. Pupils in both age groups clearly enjoy the practical activities associated with this subject. They concentrate well on their tasks and behave satisfactorily.
77. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory overall. Both are sometimes good in individual lessons in both age groups and in one lesson, with pupils in Year 2, the teaching was very good. In all classes, the teachers' effective planning ensures that the pupils' learning follows a common pattern. The pupils are successfully taught to research ideas, practise skills, develop designs, make products and review what they have accomplished. This effectively builds on their previous learning experiences, an area of improvement since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 1, for example, are able to make moving pictures using slots in cards and paper fasteners to produce 'pop-up' flowers and figures with moving limbs. The teachers develop these skills further to enable pupils in Year 2 to design and make puppet

theatres based on nursery rhymes such as Humpty Dumpty. Pupils in Year 2 are supported well in ordering their writing by using the teacher's self-produced writing frame to write about the whole of the design and make process. In the end, responding to the teacher's effective questioning, they make simple evaluations by deciding how they would do things differently another time. Finished wheeled vehicles show an appropriate range of sound design ideas. There are black limousines; brightly decorated recovery trucks and streamlined aircraft all of good quality.

78. The subject is led and managed satisfactorily. There is clear guidance as to what should be taught and when. The subject was a priority in the last school year. As a result, teaching and learning were evaluated and feedback given to staff as to how they might improve standards in both. The common approach to the teaching of the subject is influential in maintaining standards. Up until January of this year, the accommodation for 7 to 9 year old pupils restricted the curriculum opportunities available in this subject. For example, last term the planned activity was to make soup but instead the children had to make sandwiches because of lack of access to a cooker. The teachers are taking every advantage of the new classrooms to improve teaching and learning in this subject. A remaining weakness is the insufficient use of information and communications technology to extend pupils' learning in design and technology.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

79. No geography lessons were seen during the inspection and only two history lessons were observed, both in the 7 to 9 age range. It is not therefore possible to make an overall judgement on teaching in either subject, though the quality of history teaching is sound in the 7 to 9 age range. Judgements on attainment and achievement are based on the analysis of the pupils' past work, displays around the school, discussions with pupils and teachers' planning. At the ages of both 7 and 9, attainment is at the nationally expected levels in both subjects. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve satisfactorily.
80. In geography, younger pupils are taught to interpret simple maps and go on short walks around the school and the locality. As they progress through the school pupils carry out an in-depth comparison between their own area and Kaptalamwa in Africa. Some good written work was seen in Year 2 books as pupils described the differences between their own houses and the huts in an African village. An ongoing unit of work entitled 'Barnaby Bear/Passport to the World successfully fosters the pupils' enthusiasm for and enjoyment of geography and promotes effectively their understanding of the varying climates and features of other countries. Year 4 pupils successfully identify key features within their locality and interpret them well using their own key.
81. The study of ancient Greek gods featured in the history lessons observed. Discussion with pupils show that they have a good knowledge of the twelve most important gods and what they represented for the Greeks. In the Year 3/4 lesson the teacher used the time line display well to encourage the pupils to locate when the Ancient Greeks lived. During a whole class session, the higher attaining pupils displayed good knowledge of the life style of the Ancient Greeks. In a Year 4 lesson on the same aspect, the teacher successfully transmitted her own enthusiasm and good subject knowledge of the Parthenon and the importance of Greek temples to the pupils, motivating them well to concentrate, listen well and acquire new knowledge and understanding. The sharing of clear learning objectives, together with well prepared resources meant that the pupils settled quickly, worked hard and displayed good information retrieval skills to inform their writing. Displays in the classrooms and around the school reflect the importance and value that the staff place on the pupils' work, and stimulates further discussion. Pupils use their literacy skills well in this subject. The majority listen well and show good levels of interest in and concentration on what they are being told. The higher attaining pupils discuss sensibly the important aspects of civilisation and use a variety of appropriate ways to record their work. For example, they list the differences between Athenian and Spartan lifestyles, compose questions to ask a Victorian family, and write accounts of important events. Drama is also effectively used in history and the school makes good use of visiting theatre groups. These strategies have a good impact on the pupils' learning and bring history to life for them. Two pupils from a Year 2 class competently used the computer to research the difference between Victorian shops and those of the present day but missed the opportunity to record and print their findings. This is an area that has rightly been identified for improvement.
82. The leadership and management of history is satisfactory. The newly appointed co-ordinator has already reviewed the scheme of work and policy to incorporate national guidance where appropriate. The scheme is

a good tool to aid teacher's planning and provides for the progressive development of pupils' knowledge and understanding. However, in both history and geography there is little evidence that the subjects' key skills are developed in a progressive way. The geography co-ordinator is to take up responsibilities after Easter but has already reviewed the subject. Because of her expertise she is fully aware of the areas that need development, including the updating of the policy and scheme of work for geography. There is little evidence of the appropriate use of information and communications technology in either geography or history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

83. Pupils aged 7 are working at the nationally expected levels in this subject but pupils aged 9 are well below the levels expected nationally for their age. One of the key issues from the previous inspection was to raise pupils' attainment in information and communications technology in Years 3 and 4. This has not happened, largely because of the many changes in teaching staff and the lack of teachers' expertise. Insufficient teaching was seen during the inspection to make a secure judgement on its quality. However, discussions with pupils and analysis of the limited amount of work available shows that pupils aged 5 to 7 achieve well and reach the nationally expected levels by the age of 7. The achievement of pupils aged 7 to 9 is unsatisfactory and pupils in the final year in the school are working at levels well below those expected for their age. Although it is now catered for in the teachers' planning, pupils in Years 3 and 4 do not yet receive the breadth or depth of experiences required to make sufficient progress in this subject.
84. By the age of 7, pupils successfully represent information in an appropriate range of ways. They produce graphs, create pictures, enter text and print out their work. The pupils in the Year 2 class, for example, have drawn graphs about favourite pets using their own data. Recently, an Internet connection has been established in the mixed Year 1/2 class and the pupils, with the help of an adult, successfully access a virtual museum to find out about shopping in Victorian times. The pupils' use of computers in Year 1 has been limited by unreliable hardware. Pupils in Year 2 receive the broadest experiences. For example, the pupils use computers to consolidate their understanding of place value in mathematics, and use interactive talking stories to create added interest in literacy hour. The teachers introduce pupils to control technology through the use of a programmable toy and the pupils plot routes on paper to develop their understanding of this aspect of the work. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have few opportunities to build on these early experiences and skills. Very little use is made of the available resources. The pupils' main experiences are in the use of software to create pictures and patterns. Many pupils have created symmetrical Islamic patterns related to their work in religious education, and repeated patterns in art. However, this work is undemanding of the pupils. The higher order skills expected for this age group, for example, saving and retrieving, are poor. Pupils are under-achieving and in discussions showed little interest or enthusiasm for the subject because they have few experiences to relate.
85. Teachers do not plan sufficiently to use computers to support work in, for example, literacy and numeracy or to support the work of pupils with special educational needs or those for whom English is an additional language. This affects the learning of all pupils and denies them the opportunities to benefit from the challenge and stimulation that many ICT programs can bring. As they move through school, the pupils' learning is erratic. They do not build up their knowledge and skills in small steps because teachers have too little information about their prior experiences to enable appropriate work to be planned for them.
86. Because of the many staff changes in the school, the subject has lacked the necessary leadership to raise standards and to improve the teaching and learning. A new co-ordinator was appointed in January 2000 but as yet has had little time to begin to make an impact on the subject. Nevertheless, she is fully aware of the challenge ahead of her and has already begun to consider how best to deal with it. The recently leased computers are under-used and, although statutory requirements are met in terms of the planned curriculum for ICT, some of the areas have yet to be covered sufficiently well for pupils to gain appropriate experience of the full range of activities required by the National Curriculum programme of study. The school recognises the significant weaknesses in this subject, including the absence of assessment and the lack of expertise amongst the teachers, and a much-needed training programme has been arranged for later in the year. The subject is given high priority in the current school improvement plan.

MUSIC

87. By the age of 7, pupils attain the nationally expected levels for their age. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and the pupils achieve well. They know the names of a range of simple percussion instruments and demonstrate an emerging understanding of how to play the instruments in different ways to interpret a graphic score relating to well known stories. In these activities they learn to listen well, concentrate hard and successfully follow directions as to when they should or should not play or sing at different parts of the story. This was especially noted in a good lesson with pupils in Year 1 but was also evident in the two other classes in this age range. Because they are taught to listen well, the pupils also recognise how changes in volume, pitch, rhythm and tempo can be used to reflect or change the atmosphere or mood intended in the music. This work successfully introduces them to musical activities related to composing, performing, listening and appraising. In the 7 to 9 age group, it is not possible to make a secure judgement on standards or on teaching since only one music lesson was observed. In the lesson, pupils were singing a good range of well known songs, culminating in singing rounds. Singing is good both in class and in assembly. Pupils are taught to breathe well, attend to their posture, whether sitting or standing and as a result, they sing together with good volume and secure pitch, often unaccompanied, following the confident lead provided by their teachers. Pupils in Year 2 also confidently sing solo in front of the class. For a small number of pupils, musical achievement is enhanced by violin lessons and this contributes to the pupils' overall musical attainment.
88. In the 5 to 7 age range, the teachers' sound planning of an appropriate range of progressively more difficult activities successfully motivates the pupils and keeps them on task. For example, the use of a 'hello (name)' song with pupils in Year 2 grabbed their attention and successfully got them into the required listening mode for the start of the music session, which included appropriate listening, singing and composing activities. All three teachers in this age range explain clearly what is to be learned in each lesson, and how it will be achieved, and this ensures that the pupils know what is expected of them and work hard to achieve it. In a very good Year 1 lesson, for example, after giving the pupils ample time to practise their work, 'performing' the story 'up to now' gave the pupils an initial sense of performance. The evaluative discussion that followed helped them to understand what needed to be improved and how for the next performance. The teachers use their good subject knowledge in effective questioning that holds pupils' interest and enhances their listening skills as they hear how each other or famous composers over time, have created different effects in their music.
89. The leadership and management of music are satisfactory. The curriculum is adequately planned to cover all the areas of music required by the National Curriculum, although the use of information and communications technology is very limited. Music is a designated priority in the school development plan for this year. The co-ordinator has attended relevant courses, the outcomes of which are to be disseminated at planned in-service training to take place next term with a view to updating policy and practice to take account of the latest programme of study. This also includes establishing procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and supporting less confident teachers in their teaching of the subject, none of which is in place at the present time. As yet there are no assessment procedures to ascertain how well pupils are doing or what they need to do to improve further and the quality of teaching is not formally monitored. Music makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, and cultural development. At present there are no extra-curricular activities. Overall, standards and provision have been maintained since the previous inspection despite staff changes.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

90. Attainment is as expected nationally for pupils aged 7 and 9 and achievement is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the 5 to 7 age range and satisfactory in the 7 to 9 age range, although some good teaching was seen in the Year 4 class.
91. Teachers use their good subject knowledge well to plan progressively challenging activities in lessons. They explain clearly to the pupils what they have to learn and confidently demonstrate the skills and techniques to be used. As a result, the majority of pupils confidently plan and perform simple skills safely and realise the importance of improving their performances through practice. For example, in a Year 1 dance lesson higher attaining pupils used their bodies well to denote rain falling, following their fingertips and moving at different levels. Well targeted questioning by the teacher also enabled a pupil with special educational needs to participate fully and achieve well. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 made good

attempts at interpreting a piece of music to denote the making and mixing of pancakes, sequencing their movements with control. The teacher's high expectations of the pupils' performance in a Year 4 games lesson resulted in good improvement in the pupils' ability to devise a throwing game to hit or knock down their opponent's skittle. The majority of pupils behave appropriately, co-operate well and work together as a team. The teacher's on-going assessment of how well they are doing is effectively shared with the pupils and successfully promotes their self-evaluation skills. Less effective was the way pupils in the mixed Year 3/4 class used the apparatus to demonstrate symmetric and asymmetric shapes. In this lesson, the pupils became noisy and inattentive, giving little thought to their performance or that of others and hindered the achievement of all pupils in the lesson. The teachers set good examples by dressing appropriately for physical education lessons and as a result are able to demonstrate techniques effectively. They use appropriate warm up and cool down techniques but do not sufficiently stress why these are important. The subject has improved satisfactorily since the previous inspection with pupils now being given appropriate praise and the opportunity to learn from each other's demonstrations of good practice.

92. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The newly appointed co-ordinator has already used her good subject knowledge and expertise to develop an effective action plan for improvement. This includes guidelines for teachers to ensure that pupils' learning is both continuous and progressive as they move through the school. It incorporates a list of progressive skills to complement the commercial scheme that the school uses, to ensure consistency of assessment and to draw up plans for evaluating teaching, both of which are presently lacking. Opportunities for pupils to participate in sporting activities, including competitive sport, outside of school hours, are unsatisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

93. The pupils' attainment in religious education is satisfactory in relation to the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. They achieve satisfactorily because aspects of religious education are continually reinforced, especially in the daily assemblies, all of which include an appropriate act of collective worship. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
94. The school conceives religious education as a journey during which the pupils develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major world religions. It is taught as separate units in which seasons and festivals are celebrated throughout the year. The whole school is preparing for the Easter Christian festival and work throughout the school shows a progression of understanding. For example the children within the Foundation Stage are studying the aspect of new growth whilst in Year 1, a very good lesson on what Christians believe enabled pupils to discuss why Jesus was such a special person. The teacher's skilful use of well prepared resources, sensitive questioning and the well presented tableaux depicting Jesus' arrival into Jerusalem and of the Last Supper, helped the pupils to appreciate the feelings of joy and sadness amongst the people. This was built upon in a good lesson in Year 2 where the teacher successfully enabled the pupils to deepen their understanding of the symbolism of Easter. In most classes, the pupils are confident to express their opinions and feelings without fear of ridicule. This was particularly noticeable in a very good Year 4 lesson when they discussed the feelings of people involved in the crucifixion. Higher attaining pupils wrote a poem from the perspective of the cross while others considered why Jesus had to die.
95. The quality of teaching is good in the 5 to 7 age range and satisfactory in the 7 to 9 age range. Most teachers effectively use their good subject knowledge to deepen the pupils' understanding of different religious beliefs and to teach the pupils to value others as themselves. This helps the pupils to accept and respect faiths and beliefs that differ from their own. They gain good knowledge of the major religions of Christianity, Islam and Judaism and this also contributes effectively to their multicultural understanding. However, in one lesson, where teaching was unsatisfactory the objective, to find out why was Jesus so important to Christians, was not achieved. A small but significant minority of pupils constantly interrupted the flow of the lesson. They were rude and disrespectful, asked inappropriate questions and talked over the teacher. They were not handled effectively and disrupted learning for the whole class.
96. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well, using her good subject knowledge to produce and keep up to date a well-planned and organised religious education curriculum, which follows the locally agreed syllabus. This provides effective guidance for teachers in their individual work and enables the majority of pupils to achieve appropriately. Aspects of religious education are further reinforced in personal, social and health education and are often appropriately linked with multi-disciplinary modules in

science and humanities, where pupils are encouraged to reflect on the achievements of mankind over time and on the effects that decisions have on the environment and on peoples' lives in different parts of the world. Religious education makes a good contribution to the pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There has recently been some evaluation of teaching and feedback has been given as to how teaching and learning might be improved. However, there are no formal assessments of the pupils' work to ensure that their learning is continuous and progressive as they move through the school. Resources for the subject are satisfactory but the pupils have few opportunities to visit places of worship and visitors from other religions are infrequent. The school development plan highlights this aspect together with assessment as priorities for improvement. Information and communications technology is not yet used to enhance the pupils' learning in religious education.