

INSPECTION REPORT

**MRS BLAND'S INFANT AND NURSERY
SCHOOL**

Burghfield Common, Reading

LEA area: West Berkshire

Unique reference number: 109887

Headteacher: Mrs B Taylor

Reporting inspector: Ms A Grainger
20782

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th March 2000

Inspection number: 190002

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Nursery School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Jordan's Lane Burghfield Common Reading Berkshire
Postcode:	RG7 3LP
Telephone number:	(0118) 983 2332
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Dadswell
Date of previous inspection:	14 October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Ms A Grainger	Registered inspector	English Music English as an additional language	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management
Mr C Farris	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
Mrs J Denton	Team Inspector	Mathematics Information technology Design and technology Under fives	
Mr M James	Team Inspector	Science Art Physical education Religious education Equal opportunities Special educational needs	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
Mrs M Roberts	Team inspector	Geography History	

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Inspection Quality Division
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 8
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	9 - 12
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12 - 13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13 - 15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	15 - 16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	16 - 18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	19
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20 - 23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	24 - 36

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Number of full-time pupils:	144	(smaller than many other primary schools)
Pupils with English as an additional language:	1.4%	(a little higher than in most schools)
Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals:	9.7%	(below average)
Pupils on the register of special educational needs:	20.8%	(just above average)
Average class size:	24	

The school is situated in the village of Burghfield Common. Children enter the nursery in the term after their fourth birthday. The nursery serves a wider community than Mrs Bland's Infant School, and about 75 per cent of children attending the nursery move to the main school. Children start in the reception classes at the beginning of the term in which they will be five. No pupil has a statement of special educational need. The percentage of pupils from ethnic minority groups (1.4 per cent) is lower than in most primary schools. Considering the intake as a whole, children's attainment on entry to the nursery is broadly average. On entry to the infant school, it is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Children have a good start to their schooling while they are under five and achieve above average standards by the age of five. Standards at the age of seven, judged on the basis of pupils now in Year 2, are still above average in reading, mathematics and science. In writing, they are average. Children are well taught while they are under five and teaching is satisfactory for pupils aged five to seven. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money. The school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average in reading, mathematics and science at the age of seven.
- Art is well taught and this results in pupils achieving high standards in their work.
- Children under five achieve above average standards because teaching is imaginative and takes good account of all their needs.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and they work and play well together.
- Attendance is very good and is well above the national average.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and for their cultural development it is very good.

What could be improved

- Pupils aged five to seven do not make enough progress in writing.
- Standards in information technology are too low at the age of seven.
- The higher attaining pupils are not always challenged to achieve their best between the ages of five and seven.
- There are no procedures for assessing the standard of pupils' work in religious education, art and music. Procedures for assessment in English are not effective.
- Marking does not tell pupils enough about how to improve their work.
- Except in English, mathematics and information technology, subject co-ordinators are not well enough involved in checking the provision in their subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school's progress with improvement, since its last inspection in October 1996, has been satisfactory. Although there is still some further work to be done in fully rectifying the weaknesses identified at that time, much effective action has been taken. There has been considerable improvement in the quality of teaching. The school now has a coherent curriculum framework and schemes of work to support teachers in the planning of lessons, although some action is needed in monitoring their implementation. The pace and challenge in lessons has improved and the school is

continuing to work on this. There has been satisfactory improvement in the opportunities provided for pupils to develop independent learning skills. Good progress has been made in improving the provision for pupils' personal, social and cultural education. There is now a shared view of the aims of the school, together with an effective partnership between the headteacher, governors and staff.

The school has also improved in some areas not identified as key issues at the last inspection. The teaching of art is much better and the standard of pupils' art work is higher. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is better and is now good. Attendance has improved.

The school's performance in the National Curriculum test results is similar to that at the time of the last inspection in reading and mathematics, although writing standards are lower.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	B	D	B	B
Writing	B	D	B	B
Mathematics	A	C	B	B

Key

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

The table above shows that pupils' results in 1999 were above the national average and also above average when compared with those achieved in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The school's results in the National Curriculum tests fell in reading and writing after the last inspection. In mathematics, they dipped in 1998 only, but did not fall below the national average as they did in reading and writing. Standards in reading and mathematics are now similar to those at the time of the last inspection, but writing standards are lower. The school is setting realistic targets for improvement in reading, writing and mathematics standards and is making satisfactory progress towards them.

Standards in science are above average nationally. In information technology, standards are too low and below those expected nationally by the age of seven. In religious education, pupils' achieve standards in line with the expectations set in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards of art work and singing, as an aspect of music, are higher than normally found for the age of the pupils. In all other subjects, pupils' work is of the standard expected for their age.

Children achieve above average standards at the age of five in all the recommended areas of learning for children of their age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy learning, are interested, responsive and settle to work quickly.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well during lessons, around the school and when at play. They are courteous and polite.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils get on well with adults and work and play well together. They respond satisfactorily to opportunities for them to show initiative and take personal responsibility.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is well above the national average. The rate of unauthorised attendance is broadly average. Punctuality is excellent.

Pupils' good attitudes to school, good behaviour and relationships, as well as their very good attendance, contribute positively to their progress and the standards they attain.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Thirty-seven lessons were seen during the inspection. Of these, 97 per cent were satisfactory or better, including 51 per cent where teaching was good. Teaching was unsatisfactory in one lesson, which was a history lesson in Year 1. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good. There is a much higher proportion of good teaching in Year 2 than in Year 1. The teaching of science and art is good for pupils aged five to seven, but the teaching of information technology is unsatisfactory for pupils of this age.

The teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good for children under five and it is satisfactory for pupils aged five to seven. Children's achievements and learning are good while they are under five and they are satisfactory between the ages of five and seven. The school is effective in meeting the needs of all pupils when they are under five, but there is too little challenge for the higher attaining pupils aged five to seven, especially in Year 1. There is good teaching of pupils with special educational needs in small groups taken out of class. The teaching of these pupils in class lessons is satisfactory.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for children under five. Satisfactory for those aged five to seven, although there is too little work in the word processing aspect of information technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There are clear and effective procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are provided with suitable work that takes account of their identified needs. Their individual education plans are reviewed termly.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The school is well aware of the needs of the few pupils with English as an additional language and ensures that they receive the necessary support and work matched to their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and very well for their cultural development. The school has a Christian ethos. Pupils learn about their own cultural heritage and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. The school cares well for pupils' personal wellbeing. The pastoral support is of a high quality and pupils are made to feel safe and secure at school. There are no procedures for assessing the standard of pupils' work in religious education, art and music and the procedures for assessment in English are not effective.

The school's partnership with parents is good and parents have positive views of the school. The links with the junior and secondary school are very good and contribute positively to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher is very aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and leads the team of staff with quiet determination. Not all teachers with subject co-ordinating responsibilities are well enough involved in leading and developing their areas.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is well involved in the management of the school and fulfils all its responsibilities effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Evaluation of teaching takes place and action is taken to bring about improvements where identified as necessary. The school's performance in national tests is analysed and areas of weakness are targeted for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Appropriate use is made of all the resources available to the school. Specific grants are used properly for their intended purposes.

The school has sufficient teachers, support staff and resources to meet the demands of the curriculum. The accommodation is good. The school's application of the principles of best value to its work is good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is approachable. • Their children are well taught and make good progress. • The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. • Pupils are encouraged to be mature and responsible. • The school is well lead and managed. • Their children like school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information they receive on their children's progress. • The range of activities outside lessons. • The amount of homework.

Inspection findings support parents' positive views, although pupils' progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and the higher attaining pupils are not always challenged enough. The quality of information provided for parents, especially about their children's progress, is very good. A good range of activities is provided outside lessons, although these are only for Year 2 pupils. The amount of homework is satisfactory for the age of the pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The standards achieved by pupils leaving the school in 1999, in the National Curriculum tests, were above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. These results were also above average when compared with those achieved in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Pupils' achievements were better in reading and mathematics than in writing. The percentage of pupils reaching at least the level expected of most seven year olds in the tests was close to the national average. In reading, two-fifths of pupils reached a higher level than this and, in mathematics, a third of pupils did. In writing, by contrast, only a few pupils were performing at the higher level. Girls did better than boys in writing and boys did better than girls in mathematics. There was little difference between the performance of boys and girls in reading.
2. After the last inspection, in 1996, pupils' results in the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests fell in reading and writing. In 1999, they returned to a similar level to those of 1996 in reading, but writing results remained lower. In 1998, mathematics results fell, but did not go below the national average as those in reading and writing did. The mathematics results for 1999 are close to those at the time of the last inspection.
3. In the teacher assessments in science in 1999, all pupils reached the standard expected of most seven year olds, but only a tenth reached the level above this. This meant that the percentage reaching the expected standard for seven year olds in science was high, although the percentage reaching a higher level was below the national average. Science standards are above average and higher than at the time of the last inspection, when they were reported as being broadly average.
4. This year, on the evidence of pupils' school work, standards in reading, mathematics and science in Year 2 are above average. In writing, standards are lower and are average. The achievements of these pupils are satisfactory, overall, in reading and mathematics. In writing, achievements are unsatisfactory because pupils have not made enough progress in specific aspects such as spelling and punctuation throughout the key stage. A similar picture is shown in the achievements of the pupils now in Year 1. Good progress is made in writing in the reception classes, but it is not continued when pupils are in Year 1. The school is setting realistic targets for the improvement of standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics and is making satisfactory progress towards them. The school is not being ambitious enough, however, about the percentages of pupils that it aims to reach the higher level and to perform above the standard expected of most seven year olds. The writing standards of pupils now in Year 2 are lower than those of the year group that took the end of Key Stage 1 tests in 1999. The school is taking satisfactory action to address this.
5. Children's attainment on entry to the nursery, at the age of four, is broadly average in all areas of learning. On entry to the reception classes, at the beginning of the term in which they will be five, children's attainment is above average except in writing. Attainment in writing is average. By the age of five, children achieve standards above those normally expected for their age, including writing. They meet and many exceed, the Desirable Learning Outcomes for five year olds in language and literacy, mathematics, personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development.
6. By the age of five, children listen attentively to stories and to instructions and explanations given by adults. They handle books correctly, and most read simple sentences. A few higher attaining children read simple stories and discuss their content. All children recognise many letters of the alphabet by shape and sound. Many spell simple three letter words and use them independently in writing and the higher attaining children write in clear sentences. All write their names independently, using upper and lower case letters correctly. Children count to twenty, from ten back to zero, and in tens to one hundred. They add numbers to nine and higher

attaining children add to more than ten in pictorial form. Children sort objects according to criteria, such as colour and make repeating patterns, using two or three shapes and colours. They recognise simple two-dimensional shapes such as circles and triangles and higher attaining children are familiar with some three-dimensional shapes such as cubes. Children understand mathematical language, for example 'taller' and 'shorter', identify small coins and amounts of money and understand the passage of time.

7. By the age of seven, pupils have above average skills in speaking and listening. They listen carefully to their teachers and to each other and communicate ideas clearly, for example, about books they have read together as a class, or the importance of sharing when working and playing together. Many are confident and fluent readers and have good comprehension skills when reading fiction and non-fiction books. Pupils write at the expected length and for a suitable range of purposes, and have a good vocabulary. While higher attaining pupils organise their writing well using simple punctuation, many others do not. Many pupils' spelling is inconsistent. Higher attaining pupils have neat evenly formed and joined writing, but too many others have handwriting that is not sufficiently clear or well enough formed.
8. Most pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 count up to 1000 and forwards and backwards in tens and hundreds. They mentally add and subtract numbers to 100, understand place value to three and four figures, have a secure knowledge of odd and even numbers and check predictions, using calculators. They understand halves and quarters, are familiar with two and three-dimensional shapes, recognise reflective symmetry and have the expected understanding of measures. Pupils apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding well, when solving problems. In science, pupils have a better than expected knowledge of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. They are confident in undertaking scientific investigations and have a secure understanding of the meaning of a fair test. Pupils' work in practical and investigative science, in particular, has improved since the last inspection.
9. Standards of literacy and numeracy in other subjects, at Key Stage 1, are as found in most schools. Pupils use and apply their reading skills effectively, for example, looking at books and reading instructions in geography and history. Writing skills are not well used in Year 1 across the curriculum, because of too great an emphasis on the use of worksheets. They are applied satisfactorily in Year 2 where there are far more opportunities for writing for different purposes. Numeracy skills are used effectively in subjects such as science.
10. Standards in information technology at the end of Key Stage 1 are below the national expectations, and are lower than they were reported as being at the last inspection. Present low standards result from pupils having too few opportunities to develop skills of word processing. Pupils are unable to word process independently, do not have the expected skills in opening, using or closing programs, in changing the colour or size of text, or in printing their work. Pupils do, however, access information on CD ROM to support work in other subjects, program a robot toy and understand the place of technology in the modern world. Due to the limited progress made by pupils in information technology and the low standards achieved, pupils' achievements in this area are unsatisfactory.
11. Standards in religious education, at the end of Key Stage 1, are in line with the expectations set in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils have the expected knowledge and understanding of Christianity, Judaism and Islam, as well as being aware of some other world religions. They recognise some of the differences and similarities of these faiths and are aware of key symbols and ceremonies. They also understand something of the importance of community life and are aware of human emotions. Pupils' achievements in religious education are satisfactory.
12. In design and technology, geography, history and physical education, pupils' work is of the standard normally expected for their age at Key Stage 1 and their achievements in these subjects are satisfactory. In art, and singing as an aspect of music, standards are higher than usually found and pupils' achievements are good. In other aspects of music, standards are as found in most schools and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Standards in art and singing have improved since the last inspection. In all other subjects, except physical education, standards are similar to those found when last inspected. Physical education standards are lower than they were reported as being then, when they were said to be above average. There

is no evidence that physical education standards are declining presently, or as to why they should be lower now than at the time of the last inspection.

13. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. This is a result of the good support they receive in small groups taken out of class. In class lessons, they are provided with satisfactory support and their progress at these times is satisfactory, although it is good in some individual lessons. The few pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress because their needs are recognised and account is taken of them. Higher attaining pupils make satisfactory progress, but their achievements are limited in Year 1, because they do not receive the additional challenge they require. There are, also, occasional instances of these pupils' progress being restricted, due to insufficiently demanding work in Year 2.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Children under five settle into school quickly. In the nursery, they develop good working habits right from the start. They move around the nursery with confidence and know where to find things. They become increasingly able to persevere with a task until it is completed. They play together amicably and know how to share and take turns without argument. This is evident when they are outside using the large play equipment. Their tidying up after outdoor play is quick and well rehearsed. Children in the reception classes understand the fairness of having their time in the role play areas limited, so that other children can have their chance to play there as well. Reception class children settle to work quickly and without fuss, showing good independence as learners.
15. Pupils at Key Stage 1 have good attitudes to learning and are well motivated, especially when the lesson is challenging. They listen attentively to the teacher and each other and are keen to answer questions and be involved. They have good levels of concentration and continue to work even when not directly supervised. They work well both individually and in groups and enjoy sharing their views with the rest of the class.
16. The behaviour of all pupils, whether in class or at play, is good and they know clearly the difference between right and wrong. They are friendly and polite to adults, and enjoy helping whenever they get the chance. Even children in the nursery remember to say thank you to their teacher when she hands them their toys. Pupils meet the teachers' high expectations for behaviour and lessons are uninterrupted and productive. Pupils enjoy the pleasant school buildings and grounds and take good care of them. No incidents of aggressive behaviour were seen during the inspection and bullying is said to be very rare. There were no exclusions during the last school year.
17. Relationships are good among the pupils and between pupils and adults. Pupils of all ages support each other well and provide help when it is needed. A nursery child, for example, picked up a toy for another child which had rolled out of reach. Lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions, with all ages mixing happily together as they eat in the hall. Boys and girls work and play well together and naturally include everybody in playground games. They appreciate the value of friendship.
18. Pupils respond satisfactorily to the school's structured provision for their personal development. They develop increasing independence in their school life, coming in without parental support and getting into the classroom on time and ready for the first lesson. This independence increases as they go through the school and by the time they leave they are starting to look things up in books and work independently. They work with their teacher in agreeing targets for improvement in their work and in their personal development. Pupils undertake a range of duties cheerfully and willingly, such as taking registers to the office, tidying the tables and seeing that the feeders on the bird tables are filled.
19. Attendance during the last reporting period was 96.3 per cent, which is well above the national average and is very good. Attendance has improved significantly since the last inspection. Unauthorised absence is broadly average. Punctuality is excellent and this ensures a very good, prompt start to the school day.

20. Pupils enjoy school. Their good attitudes to school, good behaviour, good relationships and satisfactory response to the opportunities provided for their personal development, as well as their very good attendance, all contribute to the effectiveness of their learning and the standards they achieve.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good for children under five and it is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. In the school as a whole, teaching is at least satisfactory in 97 per cent of lessons and it is good in 51 per cent of lessons. There is a far higher proportion of good teaching in Year 2 than in Year 1. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen during the inspection, which was a history lesson in Year 1. The teaching of all areas of learning is good for children under five in both the nursery and reception classes. This gives children a good start to their education, which is reflected in the standards achieved when they leave the nursery and by the age of five. At Key Stage 1, there is good teaching of science and art and the singing aspect of music. The overall quality of teaching and learning in information technology is unsatisfactory. In all other subjects at Key Stage 1, teaching and learning are satisfactory.
22. Where teaching and learning are good, in the nursery and reception classes, it is because teachers are very knowledgeable about the areas of learning for children of this age. They have very high expectations of the standards of work and behaviour of which all children are capable. Many stimulating and imaginative activities are provided to support clearly identified learning objectives and to make learning fun. In involving nursery children in making vegetable soup, for example, the children were learning about how materials change, using their senses to make decisions about taste and smell and developing their speaking and listening skills as they shared their thoughts. Maximum use is made of outdoor play in the nursery to develop pupils' imagination, creativity and language, as well as their physical skills. As children ride their wheeled toys they are, for example, able to pull in at 'the garage' to fill up with petrol, ask the help of 'the mechanic', and pay the cashier for these services. Staff support children in their learning well, questioning them individually as they work and play. This was evident in one reception class, when a variety of activities were taking place. The teacher questioned children during their role play in 'the vet's practice' by joining in the make-believe situation and asking a child how he had travelled there with his hamster cage. Another child studying some sheep's wool was asked whether she had seen what happens when it is twisted. These well focused interactions with children do much to challenge their thinking and promote effective learning.
23. When teaching is good at Key Stage 1, lessons are also well planned and focused on clear learning objectives and the teacher has good subject knowledge. Good account is taken of the range of pupils' needs in the mixed ability classes. In science lessons, emphasis is placed on the use of the correct scientific language. In art lessons, resources are well prepared, such as for objective drawing. Teachers also provide good demonstrations for pupils to ensure that they are clear about what they have to do. This results in pupils trying hard, working with a good level of involvement and achieving good standards. In singing in Year 1, every moment is used well and the lesson moves on at a good pace. In the most effective literacy lessons, in Year 2, the teacher questions the pupils well about the 'big book' they are reading together as a class and this develops their skills of comprehension. In good history teaching, in Year 2, teaching and learning methods, including role play and model making, ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, develop their understanding well.
24. Where teaching is satisfactory, at Key Stage 1, teachers have secure knowledge of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the requirements of the National Curriculum. Teachers make good use of artefacts in history and demonstration is used in physical education. There are some missed opportunities to discuss the quality of work in physical education lessons, however, when pupils are used to demonstrate. Classroom assistants are well briefed in all lessons and make a good contribution to pupils' learning, especially that of pupils with special educational needs. Although lessons are usually well planned, insufficient account is taken of the needs of higher attaining pupils. This means that they do not receive the challenge they require and that the pace of their learning is slowed. In one Year 1 mathematics

lesson, this resulted in some pupils becoming restless.

25. Good teaching is provided for pupils with special educational needs when they are taken out of class in small groups. Teachers and classroom assistants have a clear understanding of the needs of these pupils and provide a suitable range of activities. They give these pupils the support needed as they work, which helps them to make good progress towards the targets set for them. When pupils with special educational needs are taught with the rest of the class, sufficient support is provided and they make satisfactory progress as a result. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs has improved since the last inspection.
26. The teaching of information technology is unsatisfactory, because teachers do not provide pupils with the experiences necessary to develop their word processing skills to the expected standard. Teachers are not sufficiently confident in the use of the new computer programs available in the school. The overall teaching of information technology is better in Year 1 than in Year 2, because the co-ordinator is based in Year 1 and plans jointly with the other Year 1 teacher. Although some satisfactory teaching was seen in Year 2, this was in the specific area of using a programmable toy, rather than in the use of word processing packages on the computer. Information technology teaching has not improved since the last inspection.
27. In the unsatisfactory history lesson seen, the pace of the lesson was too slow and the work was not challenging enough for many average attaining pupils, as well as those who are higher attaining. There was too little work for the time available and pupils' learning was restricted. Marking is weak throughout Key Stage 1 and does little to help pupils to improve their work. It is often limited to ticks in Year 1 and there are occasional examples of incorrect work being marked as correct, for example in mathematics in Year 2. There is a lack of emphasis on spelling and punctuation either in marking or in the wider teaching of writing. These aspects of teaching limit pupils' learning and the standards they achieve.

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

28. The quality and range of opportunities for learning are good for children under five. The curriculum for nursery and reception children is appropriately framed in the recommended areas of learning for children of this age. It links well to the start of the National Curriculum in the reception classes. Relevant and imaginative activities are provided in all areas to promote effective learning for children under five and those who have already reached their fifth birthday. The exception is the lack of provision for outdoor play with wheeled toys in the reception classes. The nursery and reception teachers work very well together to ensure that the work in the reception classes builds well on that covered in the nursery. They also ensure that similar approaches to the delivery of the curriculum are used to ease the transition for children between the nursery and reception classes.
29. At Key Stage 1, the curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced, except in information technology, where not enough work is undertaken in word-processing. The lack of opportunities provided for pupils to develop their skills in word processing contributes substantially towards the lower standards attained in this subject. An addition to the curriculum since the last inspection, is modern foreign language teaching for Year 2 pupils. Suitable time allocations are made for all subjects. The curriculum is now organised in subjects, rather than broad topics. This has helped to rectify a weakness noted at the time of the last inspection, in the depth of the work undertaken. Pupils are now provided with opportunities to take part in investigative work, in subjects such as mathematics and science, as well as to develop their independent learning skills. This was also an area of weakness at the time of the last inspection.
30. Policies and schemes of work are now in place for all subjects, satisfactorily addressing an omission found at the last inspection. This is ensuring improved continuity in the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills as they move through the key stage. Planning has also improved since that time and teachers now produce planning, termly and weekly. Much detail is included, for example, learning objectives, lesson content and the resources to be used. Too little emphasis, however, is placed on providing work to suit higher attaining pupils. This shortcoming was noted at the time of the last inspection and it still remains, particularly in Year 1.

31. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented. They are maintaining standards in reading and mathematics. The literacy strategy is having less effect on raising standards in writing, especially in the achievement of the higher grades in the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests. The school has introduced weekly lessons, focusing on extended writing to supplement the provision of the literacy hour and to try to improve pupils' achievements in this area. Not enough use is made of other subjects as a means of developing writing skills in Year 1.
32. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Clear procedures are in place and they closely follow the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of pupils. The information gained from the assessment of these pupils' needs is put to good use in the planning of work for teaching in small groups. Individual education plans are provided for pupils who are at Stage 2 and beyond on the school's special educational needs register. These are of good quality and are reviewed each term.
33. Good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education. Issues of drugs awareness and sex education are effectively covered within the topic of 'responsibility and making choices'. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and for their cultural development it is very good. This is a great improvement since the last inspection. Spiritual development is well promoted by acts of collective worship and through religious education. Pupils have opportunities to engage in quiet reflection during assemblies. They are taught the values and beliefs of the Christian faith during religious education lessons, as well as learning about other major world religions. There are good opportunities for pupils to experience awe and wonder. For example, nursery children are introduced to live animals and have the chance to stroke a chicken. Key Stage 1 pupils delight in the intricacy of the flowers they draw in their art class.
34. Pupils' cultural development is well supported by visits to museums and through the use of visiting artists and members of the community who tell them about past times. Multi-cultural understanding is well promoted in religious education lessons and through the use of musical instruments from a wide range of cultures. The work in modern foreign languages helps pupils to develop positive attitudes to other cultures. The school clearly teaches pupils the difference between right and wrong. The moral teaching in personal and social education lessons and in assemblies helps pupils develop a clear set of values. Pupils' social development is well supported in the happy atmosphere that pervades the school and in the good opportunities for them to work together such as in physical education lessons or in science experiments.
35. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided, including art, ball skills, country dancing, musical activities and sewing. These give pupils opportunities to work and play together outside normal lessons. The school welcomes many visitors to enrich the curriculum, including the police, local clergy and guide-dog handlers, as well as various dance, drama and music groups. A wide range of educational visits is arranged, to places such as Blake's Lock Museum, Safety Street and a local farm. All these activities make a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development, as well as to their learning in subjects, such as history and science.
36. The school has good links with the local community, which enrich the curriculum. Links with local churches benefit work in religious education. Connections with local industry have resulted in extra resources, for science in particular. Very good links exist with the local schools and play group and pupils benefit in many ways. Pupils from the comprehensive school visit, to provide displays of gymnastics and music and, on occasions, they help pupils in class, especially with English and mathematics. Curricular links not only support pupils' present work, but allow for a smooth transition to the next stages of their education. A particularly valuable initiative is the modern foreign language teaching for Year 2 pupils provided by the comprehensive school's language assistants. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their schooling.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. Overall, the school cares for the pupils well and there are satisfactory procedures in place to ensure their safety and well being. The pastoral support provided is of a high quality. The

school is a warm and friendly place in which pupils are happy and secure and can enjoy their school life. They can learn without fear within a caring environment. The good relationships that exist make it easy for pupils to talk to staff about any worries they may have. The involvement of the pupils in setting targets for themselves, coupled with their training in independence skills, help them to become mature and self confident. While class teachers are aware of pupils' differing needs, there is too little account taken of higher attaining pupils' needs, especially in Year 1.

38. A satisfactory range of assessment procedures has been introduced to the school since the last inspection. These provide adequate assessment in mathematics, science, information technology, history and geography. The information gained is used well in planning mathematics and science. There are no procedures for assessment in religious education, art or music. In English, assessment procedures are not effective in raising standards. This is because the assessment of pupils' writing against National Curriculum level descriptors is too infrequent. The most frequently used assessment procedures for reading are linked to group reading objectives, and do not adequately identify the attainment and needs of individual pupils. Other satisfactory procedures are in place for individual assessments, but these are used less frequently. The nursery and reception classes have good assessment procedures in addition to those used by the whole school. The information gained is used well to build on children's achievements. A detailed transfer record on each child is passed from the nursery to the reception classes.
39. Target setting in literacy and numeracy takes place for all pupils at Key Stage 1. There is also setting of personal development targets for individuals and the class as a whole, which are determined through discussion between teachers and pupils. Targets are reviewed termly by class teachers with pupils, and are shared with parents. Target setting is not effective in ensuring that higher attaining pupils receive the challenge they need, especially in Year 1. Pupils' personal development is monitored through personal and social and development lessons, where views and attitudes are discussed.
40. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. Staff have regular updates to their training and the headteacher keeps them briefed on any concerns. Where necessary, the school involves social services and other outside agencies. There is an effective policy for health and safety and the management of this on a day-to-day basis is good. A governing body committee carries out annual safety checks and risk assessments. Fire drills take place regularly and there are weekly tests of the alarm. Testing of portable electrical appliances is up to date. First aid procedures are good. Accidents are properly logged and parents are notified in writing in the event of a bump to the head or more serious accident.
41. The school promotes and monitors attendance very well, involving the education welfare officer where necessary. This has led to a significant improvement in attendance since the time of the last inspection. Registers are properly monitored and all unexplained absence is followed up with parents each day. The importance of regular attendance is emphasised by the headteacher and the home-school agreement has led to an improvement in punctuality.
42. The school's management of behaviour is good and leads to high standards of behaviour both in and out of class. This is better than at the time of the last inspection, when some inconsistencies in behaviour management were noted. There is a new policy that is used by Mrs Bland's Infant School and the junior school. This ensures that pupils experience a consistent behaviour management regime throughout their primary education. Staff set a good example and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour at all times. This leads to an environment that is conducive to effective learning. Midday supervisory staff help maintain good order and provide good support during lunchtime on the playgrounds. This has a positive effect on behaviour and safety.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. The school has a good relationship with parents and works closely with them on the education of their children. The views of parents, expressed at the pre-inspection meeting, in the questionnaires and during interviews in the inspection week were strongly supportive of the school. As at the last inspection, most parents see the school as welcoming and easy to

approach. They like the work ethic that the school promotes and see their children happy at school and making good progress. The inspection findings support the positive views of the parents, although progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough. The few negative views expressed in the questionnaire were in relation to homework, information on progress and extra-curricular activities. The inspection findings do not support these negative views.

44. The school places strong emphasis on communications and provides parents with very good information. A regular newsletter and letters from the headteacher provide parents with general information of diary details and other events within the school. Topic details are sent out every term. All communications are put on notice boards as well as being sent home. Pupils' annual reports are of a good quality and provide sufficient detail of attainment and progress made, together with targets for improvement. There is an informative prospectus and governors' annual report, but both publications omit a few items statutorily required. Each term there are consultation evenings to discuss pupils' progress.
45. Parents make a good contribution to the learning of their children and to the life of the school. A significant number of parents help in the classroom and on outside visits and provide valuable help that the school itself could not afford. Parents provide good help to their children at home with their reading and other homework. Reading diaries are very well used and are checked daily by the school. This ensures that almost all children are heard to read every day at home. The school provides helpful information to parents on how to help support their children's learning. The parents' association is active and well supported. It raises significant funds that are put to good use, purchasing resources and improving the school environment. The school has maintained the many positive features of its links with parents identified at the last inspection.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The school's aims and values are well reflected in its work. The school is successful in providing pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum as it sets out to do. It also meets its other aims of developing a positive attitude to learning and encouraging a sense of responsibility and respect for the school community and the wider world. The one area in which it is less successful is in ensuring that the curriculum is relevant to each child's needs, as higher attaining pupils are not well enough challenged, especially in Year 1.
47. The overall leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and key staff are satisfactory. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction for the work of the school, based on a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. She leads with quiet determination, focusing staff on the areas in need of improvement. At the time of the inspection, the school was without a deputy headteacher. A senior member of staff was unofficially taking a more leading role to support the headteacher. Staff work well together as a team.
48. The headteacher is co-ordinator for English. She provides good leadership for this area through the monitoring of teaching, analysis of test results to identify areas in need of improvement and the provision of support to any teachers who need to rectify weaknesses in their teaching. The numeracy co-ordinator has provided effective leadership for the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. She has been very active in training staff and she is ensuring further development of the school's provision through monitoring teaching and analysing assessment results, as well as through discussions with staff. There is no one person responsible for leading and managing the provision for children under five, but staff in the nursery and reception classes work well as a team. Where the content of meetings is seen to be relevant, the nursery teacher joins the senior management team. The area of special educational needs is well led and managed by the co-ordinator. The wider monitoring of teaching by the headteacher is satisfactory.
49. The co-ordination of subjects other than English and mathematics is less effective. Teachers responsible for subjects provide colleagues with informal support when required and some maintain an overview of resources, such as in geography and history. While most co-ordinators

are aware of what is taking place in their subjects throughout the school by receiving planning from other teachers, they do not monitor the quality of the teaching or the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning sufficiently. As information technology is currently identified as an area for development, the co-ordinator is providing staff training and has seen colleagues teach. Co-ordinators do not monitor teaching directly unless their subject is identified as a priority on the school development plan. This limits their effectiveness in raising standards and improving the quality of education provided.

50. The involvement of the governing body in the management of the school is good. Governors are well informed about the work of the school, recognising areas in need of improvement as well as its strengths. They are active in monitoring independently as well as in fully taking account of information provided by the headteacher. The literacy and numeracy governors observe the school's work in these areas and report to governors. Governors also identify other areas of focus, which they look at and report on, for example the transition between the nursery and the reception classes. They have recognised the need to look at provision for higher attaining pupils. Governors are very proactive in gaining parents' opinions and in reporting back to parents, for example, explaining why the school takes a particular approach. Governors are not monitoring the progress of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs and this is an omission. There are also omissions in the governing body's annual report to parents and in the prospectus.
51. The school's identification of priorities for improvement is good. There is a firm recognition of the need to improve writing standards to bring pupils' achievements in line with those in reading and mathematics and action is being taken to realise this. Action is also being taken to address the weaknesses in information technology. The process of school development planning is satisfactory. The school has a detailed one year development plan, with outline planning for the next two years. Sufficient account is taken of staff views, as well as there being a good level of involvement of the governing body. In making decisions on spending, governors take into account the school's performance in comparison with other schools. They use figures for academic performance and cost effectiveness in their deliberations. The only minor concern about the development planning is that cost details are only included for the current year. This has already been recognised by the incoming chair of the finance committee as an area for development. The principles of best value are applied well to the school's work, including its spending.
52. The school receives an amount per pupil that is a little above average for an infant school and carried forward a balance of around ten per cent from last year. This has been used to provide additional classroom support during the current school year. In particular, this support is of benefit to pupils with special educational needs.
53. Day-to-day financial management is satisfactory. The school has only recently installed a new computerised accounts system and has not yet completed a full year with it. The finance officer maintains the accounts effectively and these are reconciled each month with figures provided by the local education authority. Purchase procedures ensure that value for money is obtained and there is a proper hierarchy of signatories for order, receipt and invoice. The school was audited in 1997 and the one recommendation has been put in place. The chair of the finance committee is in school regularly and provides ongoing support.
54. The school receives grants under the standards fund and the National Grid for Learning. These grants are administered by the headteacher and properly used for the purposes intended. The finance officer maintains the school fund and this has been recently audited. Although computers exist in all classrooms and the school is linked to the Internet, the use of new technology in the school is at an early stage, but is satisfactory, overall. Plans are in hand to increase the provision of computers in the near future and the use of computerised systems for administration is developing satisfactorily.
55. There are sufficient qualified and experienced teachers in the school. Most teachers have additional responsibilities over and above their classroom duties and have appropriate job descriptions. Newly qualified teachers receive good support from a colleague acting as a 'mentor'. Teachers and other staff new to the school are properly briefed and supported. The

provision of classroom assistants is good, with each class having support for literacy and numeracy in the mornings. The administrative and premises staff provide good support and ensure the smooth daily running of the school. Appraisal of all staff other than the headteacher takes place, and the school is producing a staff development plan as part of its preparation for Investors in People accreditation. The headteacher has not been appraised for some years. This is unsatisfactory.

56. The accommodation is good. The classrooms are large and well appointed and there are useful additional areas for small group work. The building is in good condition and is enhanced by attractive displays of pupils' work. The nursery provides very good accommodation and the school's external facilities are good. Resources for learning are satisfactory in range, quality and quantity and are effectively used to support the pupils' learning. There is no provision for children under five in the reception classes to use large equipment, such as wheeled toys, for outdoor play.
57. The effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. Children's attainment is average when they enter the nursery and, on entry to the infant school, pupils' have achieved above average standards. Standards are above average when pupils leave the school at the age of seven in reading and mathematics, but writing standards are average. Children's achievements are good while they are under five and they are satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and the overall provision for their personal development is good. Teaching is good for children under five and it is satisfactory at Key Stage 1. The overall leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Considering the effectiveness of the school against the costs, the value for money provided by the school is satisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to build on the existing good practice, rectify the weaknesses and improve the quality of education in the school, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:
- a. improve pupils' progress in writing and raise standards in information technology by:
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes through the subjects of the curriculum and placing greater emphasis on the quality of handwriting;
 - giving greater attention to the development of pupils' use of punctuation and spelling, with more opportunities for them to edit their writing;
 - increasing the training for teachers in the use of information technology, ensuring that pupils are taught skills in word processing and that they have sufficient opportunities to use them, especially in composing and editing their own writing; (Paragraphs 1, 4, 7, 9, 10, 26, 27, 29, 31, 73, 74, 77, 80, 106, 107)
 - b. ensure that higher attaining pupils are supported in making full progress and achieving their best by:
 - taking full account of their needs in the planning and teaching of lessons so that they are sufficiently challenged; (Paragraphs, 13, 24, 30, 37, 46, 80, 84, 89, 100)
 - c. develop procedures for assessment in religious education, art and music and review the procedures for English to ensure that teachers are clear about the standards each pupil is achieving; (Paragraphs 38, 81, 93, 119)
 - d. improve marking so that it contributes to pupils' learning by supporting them in improving their work; (Paragraphs 27, 80, 85, 89, 118)
 - e. increase the participation of all teachers with subject responsibilities in monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning. (Paragraphs 49, 90, 93, 101, 105, 112, 115, 119)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- children under five in the reception classes do not have access to outdoor play with large equipment such as wheeled toys; (Paragraphs 56, 60, 70)
- governors are not monitoring the progress of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs; (Paragraph 50)
- the headteacher has not been appraised; (Paragraph 55)
- the prospectus and governors' annual report omit items statutorily required. (Paragraphs 44, 50)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	51	46	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	144
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	30

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	22

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	25	16	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	22	22
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	35	36	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (77)	88 (81)	88 (84)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	24	25
	Girls	14	14	16
	Total	35	38	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (85)	93 (85)	100 (86)
	National	82 (83)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	141
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.6
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	100

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	274,919
Total expenditure	276,337
Expenditure per pupil	1788
Balance brought forward from previous year	29,056
Balance carried forward to next year	27,638

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	191
Number of questionnaires returned	41

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	24	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	41	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	51	5	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	54	10	0	7
The teaching is good.	51	39	5	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	54	10	5	7
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	37	0	0	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	34	2	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	34	49	7	2	7
The school is well led and managed.	54	39	2	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	37	2	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	39	12	0	12

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

CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

59. Children normally enter the nursery at the beginning of the term after their fourth birthday and attend part-time. During their first term they attend in the afternoons and in the second term for the morning sessions. This is because the morning sessions are longer than those in the afternoons. Places are offered to younger children if available. Children move to the reception classes at the beginning of the term in which they will be five. The nursery serves a wider community than Mrs Bland's Infant school. About 75 per cent of children attending the nursery go on to join the reception classes. Most children who join the reception classes from outside have had some pre-school education. At the time of the inspection, there were thirty-seven children in the reception classes. Only three of these, two girls and one boy, were still under five. Many had recently reached the age of five, twenty-four children having been under five at the beginning of term. No children under five were identified as having special educational needs.
60. On entry to the nursery, children's attainment is broadly average in all areas of learning. While in the nursery, they make good gains in their learning. Attainment on entry to the reception class is above average, except in writing. The children's writing standards are in line with those normally found for their age. They handle books well for their age and read text from left to right. They have above average skills in counting and in their understanding of numbers up to ten. Higher attaining children count to twenty. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is better than usually found for this age, as is their creative, personal, social and physical development. While in reception classes, children make good progress in all areas of development, but with limitations in some aspects of physical development. This is because there is no provision for children under five to play outside with equipment such as wheeled toys. By the age of five, less than a term after entry to the reception classes, children's attainment is above average in all areas including writing. Most children meet, and many exceed, the Desirable Learning Outcomes in all the recommended areas of learning for children of this age. The school has maintained the high standards achieved and the good quality of education provided that were found at the time of the last inspection.

Personal and social development

61. By the age of five, many children exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in this area. They share resources well, such as sticky paper for mathematics work and take turns in using sponges to make a repeating pattern with paint. They have good relationships with each other and adults and agree that it is fair to have a set time in the role play area. They concentrate well on activities, such as using the computer or tracing to develop pencil control and compliment each other on their success. When changing for physical education, they demonstrate great speed, independence and sense of purpose. They recognise the need to make full use of their allocated time in the hall for physical education and quickly settle back to lessons on returning to the classroom. They show pride in having made lanterns for the Chinese New Year and treat their classrooms and equipment with great care when tidying away.
62. The quality of teaching of this area is good in the nursery and the reception classes, enabling the children to make good gains in their learning. Teachers and nursery nurses work well together to create a positive environment in which their example helps children to develop respect and consideration for others. In using equipment, such as large wheeled toys outdoors, children are encouraged to take turns and play co-operatively together. Respect for different cultures is well promoted through displays of lanterns and dragons for Chinese New Year. Praise is used well, enhancing children's self-esteem, for example when success has been achieved in counting or independently tracing patterns. Teachers successfully encourage children to have responsible attitudes and to tidy away. Good organisation of activities, including use of the computer and the teachers' very good management of the children, contribute much to their growing independence, ability to work in groups and good behaviour towards each other. Teachers promote independence by allowing children choice in selecting

from a range of activities. In the reception class, this is limited in the morning sessions because of a more directed timetable of literacy, numeracy and physical education lessons.

Language and literacy

63. Most children exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in this area by the age of five. They listen carefully to stories and to the teacher. They remember well details of stories they have heard, for example recalling 'Mr. Big', a story of the previous day and retelling it clearly. They recognise that some words rhyme and know how to make rhyming words by changing the initial letter. Many ably spell three letter words and use them independently in writing. The highest attaining children write in clear sentences. All children handle books correctly and most read simple sentences. The highest attaining children are fluent in reading simple stories and discuss the books they read. All children identify a range of letters of the alphabet by shape and sound and higher attaining children use them to spell words. All have at least the expected independence in forming letters accurately and write their names, using upper and lower letters correctly.
64. The quality of teaching is good in the nursery and reception classes. This results in children making good gains in their learning. Nursery staff promote listening skills well with interesting focal points, such as moving animal pictures to keep the children's attention. They develop the children's interest in books and give time for children to respond to questions. Reception class staff build on this effectively with a range of interesting activities to promote good reading skills, including the use of the computer, the school library and good liaison with parents through home-school reading diaries. Good opportunities for speaking and listening and writing are provided through role play, which help extend children's vocabulary. Children are given many situations in which to speak, listen and write as they participate in imaginative play in 'the vet's practice' or 'the pet shop'. Opportunities for the development of children's vocabulary are planned for effectively and used through visits made to a farm, explorations of artefacts from the past and in the use of mathematical terms such as 'shape' and 'position'.

Mathematics

65. Most children exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in mathematics, by the age of five. All children are familiar with numbers from one to ten and most ably count to twenty, from ten back to zero and in tens to one hundred. They understand 'one more' than a number and combine this with larger numbers to make numbers up to nine. The higher attaining children combine numbers over ten in pictorial form. Children sort objects into sets according to their colour and identify two-dimensional shapes such as circles, squares, rectangles and triangles. Those who are higher attaining recognise three-dimensional shapes such as cubes and cuboids. They use the correct language for shape when making a two or three pattern sequence. They correctly identify everyday objects that are taller or shorter than each other and small coins and amounts of money. The highest attaining pupils recognise coins and amounts of money up to fifty pence. Children are aware of the passage of time and understand payment for services through their role-play in the 'pet shop' and 'vet's practice'.
66. The quality of teaching of this area of learning is good. It results in children concentrating well in group and class activities and making good gains in their development of mathematical understanding. In the nursery, good use is made of interesting resources to develop children's counting skills and awareness of number. Effective adult support helps children to play games together where decisions must be made about ordering odd and even numbers, or naming a shape such as a square, triangle or cube. In the reception classes, teaching takes place at a brisk pace with interesting resources, which help focus and develop skills in concentration and promote children's learning. In mental mathematics sessions, questions are well matched to children's differing needs and challenge their thinking. The provision of a good range of activities to explore patterns contributes to the good gains children make in their understanding of sequence. Activities engage children's interest and lead to them persevering with their work. Effective discussion sessions at the end of lessons help reinforce what children have learned. The grouping of children by prior attainment for focused activities ensures that children are sufficiently challenged or supported where the need arises. The use of mathematics in role play, use of cursor keys on the computer and positional language in physical education and on

displays contribute to children's growing awareness of mathematics in everyday life.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. By the age of five, most children exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in this area. They confidently talk about their home, family, the adjacent 'big school' and the library there. They know that the farm is not too far from school and that it is possible to walk there on a defined route. Through discussions about air, they know that it can help kites to fly, blow up balloons and that fish get air from water. Through role-play, they understand appointment systems and care of animals at 'the vet's practice' and purchasing of animals in 'the pet shop'. Children use cutting, joining and folding skills effectively to make large and small puppets and join construction materials to represent vehicles or buildings. They use the mouse or cursor keys on the computer ably to access games such as 'dress the teddy' and find letters or numbers in programs to support the development of their literacy and numeracy skills.
68. The quality of teaching is good in the nursery and reception classes. Interesting activities in the nursery result in good gains in learning and promote the development of skills in cutting, joining and sticking with a range of materials. Awareness of the wider world is developed through role-play situations indoors, such as 'a building site' and outdoors with a 'garage'. A well planned activity of making soup with vegetables enabled children to experience change in materials as they were heated, use their senses to make decisions about taste and smell and to discuss what was happening. The effective use of visitors to bring in live animals such as a chicken and a dog gives children good opportunities to touch, observe and ask questions. The planning and organising of a visit to an allotment allowed children to understand that 'cabbages and carrots grow there' and are not always from a supermarket, as well as following a route from school. Reception teachers plan interesting topics that help develop an enquiring mind, such as the topic on air and a visit to a farm. These activities lead to children developing rapidly their understanding of how air affects living and non-living objects. They very quickly develop their knowledge that wool comes from sheep and eggs from hens. The provision of role play in 'the vet's practice' or puppet theatre enables children to explore and make sense of the world around them.

Physical development

69. By the age of five, most children exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in their physical development. They have co-ordination, control and confidence in using climbing and jumping equipment. Their skills with bats and balls are well developed. When moving about the classroom, they are confident and show a good awareness of others around them. They handle crayons and glue sticks with good control and have good hand-eye co-ordination when using pencils and tools such as scissors.
70. The quality of teaching is good in the nursery and reception classes. Nursery staff provide opportunities for mark making, as well as guided letter formation and support children in developing manipulative skills in the use of tools. They also ensure that tools are used carefully and safely. The regular, planned use of the outdoor environment allows children to develop physical skills in pushing, pulling and riding toys as well as climbing, swinging and balancing. Teachers in the reception classes build on these skills well, with the use of a daily physical education lesson involving small and large apparatus. The frequency of these lessons supports children in participating with enhanced skill and confidence for their age. These lessons are well organised and the activities are suitably challenging for all the children. Teachers do not, however, provide opportunities for children to use wheeled toys in the children's first term in the reception classes when they are still under five. This limits the further development of some physical skills. Although an appropriate outdoor area exists, it is not equipped. The provision of a good range of activities and finger exercises ensures that children continue to make good gains in their manipulative skills with tools and construction materials.

Creative development

71. By the age of five, most children exceed the Desirable Learning Outcomes in this area. They explore musical instruments, know their names such as 'tambourine' and 'guiro', clap rhythms accurately and sing tunefully up and down scales as well as songs. They know that some

instruments are played by beating and some by scraping or shaking. They compare textures well when making pictures from different materials and when modelling with dough, plasticine or clay. They consider the merits of wet and dry sand when using it to make repeating patterns, or explore the shape of letters showing great perseverance to get the shape right. In role-play in 'the vet's practice' and 'pet shop', they sustain imaginary play situations well, communicating with each other as if in the real world.

72. The quality of teaching is good in the nursery and reception classes. In the nursery, children are provided with a wide range of opportunities to develop creativity. The use of role play, both indoors and outdoors, helps children to develop their imagination. Well planned painting, gluing and sticking activities allow children to explore different textures. They are encouraged to appreciate beauty around them in the display of spring flowers and to respond with their senses to the colour and smell. The provision of good quality musical instruments and interesting exercises in rhythm to taped music help children make good gains in skills of listening and responding with feeling. Reception teachers plan well for a wide range of both directed and free choice opportunities for creative and imaginative play, which contribute to the good gains children make in their learning. These include experiencing the use of different textures and responding to music in which children eagerly become involved. Some of these activities are also well planned to support learning in literacy and numeracy, such as the use of paint, plasticine and sticky shapes for looking at symmetry and sand for pattern making and letter formation. The involvement of nursery nurses as part of a team teaching situation contributes to the good achievements of the children.

ENGLISH

73. Pupils' results in the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests in 1999 were above the national average in both reading and writing, based on the average of all the scores achieved. They were also above average when compared with the results achieved in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Pupils' achievements were better in reading than in writing and this is reflected in the percentages of pupils reaching the higher grades in each area. In reading, almost two-fifths of pupils reached level 3, the level above that expected of most seven year olds. In writing, only a few pupils reached this level. The school's results fell after the last inspection. The test results for 1999 showed standards in reading as being at a similar level to those at the time of the last inspection, but writing standards as lower. Girls did better than boys in the writing tests, but there was little difference between the performance of boys and girls in reading in 1999.
74. The evidence of pupils' school work shows the reading standards of pupils now in Year 2 as above average. Their writing standards are no better than average and are lower than those of the year group that took the tests in 1999. Other than staffing changes, there are no identifiable differences in the experiences provided for these two year groups. There are also no apparent differences between the two year groups, such as in the percentage with special educational needs. As with the year group that took the tests in 1999, pupils' achievements continue to be better in reading than in writing. There are some weaknesses in the teaching of writing which contribute to this. The school has already started to address this issue. The judgements that follow relate to pupils now at the end of Key Stage 1.
75. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. They share ideas clearly, giving extended explanations, for example when recounting facts about elephants or chimpanzees from the big books read together as a class. They are confident when speaking to adults about their reading experiences or the work they are doing in class. Standards in speaking and listening have improved since the last inspection, when lower attaining pupils did not contribute to class discussions.
76. Reading standards are also above average at the end of Key Stage 1. Many pupils read confidently, fluently and with good understanding. They discuss the narrative and characters in stories and collect information from non-fiction books, which they are able to sort into categories. As they read books on animals, for example, they identify facts about habitat and the young of the animals. They appreciate the humour in books, such as the behaviour of

young chimpanzees. All pupils use phonic clues effectively when encountering an unfamiliar word. Higher attaining pupils use contextual clues and split words such as 'gangplank'. Pupils' use of phonic skills has improved since the last inspection.

77. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in writing is average, although there are strengths and weaknesses. Pupils write at the expected length and for a suitable range of purposes. They produce reports based on information gathered from books, letters to Father Christmas, descriptions of the village and instructions for making a marbled picture. Many have a well developed vocabulary, which they use to good effect. They understand that the style of their writing needs to be matched to its purpose. Nevertheless, the overall standard of writing is reduced by many pupils' inconsistent use of simple punctuation and spelling. Higher attaining pupils' writing is neat, evenly formed and joined, although the handwriting of a significant minority is unclear and not well enough formed.
78. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with some good teaching of the literacy hour in Year 2. Where teaching is most effective, in Year 2, lessons are well planned and activities relate to clearly identified learning intentions. The teachers' expectations of the standards that all pupils are capable of attaining are appropriately high. Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain activities clearly. This results in pupils learning effectively, because the work has just the right amount of challenge and they are very clear about what is required of them. This means that they concentrate well and put a good effort into their work. Even in otherwise good lessons, there are occasional moments when higher attaining pupils mark time, because there is not sufficient work for the time allowed. This was evident in the writing part of one Year 2 lesson. The result was that the pupils made good gains in developing their skills of reading comprehension in the early part of the lesson, but their rate of progress in writing did not match this.
79. Where teaching and learning in literacy lessons is satisfactory, in Year 1, teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and lesson planning identifies learning objectives. Introductions are focused, but instructions are not always sufficiently clear. Nevertheless, the support provided by teachers and classroom assistants enables pupils to make satisfactory gains in their learning. Sometimes, the pace of the lesson is slowed because the introduction is too long and there is too little time left for pupils to use new knowledge, for example about rhyming words, in their own writing. Teachers with classes in the same year group are better at planning together than at the time of the last inspection.
80. The work in Year 1 pupils' books shows that they do not have sufficient opportunities to write at length or for different purposes, either in English lessons or in other subjects. These features of teaching limit pupils' progress and contribute to their achievements in writing being lower than those in reading. There is also too great an emphasis on the use of worksheets, which restrict the progress of higher attaining pupils, because they do not provide them with enough challenge. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. Their learning is particularly effective when they are taken out of class for intensive support with a classroom assistant. There are also examples of good progress being made by these pupils in some class lessons because of the support given and the matching of activities to their particular needs. Pupils with English as an additional language receive the support they need and make satisfactory progress. Punctuation and spelling are not emphasised enough, which leads to limitations in these features of pupils' writing. This is compounded by marking not focusing on how pupils might improve in these areas. In Year 1, marking is poor and is limited mainly to ticks.
81. The headteacher is co-ordinating English and is providing good leadership for this aspect of the school's work. She is very aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision. She monitors through classroom observations, discusses areas for development with individual teachers and provides them with a written report. In any cases where weaknesses in teaching are identified, support is provided. The leadership of English, including the monitoring of teaching, has improved since the last inspection. Although staff development has been undertaken to improve pupils' standards and achievements in writing, the headteacher recognises that improvement is too slow. There are new systems for evaluating and recording the standard of pupils' reading and writing skills. While these have been implemented across

the school, they are not effective in raising standards. The group reading records fail to identify when individuals are in need of greater challenge. Hence, some pupils' individual reading, using scheme books, is too easy for them. Writing assessments in relation to National Curriculum level descriptors are too infrequent to inform teaching.

MATHEMATICS

82. Pupils' results in the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests in 1999 were above average, based on the average of all the scores achieved. They were also above average when compared with the results achieved in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Almost a third of pupils reached the level above that normally expected of seven year olds. Since the last inspection, results have been consistently above the national average, except in 1998 when they were broadly in line with the national average. Over the last two years, boys have performed better than girls. The evidence of pupils' work shows the present Year 2 to be above average, maintaining the standards of the 1999 tests.
83. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils count reliably to 1,000 and confidently count forwards and backwards in tens and hundreds. They add and subtract numbers to 100 mentally. The highest attaining pupils work with numbers up to one thousand. Most pupils understand place value to three and four figures. They know, for example, that 93 is $9 \times 10 + 3$. Pupils readily transfer their knowledge of numbers to solving money problems in similarly large numbers. Pupils have secure knowledge of odd and even numbers and check predictions with calculators. When using fractions they recognise halves and quarters of amounts as well as numbers. They understand and compare weights, using everyday objects. They name two and three-dimensional shapes accurately and match them to commonly used packets in the environment, such as cereal or sweet boxes. They know how many faces and edges these shapes have, understand that a 90 degree angle makes a quarter turn in shapes and letters and represent reflective symmetry pictorially. When programming a robot toy, they demonstrate clear understanding of half turns as 180 degrees and full turns as 360 degrees. They apply their mathematical knowledge to solving written problems, choosing the correct procedures, for example, in solving cost problems with money or estimates in measures.
84. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, as at the time of the last inspection and some good teaching was observed in one Year 2 class. In this good lesson, the brisk pace, combined with the teacher's good subject knowledge and well directed questions, resulted in pupils eagerly answering questions and concentrating on their work throughout the lesson. This enabled them to make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of subtraction facts and solving money problems. Satisfactory teaching in other lessons allows pupils to make the expected gains in learning. In both Year 1 classes, however, while pupils with special educational needs are well supported, insufficient attention is given to challenging higher attaining pupils who are capable of working with higher numbers. Where extension work was provided in one Year 1 class, it was not sufficiently structured to present a challenge, which allowed pupils to become restless.
85. All teachers have at least satisfactory subject knowledge and plan and conduct lessons at an appropriate pace for their pupils, ensuring that they understand the focus of the lesson. This results in pupils behaving well and persevering with a task. Discussions at the close of lessons help pupils to consolidate what they have learned. Good use is made of well-informed classroom assistants to guide pupils in acquiring new mathematical skills, particularly those who have special educational needs. Year 1 teachers make good use of information technology to enhance pupils' interest and understanding in presenting a collection of data in graphs, such as block graphs and pictographs. Most pupils work with confidence and pupils in Year 2, including those with special educational needs, are supported in developing independence in solving number problems. Pupils with English as an additional language are given the necessary support to fully access the mathematics curriculum. Marking in mathematics does not do enough to support pupils' learning and, occasionally, incorrect work is ticked as being correct.
86. A satisfactory policy and scheme of work are in place. The scheme is based on the National Numeracy Strategy and a commercial scheme provides support in developing pupils' understanding of shape, space and measures. It has an assessment system linked to it for

individual pupils, as well as for giving a class overview. This is being used successfully in most classes to identify progress, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has been very active in training staff in the National Numeracy Strategy and is continuing to develop new initiatives. These are developed after monitoring of lessons, assessments and discussions with staff. The leadership of mathematics has improved since the last inspection. The setting of pupils in Year 2 is allowing higher attaining pupils to move forward and pupils who need additional support receive more focused attention in smaller groups.

SCIENCE

87. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments, all pupils reached the level expected of most seven year olds. In this respect, standards were high. The percentage of pupils reaching the level above this was below the national average and represented a tenth of the pupils, which was lower than in reading and mathematics. The school work of pupils presently in Year 2 is of an above average standard. Standards are better than at the time of the last inspection when they were reported as being broadly average.
88. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils correctly name the main external features of the human body and a flowering plant. They recognise that living things need to grow and to reproduce, and explain, for example, the life cycle of the frog and the importance of the different methods of seed distribution for plants. Pupils know that food is needed for activity and understand what constitutes a healthy diet. They recognise and name common materials and sort them according to their properties. They know, for example, that some will float and others will sink and that some conduct electricity and others do not. Pupils understand the role of batteries, wires and bulbs in making an electric circuit and know that a circuit will not work if it has a break in it. Pupils know that sound and light come from a variety of sources. They successfully undertake experiments, such as into the effect of heat on plant growth and most explain clearly the meaning of a fair test. This aspect of pupils' work in science has particularly improved since the time of the last inspection.
89. The overall quality of teaching is good, although there are some weaknesses in Year 1. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. Lessons are usually well planned and good use is made of practical activities to gain pupils' interest and to promote their learning. Nevertheless, insufficient account is taken of the needs of higher attaining pupils in Year 1. In one lesson, Year 1 pupils who had finished the work provided were given mundane colouring exercises for the rest of the lesson, which neither suited their needs, nor extended their knowledge. In other lessons in Year 2, however, teachers' expectations of pupils are high and lessons are conducted at a brisk pace. In these lessons, pupils' interest is engaged and they settle quickly and enthusiastically to their tasks. This ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are able to make good gains in their knowledge and understanding. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, instruction is clear and helpful support is provided throughout. Teachers use the correct scientific language, which develops pupils' confidence in using it. Pupils respond to the good teaching by working well with other pupils in carrying out activities, producing neat work and being keen to provide correct answers to the problems set. Pupils know how to proceed and readily turn to their teachers for assistance if necessary. Much verbal support is given by teachers, but, when marking pupils' books, they rarely provide any helpful comments or advice.
90. The school has a satisfactory scheme of work and this is an improvement since the last inspection. It has helped to ensure that new work builds on that previously covered as pupils move through the school. The result has been an improvement in standards. The co-ordinator, who produced the scheme, gives support to her colleagues when required. She is aware of what is taking place throughout the school, because she receives teachers' planning. She does not, however, have a monitoring role in classrooms. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, with the information gained from assessment being used effectively to tackle any identified weaknesses. The written work undertaken by pupils, especially that relating to practical activities, successfully supports the school's initiative in literacy in Year 2. This is less effective in Year 1, where the use of worksheets limits pupils' opportunities to express themselves. Counting and measuring activities support the school's work in numeracy. Little use is made of

information technology to enhance the work in science and this was also a weakness at the time of the last inspection.

ART

91. The standard of work achieved is higher than that normally expected for pupils of this age. Standards are better than they were reported as being at the time of the last inspection. Pupils use pencils, pastels and paint effectively. They mix their own colours confidently, and understand how to achieve the shades they require for their paintings. Still life drawings, such as those of fruit and flowers, show good observational skills, as well as effective use of line and tone. Pupils draw and paint from imagination and express feelings successfully, such as happiness and anger. Pupils control materials such as clay well when making candle holders. They show good awareness of the visual impact of their work in collage representing such things as spiders and forest scenes. Pupils have a good understanding of the work of famous artists studied. Year 2 pupils, for example, show this well in their pictures in the style of Joan Miro. Pupils throughout the school reflect confidently on their work and consider how it might be improved.
92. The quality of teaching and learning is good and this is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Lessons are well planned and well resourced. Teachers provide a good range of items for pupils to observe and copy and suitable materials with which to work. Teachers have good subject knowledge and provide clear explanations and demonstrations. The instruction provided on observational drawing is given particularly carefully. Teachers manage pupils well. Pupils enjoy art and work with interest, enthusiasm and commitment. They concentrate hard, such as when providing fine detail in pencil sketches. Their behaviour is always good. Teachers provide much help and support, enabling pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make good gains in their knowledge and skills. Teachers take pleasure in producing attractive displays of pupils' work.
93. There is a satisfactory scheme of work, which is now being implemented consistently through the school. This has contributed substantially towards the improvements in standards since the time of the last inspection. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and provides clear support for her colleagues. She receives plans of the work to be undertaken, but she has only informal opportunities to monitor the work being produced. No assessment procedures are in place, so information from assessment cannot be used to inform planning. Pupils are provided with opportunities to write about their own work, as well as that of famous artists and this supports the school's work in literacy satisfactorily.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. Only one lesson of design and technology was observed. Evidence was also drawn from looking at teachers' planning, displays around the school, pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils.
95. The standard of work in design and technology is similar to that normally found for pupils of this age and that found at the last inspection. Year 2 pupils design a picture to be made with cross-stitch competently. Their designs show detailed sequenced steps of the sewing, sticking to a background and making of a wooden frame. They identify the resources needed. Levels of evaluation range from simple sentences to detailed analysis of how the product could be improved. In a current topic on making a book with bookbinding procedures, the making aspect is better than normally found for the age group. Year 1 pupils plan as a class and discuss how they will make houses by covering boxes in paper and make chimneys fit upright on the roof. When making dragon puppets for the Chinese New Year, they list the materials needed. They are competent in a range of folding and joining techniques using glue and staples. They understand the use of paper fasteners to make moving joints on puppets. They do not record their evaluations, but discuss them orally within the class.
96. On the basis of all the evidence available, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall. The planning of new projects builds well on pupils' prior experience and ensures the development of pupils' skills. Interesting and challenging projects are provided, such as making

a box in Year 2 to hold a Christmas cake that the pupils also made. Planning for evaluation is not undertaken consistently with each project. As a result, pupils' skills of evaluation are not as well developed as their skills in other aspects of the design process. Teachers' expectations of pupils' standards of work in making objects is appropriate for their age and pupils respond well by producing careful work which they are proud to discuss. In Year 2, the use of a skilled voluntary helper makes a positive contribution to the standard of work. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. The teaching supports pupils' productivity, perseverance and independence, while allowing them to support each other in more complex gluing and stitching procedures, such as when making a special book. Pupils respond with enthusiasm to tasks set for them and co-operate with each other well. All pupils make satisfactory gains in skills of designing and particularly in making, but not consistently so in written evaluations in Year 2.

97. The scheme of work provides satisfactory support for the development of skills, as pupils move through the school, including work with food and textiles. An assessment procedure is included and is used satisfactorily. The co-ordinator, although not a specialist, seeks to extend her knowledge through attending courses and bringing in expert help. She sees planning documents, but does not monitor teaching. She is not able to develop the subject, as it is not a school priority. There are plans, however, to update the scheme of work for the introduction of the revised National Curriculum in September. All the positive features found at the last inspection have been maintained.

GEOGRAPHY

98. No direct teaching of geography was seen during the inspection. Evidence was drawn from an examination of teachers' planning, looking at the work in pupils' books and on display around the school and from discussions with teachers and pupils.
99. Throughout the school, the standard of geography work is broadly in line with that normally found for the age of the pupils. Year 1 pupils have the expected awareness of their immediate environment. They make plans of their classroom and playground competently. They know where their homes are in relation to the school and make simple maps, showing features of their neighbourhood. They use the computer to record information in simple graphs, for example, about the number of pupils living in different types of houses, such as detached or semi-detached. Pupils in Year 1 also know how to observe and record the weather and make a chart for this purpose using symbols and pictures. Pupils in Year 2 understand a large-scale map of the neighbourhood with photographs taken from the air. They are starting to assess the quality of their environment and make comparisons of Burghfield Common with Reading. They are aware of the problems posed by traffic on narrow roads. They have the expected geographical vocabulary and understand terms such as 'village' and 'canal'. Through undertaking local walks, pupils are aware of the effect of different seasons on the physical landscape.
100. On the basis of all the available evidence, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. While all pupils make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding of geography, occasionally, too little challenge is offered to higher attaining pupils. This is especially the case in Year 1 where pupils have too few opportunities for writing activities. In Year 2, in particular, the use of practical activities such as drama, model making and fieldwork ensures that all pupils learn well. These ways of learning give good access to the geography curriculum to pupils with special educational needs or those for whom English is an additional language.
101. The co-ordinator is a temporary teacher and, as a result, has a limited role in the development of geography. She does ensure that the school has sufficient resources to deliver the curriculum and that the scheme of work is followed broadly by her colleagues. Assessment procedures are adequate, although there is little use of the information gained from them in planning the curriculum. There is little monitoring of pupils' performance through, for example, sampling their work. There is no specific monitoring of the teaching of geography or the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning. Potential links between the geography curriculum and the modern foreign language programme, provided by visiting staff, have not been exploited.

HISTORY

102. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. Evidence was also gained from a scrutiny of pupil's work, displays around the school, looking at teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils.
103. The standard of work in history is broadly in line with that normally found for the age of the pupils. Year 1 pupils have a good sense of chronology and compare some aspects of everyday life in the past with their own lives. They are aware of changes that have taken place over the centuries, such as in the way artificial light is provided in homes. They know something of the lives of famous people such as Florence Nightingale and Queen Elizabeth I. Through studying the work of Florence Nightingale, they have an insight into how hospitals then differed from those of today. Year 2 pupils have a secure knowledge of local history about canals, the Victorian era and life in 1950s Britain.
104. On the basis of all the available evidence, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some good teaching in Year 2. In the one lesson seen, in Year 1, teaching was unsatisfactory. Teachers make good use of artefacts and discussion about them. This helps pupils to develop an understanding of changes over time, for example in technology. Good use is also made of visitors with experience and knowledge about the topics studied. This has led to some very good work in Year 2 on the 1950s. In the unsatisfactory lesson in Year 1, the work set was not challenging enough for many pupils. This restricted the learning of not only the potentially higher attaining pupils, but also of many average attaining pupils. The pace of work was far too slow. Nevertheless, the teacher managed the pupils and resources well and was very organised. This resulted in pupils behaving well, even though there was not enough for them to do. Teachers make good use of visits to museums and re-enactments of historical experiences to enrich pupils' learning.
105. The co-ordinator is a temporary teacher and, as a result, her role is limited. She is aware of what is taking place throughout the school in history and has obtained relevant artefacts through a local scheme to support the curriculum. Little has been done on assessing history work. The procedures are adequate, but little use is made of the information gained in planning the curriculum. There is no monitoring of teaching or the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning. There has not been any specific action to address the variations in the quality of teaching and learning in history. The school is seeking to rectify this as a wider issue.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

106. Standards in information technology are too low and are below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. This is because too little work is covered to develop pupils' skills related to word processing. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a limited knowledge of producing text on screen in simple sentences. They are unable to word process independently, as they do not have the skills to open, use and close programs, or to print their work. With adult support, they enter punctuation into text and know how to select a capital letter. They do not know how to highlight or change text by colour or size. Pupils do have the expected skills in programming a robot toy and they use correct mathematical terminology for directional instructions of movement. They access information from CD ROM and hard disk competently for help in geography with atlas work, in science for testing the lighting of bulbs and in support of literacy and numeracy work. Pupils have a good understanding of how equipment both in school, and the wider world, relies on technological development for its operation. Standards are lower than at the time of the last inspection, although word processing skills were also identified as being weak then.
107. The overall quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory, as at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are not given the necessary experiences to develop skills in word processing. Satisfactory lessons were observed in both Year 2 classes during the inspection. These involved pupils learning about programmable toys with enthusiasm, an area in which standards are as expected by the age of seven. Planning indicates, and the knowledge and enthusiasm of pupils confirm that satisfactory teaching takes place in introducing pupils to technology in the world around them. Computers are used adequately to support pupils' work in other subjects

such as science, geography, literacy and numeracy. Pupils gain skills in these areas satisfactorily and work well with partners, concentrating at the computers. Year 2 have new computers and programs which are treated with care by the pupils, but the teachers' knowledge of programs is not secure. This leads to the lack of opportunities provided for pupils to word process and the resulting gaps in their skills. In Year 1, where the co-ordinator is based, teaching is satisfactory and there is a more consistent development of skills in information technology. Effective support has allowed Year 1 pupils to use a paint program and add text to pictures independently. Pupils with special educational needs are supported satisfactorily in the work covered and appropriate account is taken of the needs of pupils with English as an additional language.

108. There is a satisfactory policy and scheme of work for information technology. The co-ordinator is advising staff on the implementation of the scheme of work and has provided appropriate staff training in the use of the new computers acquired through the National Grid for Learning. Information Technology is currently a focus in the school development plan and the school is working to address the weaknesses in the teaching and improve the resources. The co-ordinator sees teachers' planning and has monitored the teaching in classrooms, providing support to colleagues. This has taken place this school year and has not yet had an effect on raising standards. Overall, too little progress has been made in improving the provision and resulting standards in this area.

MUSIC

109. Only one Year 2 class lesson was seen plus a singing lesson for the whole of Year 1. Additional information was gained from listening to pupils singing during assembly and from discussions with teachers.
110. The standard of work in music is similar to that normally found for the age of the pupils, although standards of singing are higher. Pupils in Year 1 sing up and down the scale confidently and accurately, becoming louder as they move up and quieter as they move down. All clap a rhythm well from memory and with a good awareness of timing, after listening to the teacher clap it. They sing very tunefully popular songs such as 'Daddy's taking us to the zoo tomorrow', including actions and 'She'll be coming round the mountain when she comes'. Year 2 pupils suggest how contrasting pieces of music make them feel. They have satisfactory listening skills and a few higher attaining pupils listen with a high level of concentration and involvement.
111. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with some good teaching of singing by a volunteer retired music teacher. This results in pupils' achievements being good in singing and satisfactory in other aspects of music. The singing teaching for Year 1 is well paced so that a good amount is covered, allowing pupils to revise and develop their skills. As not a moment is lost, pupils are kept involved throughout and there is a good level of participation in the singing. This contributes much to the high standards achieved. The teaching of Year 2 is satisfactory. Planning identifies learning objectives well, so that the teacher is clear about what pupils are to learn. This is communicated well to pupils. Together with the effective management of the pupils, it keeps them focused satisfactorily on the main lesson activity. The pace of the lesson seen was slow, however, with too much time spent on a question and answer session about the feelings the music listened to evoked and on writing a sentence about this. This resulted in lost time and opportunities for the development of pupils' specific music skills. This meant that higher attaining pupils were not sufficiently challenged and pushed to think at a deeper level. Teaching ensures that pupils with special educational needs, or for whom English is an additional language, are involved and learn at a similar rate to other pupils in the same class.
112. The co-ordinator has had responsibility for music since September 1999 only. She is keen and wishes to develop the music in the school, reviewing the scheme of work in line with the requirements of the new National Curriculum. She has worked hard to develop her own piano playing, so that she can ably accompany the whole school in singing during assemblies. She does not have a clear leadership role beyond this, in that she is not in any way involved in monitoring the teaching or the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning. The scheme of work presently used was developed in response to an identified need by the previous co-ordinator

who was given time for monitoring the teaching. The school has maintained the standards of music and the quality of provision found at the time of the last inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

113. Standards are similar to those expected nationally for pupils of the same age. Pupils move confidently around the hall, showing the expected awareness of space and other pupils. They perform the basic gymnastic actions of travelling successfully, using both hands and feet, introducing stretches, curls, jumps and rolls into their movements. They carry out their movements on the floor and on simple apparatus. They move under and over the various items of equipment competently. In games, pupils carry, bounce and catch a ball, showing satisfactory control, working both alone and with a partner. They take part in simple relay activities successfully, in which they apply their basic ball control skills. Pupils understand the need to warm up for and recover from exercise.
114. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers plan satisfactorily. They provide clear instruction and enthusiasm, as well as using an appropriate range of equipment. This allows all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make satisfactory gains in their learning and make improvement in their skills. All members of staff change into suitable clothing for lessons and join in and demonstrate for pupils. They have secure subject knowledge and make suitable demands of the pupils' performance. Pupils join in well, enjoying themselves and making a satisfactory physical effort. Lessons are generally conducted at a brisk pace, with pupils being kept busy throughout. The pace of lessons slows, however, where pupils queue to use apparatus in gymnastics. Teachers have good control and management skills, especially where a wide range of activities is being undertaken. Occasionally, a small minority of pupils do not give their full attention to their teacher, either not listening carefully, or preferring instead to start their activities, before they are told to do so. Teachers often take the opportunity to use pupils to demonstrate good practice, but chances are missed to discuss the quality of the work seen. Teachers provide help and support to pupils in all aspects of their work and, in particular, they emphasise the need for safety. In turn, pupils show good attitudes, behave well, work well alone and with a partner or group and carry equipment carefully and safely.
115. A satisfactory scheme of work is now in place and, through careful planning, all areas of work are covered sufficiently. The continuous development of skills is now ensured as pupils move through the key stage and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator receives plans of the work to be covered and this helps her to be aware of what is taking place throughout the school. She provides colleagues with advice, if it is required. She does not, however, undertake any regular observation of lessons. Satisfactory assessment procedures are in place and clear records are kept, identifying pupils' standards in the range of physical education skills. Where weaknesses in skills are highlighted, arrangements are made to help pupils make the necessary progress in rectifying them. Activities involving counting, such as when bouncing a ball, give support to the school's initiative in numeracy. The school makes satisfactory arrangements for extra-curricular activities in ball skills, an additional provision since the time of the last inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

116. The standard of pupils' work is in line with the expectations set in the locally agreed syllabus. The standards achieved at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are familiar with the Christian, Jewish and Moslem faiths and also have an awareness of other world religions. Pupils are aware of some of the differences and similarities of the main world faiths studied. They know that different religions have special clothing and customs and, in particular, that they have special books. They know about some of the ceremonies of these religions, such as the importance of Hanukkah to Jews and Baptism to Christians. Pupils understand that, even within one religion, there is variation such as the different ceremonies involving Baptism within the Christian faith. Pupils are aware of some of the symbols of the different faiths, for example, the cross for Christians and the Star of David for Jews. They understand the need to display emotions to others, such as love and forgiveness and know of the problems caused by anger and jealousy. Pupils know that they belong to a

variety of groups, including their families and they realise the importance of this.

117. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. In a lesson seen in Year 2, it was good. Lessons are well planned, teachers read stories sensitively and provide interesting and thought provoking experiences for pupils. In the good Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils participated in drama based on the story of the Prodigal Son. Occasionally, too much information is given in one lesson, with the result that many pupils are unable to learn all the facts provided. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge and provide clear explanations. This enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, to make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding. The positive features of teaching found at the last inspection have been maintained.
118. Teachers make good use of religious artefacts, visitors to the school and visits to churches to enhance pupils' learning. Pupils find the subject interesting, and concentrate well. They listen carefully and try hard to explain their feelings and views. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and this helps them to make satisfactory progress. Generally, pupils take care with the presentation of their work. Teachers always mark pupils' books, but few comments or words of advice are added.
119. The work undertaken strongly supports all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Much of the written work undertaken in religious education lessons supports the school's initiative on literacy. No assessment procedures are in place. Consequently, planning is not influenced enough by assessment. The co-ordinator has had responsibility for the subject since September 1999 only. She is aware of what is taking place in the school by receiving plans of the work to be covered and she provides useful support and advice for her colleagues. She is not involved in monitoring teaching in classrooms.