

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **KIRKROYDS INFANT SCHOOL**

New Mill, Huddersfield

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107686

Headteacher: Mrs K Davies

Reporting inspector: Mrs C E Waine  
23081

Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> February – 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2000

Inspection number: 190114

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Kirkroyds Lane New Mill Huddersfield
Postcode:	HD7 7LS
Telephone number:	(01484) 222482
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Frampton
Date of previous inspection:	February 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs C E Waine	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it?
		History	How high are standards?
			How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
Mr M Hammond	Lay inspector		How well are pupils cared for?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Ms T Galvin	Team inspector	Art	
		Religious education	
		Physical education	
		Provision for the children in the foundation stage	
Mrs A Patterson	Team inspector	Information technology	
		Music	
		Provision for the pupils with special educational needs	
Mrs J Tracey	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curriculum opportunities?
		Science	
		Design and technology	
		Geography	
		Equal opportunities	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Kirkroyds Infant School is a popular village school, which is smaller than most primary schools, but of a similar size to the majority of infant schools. At the time of the inspection, 31 children were under five. Children are admitted to the reception classes in the September or January preceding their fifth birthday. They have had a range of experiences, much in local pre-school. Pupils represent a very wide range of backgrounds which are, overall, average. Similarly, their range of experiences and attainment varies significantly on entry, but is, overall, average. However, the age balance in this year's reception cohort is heavily weighted towards the younger end, particularly for the boys and attainment on entry for this group is a little below average. Although several pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds, there are no pupils with English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals (21 per cent) has risen recently and is now a little above average. There are 23 pupils (16 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs, two of whom have a statement of their needs (1.4 per cent) and this is broadly average.

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

This is a very effective school, which gives its pupils a wonderful start to their education. Children are cherished and achieve as well as they can, in a rich and stimulating environment. The school greatly benefits from strong leadership, particularly that of an exceptional headteacher, who also provides exemplary classroom teaching. The quality of teaching is good and standards are above average. The school gives very good value for money.

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

- There are high standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science and, when pupils leave the school, they all achieve as well as they can.
- Teaching is good and for the children under five, it is very good.
- The school is very well led and managed by an exceptional headteacher who is supported by a very well-informed and committed governing body.
- The curriculum is rich and varied. Lessons are very interesting and children enjoy learning.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good. They develop very good attitudes to learning and exhibit high standards of behaviour.
- There is excellent provision for the pupils with special educational needs.
- Relationships are very good and all members of the school community respect and value each other.

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

- There is no overall plan for the progressive development of skills in many subjects.
- The role of some curriculum co-ordinators in monitoring planning and classroom teaching of their subjects is under-developed.

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

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

Since the last inspection, the school has made many improvements. In response to the key issues of that inspection:

- a) standards in mathematics have risen considerably and the school is now well above the national average and the average for similar schools;
- b) an appropriate sex education policy is in place;
- c) new planning formats clearly identify objectives and are closely linked to assessment;
- d) very good assessment, recording and reporting procedures are in place and information is very well used to target individual pupils who are lower or higher attainers. An in-depth analysis of the results of national tests is well used to highlight areas for curriculum improvement.

Additionally, the school has made further improvements in other aspects of provision, many of which were already judged to be good:

- standards in other subjects, such as boys' reading, have improved;
- the quality of teaching has improved and unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated;
- the headteacher displays excellent leadership skills and also provides an exemplary model of teaching;
- there are good levels of staffing and small, single age classes have been established;
- very effective Literacy and Numeracy Hours have been introduced;
- the school makes good curriculum provision for all pupils, including lower and higher attainers;
- provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent;
- the governing body is now very well informed and fully involved in the life of the school;
- strategic planning by the whole staff and governing body is very good;
- curriculum co-ordinator roles are better linked to expertise, but their monitoring role is still limited;
- links with parents are now very good and they receive very good information on progress and the curriculum. The success of the school's work with parents is seen in the very positive response to the questionnaire and at the parents' meeting.

## 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	A	B	A	A
Writing	B	B	B	B
Mathematics	A	A	A	A

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average    E

In the results of national tests at age seven, in 1999, attainment in reading and mathematics was well above the national average and that for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In writing, it was above the average in both comparisons, although a lower than average proportion of pupils exceeded the expected levels than might have been expected. Over the four years since the last inspection, standards have largely been maintained in writing and have risen in reading, particularly for boys. Girls outperform boys in reading and writing, but this is similar to the national picture. In mathematics, standards have risen considerably in response to both the very hard work of the school and the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Teacher assessments in science show that an above average proportion of pupils attained the expected level and a well above average proportion exceeded it. Inspection evidence shows that these standards are being at least maintained and that improvements are being made in the proportions of pupils exceeding expectations in writing.

In religious education, pupils achieve standards which are in line with the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus. In information technology, attainment is above average and pupils develop good skills across all aspects of the subject. In music, attainment is similar to that of other pupils of the same age but, in art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education, the quality of pupils' work is better than that of most seven year olds.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children under five develop outstanding attitudes and independence in their work. This is continued into Key Stage 1 and pupils of all ages have a hunger for learning. Parents report that they often generate their own homework because they are so enthusiastic.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The behaviour of the vast majority is very good both in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is very good. Pupils quickly gain the confidence and skills to become independent learners. Relationships are very good and children support and care for one another. They respect and value others.
Attendance	Good. Above the national average. Punctuality is also good and there is a prompt start to the school day and to lessons.

Pupils are extremely enthusiastic about school and develop a hunger for learning. This makes a significant contribution to standards. They enjoy their work so much that they often find ways to extend it, both in school and at home.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Not applicable

*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.*

During the inspection, 33 lessons were observed and teaching was always at least satisfactory. In almost 33 percent, teaching was good; in 27 percent it was very good and in 18 percent it was excellent. For the children under five, all of the teaching was at least good, 22 percent was very good and 55 percent was excellent, including all of that of the headteacher. Teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics, for the children under five and for the pupils in Key Stage 1, is very good. The school plans work very well to meet the needs of all pupils and promotes learning well, particularly for the children under five and for those pupils with special educational needs.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the children under five is very broad and rich. That for pupils in Key Stage 1 is broad and balanced and meets all requirements of the National Curriculum. It is enriched by the good links made between subjects and by strong links with parents and the local community. Teachers' medium and short-term planning is good but there is no overall plan for the development of skills in many subjects, which results in some unnecessary repetition of work.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for these pupils is excellent. They are very well taught and fully integrated into the life of the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for all aspects of personal development is very good and contributes significantly to pupils' self esteem and high standards of behaviour and respect for others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school places a high focus on its nurturing approach and cares for its pupils very well.

The school has very effective relationships with parents and these have a significant impact on learning. Parents are very well informed about their children's progress, both in written reports and at formal and informal meetings. Of particular benefit to parents is the annual 'Evidence of Learning Day'. The pupils benefit from a great deal of support from parents, grandparents and local volunteers in lessons. A high priority is placed on caring for and nurturing pupils and the school is successful in its aims in this area.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and she also provides an exemplary model of teaching. The monitoring role of some curriculum co-ordinators is under-developed as they do not yet evaluate and support classroom teaching of their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very well informed and involved in the life of the school. Statutory requirements are fulfilled.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher makes a very thorough analysis of the results of national tests and this is shared with governors and parents. Governors assess their success by comparing costs and standards against those for similar schools.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are good and well used. The headteacher and governors plan carefully to meet the aims of their long-term plans for the school.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good. The inspirational headteacher has led the development of the roles of the governing body very well. She ensures that they are very well informed and they, parents and pupils play an appropriate part in strategic planning. The governing body monitors work in the classrooms and evaluates the success of its spending decisions by comparing both its costs and its success against similar schools.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is very well led and managed and teaching is good.</li> <li>• Teachers have high expectations and pupils develop very good attitudes to work and to each other. They achieve the very best they are capable of.</li> <li>• Parents feel welcome in the school and are confident in approaching staff with concerns.</li> <li>• Parents are given good information about their children's progress and the curriculum.</li> <li>• Their children are very enthusiastic about school and are keen to do the homework that is given and often produce extra of their own.</li> <li>• Their children are valued and nurtured.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A small minority of parents felt that the school did not provide a wide range of activities outside of the classroom.</li> </ul>

The parents at the meeting and in the responses to the questionnaire were extremely supportive of the school and, in particular, expressed very positive views about the way in which it is led and managed. The inspection team fully supports the parents' views. In respect of the negative comment, inspectors find that, although there are only a limited number of after-school clubs, this provision is similar to that in most infant schools. The range of other out-of-class activities is better than is usually found, including trips and visitors to the school, individual reading interviews and a summer club which supports the development of basic skills.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children enter the school in September or January before their fifth birthday. They have had a range of experiences, much in local pre-school and attainment is usually average, overall. However, the current reception year has a very high proportion of younger pupils, particularly boys, and attainment this year is a little below average. This is confirmed by the assessments made on entry and by inspection evidence. Children make very good progress and at age five most exceed the levels expected in all areas of learning.
2. In 1999, in the national tests for seven year olds, attainment in reading and mathematics was well above the national average and that for schools with pupils with similar backgrounds. In writing, attainment was above average in both comparisons. The proportion of pupils exceeding the levels expected was well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. However, in comparison with similar schools the proportion of higher attainment in writing was below average. The school has recognised this point and identified spelling as a weakness at that time. A new system of teaching phonics has been introduced and is already having an impact on raising standards. In the results of teacher assessments in science, attainment was average in comparison with all schools and with schools with a similar intake. Inspection evidence indicates that high standards are being at least maintained and that the level of higher attainment in writing is rising. The school has set appropriate targets and has met them each year.
3. There have been no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls in the reading and mathematics tests over the last few years. The school has been successful in narrowing the gap between boys' and girls' attainment. This was greater than the national difference, but, in 1999, it matched that figure exactly. Inspection evidence shows that currently there is no significant gender difference.
4. Pupils make good progress in the development of their speaking and listening skills and, at the end of the key stage, are good listeners and confident in expressing their ideas and opinions. They make very good progress in reading and, at the end of the key stage, read with a degree of accuracy, fluency and understanding which is well above average. They enjoy reading the wide and varied selection of good quality books available. Pupils make good progress in developing into independent writers and know how to vary their style of writing for different purposes. Spelling is now sound and pupils use a range of simple punctuation at above average levels. Handwriting is neat and legible.
5. In mathematics, achievement is very good for most pupils and, at age seven, they successfully use mental recall for simple addition and subtraction and apply their knowledge to other areas of mathematics, such as shape and space. Pupils achieve well in science and at the end of the key stage pupils have good knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. They also have good investigative skills, which are developed through many opportunities to observe and experiment independently.
6. In information and communication technology, standards are above average and pupils achieve well. They have good operational skills and apply these well in work in many subjects, although information technology is not yet an integral part of all lessons. In religious education, pupils attain at levels which are in line with the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus and have sound knowledge and understanding of the beliefs, customs and values of Christianity and Islam. In music, attainment is similar to that of most other pupils of the same age. In art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education the quality of pupils' work is better than that of most pupils at age seven.
7. The vast majority of pupils with special educational needs make excellent progress towards the targets they are set. This is promoted by the quality of individual programmes of work and the

level and quality of support.

8. Overall, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve as well as they can. The main contributory factors to this are the quality of teaching and the stimulating curriculum, pupils' very good attitudes to learning, the very good use of well informed support staff and volunteers and the positive learning climate created throughout the whole school. Parents are very happy with the standards that the school achieves and the progress their children make.

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

9. Children under five and pupils in Key Stage 1 develop very good attitudes to learning. They are eager to come to school and are quickly and positively involved in a wide range of activities. Pupils are enthused by their lessons and have a hunger for learning, which often leads them to find ways of extending their work. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting reported that their children frequently want to carry on investigating and developing their work at home, in addition to any homework that is given. In lessons, pupils are often enthralled by the introductory sessions and work enthusiastically on their independent tasks. They take a great pride in their work and this is demonstrated in the high quality of display throughout the school.
10. Behaviour throughout the school is very good and pupils behave well during breaktimes and around the school. They move about the school in a sensible and orderly manner and at all times are polite and helpful. The school functions as an orderly and caring community with all of the adults providing very effective role models for the pupils.
11. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to their learning and form very good relationships with the range of people who support them. Their behaviour is usually very good.
12. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and to use their initiative without being asked. Pupils co-operate together or work independently, taking responsibility for their own and other pupils' learning as much as they can. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, a pupil showed his friend how to find a page in his dictionary, rather than just finding the page for him. Pupils respond well to questions and join eagerly in discussions.
13. Relationships are very good and there is mutual respect between pupils and staff, as well as with the many adult visitors to the school. The way in which teachers value their work raises pupils' self-esteem and confidence very well and motivates them to reach high standards.
14. Attendance is above the national average and punctuality, both at the start of the day and in the lessons, is good. This contributes to pupils' achievements.
15. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are strengths of the school and contribute to the educational standards.

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

16. Teaching is good, often very good and sometimes excellent. During the inspection, 33 lessons were observed and, in all lessons, teaching was at least satisfactory. In 33 percent teaching was good, in 27 percent it was very good and in 18 percent it was excellent. Teaching is particularly good in English and for the children under five, where all lessons were at least good and 78 percent were very good or excellent. The quality of teaching has risen considerably since the last inspection, when it was sound and often good, but with a small number of unsatisfactory lessons.
17. The quality of teaching for the children under five is very good, overall, ranging from good to excellent. Staff have an excellent knowledge of how young children learn and of the curriculum for this age. They plan and work effectively together, creating a calm relaxed atmosphere. Management of behaviour is very good, being based upon the very good relationships with the children and clearly established classroom rules and routines. Staff have high expectations that

children will behave well, respect each other's contributions and concentrate and children respond well. This underpins the very good learning which takes place. Expectations of what children should achieve are high and this is combined with making learning interesting. For instance, in language and literacy, children are expected to write many words through the provision of activities that motivate them to learn. Children show high levels of concentration, try hard, persevere and show pride in their work. For instance, they talk confidently to visitors and are keen to show them their work. Staff explain the work clearly and this means that pupils understand what they are to do, start work promptly and work at a very good pace. Staff are fully aware of children with special educational needs and plan work which is carefully matched to their needs. This successfully promotes their self-esteem and learning.

18. In Key Stage 1 teachers have good subject knowledge and use it to plan very carefully for the teaching of basic skills, within a topic framework. They make good use of assessment information to match work well to the needs of all pupils. Lessons are very interesting and pupils are enthused by the way in which teachers introduce work. For example, in Literacy Hours, teachers employ very good story telling techniques that enthral pupils and promote high levels of interest. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and manage them effectively, through the stimulation they provide in interesting activities and resources. They question pupils effectively, targeting questions well to individuals and pupils respond eagerly. Teachers' instructions about work are usually very clear and pupils settle to work quickly and concentrate well on independent tasks. There is a brisk pace to lessons, which gives pupils a sense of urgency about their work and teachers are diligent in reminding pupils about the standards they expect. For example, they remind them about the quality of handwriting and standards of punctuation and spelling. The end of lessons is used well, not only to share work, but also to give pupils time to reflect on their own learning and say what they feel they have achieved. Teachers value their pupils highly; they listen to them with respect and display their work in attractive ways. For example, each class has a display board for work that pupils generate themselves at home. Homework is varied and interesting and makes a good contribution to pupils' learning.
19. Where teaching is less successful, the teacher's instructions are not always clear enough to all pupils and this results in some uncertainty. Although information technology is well taught and standards are above average, it is not always incorporated into lessons as well as it might be. For example, it is not used in independent tasks in the Literacy Hour.
20. There is very close liaison between class teachers and the co-ordinator for special educational needs. Class teachers draw up accurate individual programmes of work with the co-ordinator acting purely in an advisory capacity. These individual education plans are of excellent quality and specific in their learning targets, which are mainly located around literacy and behaviour. Teachers carefully incorporate them into their medium and short-term planning. This has improved the quality of provision for special educational needs in terms of the range of skills and opportunities provided. Support assistants provide valuable support to teachers, are sufficiently experienced and committed to meeting the needs of pupils and know them very well. There is an emphasis on in-class support and assistants work closely with teachers to plan for their pupils' individual needs.

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

21. The school provides a rich and varied curriculum that advances the learning of pupils in all age groups at a good pace. Provision for children under five is exceptionally good and inculcates good attitudes which pupils carry with them as they progress through the school. The curriculum at Key Stage 1 fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education.
22. Children under five enjoy exciting first-hand experiences securely based on the six areas of learning. There is a high focus on the development of skills in personal and social education and language and mathematics. These underpin work in all aspects of the curriculum and progressively lead to introductory work for the National Curriculum.
23. At the time of the previous inspection, the curriculum focused well on planning, but with less

regard for the learning processes involved. As a result, pupils were not always engaged in work suitably matched to their differing abilities. A significant change in approach to the curriculum, which is now fundamentally 'child-centred', has had a major impact. Pupils of all abilities are suitably challenged and good planning of cross-curricular work encourages the transfer of skills across all subjects. Schemes of work based on national guidance are being introduced to support the systematic development of skills. There is still some work to be done in checking the continuity of topic areas covered in each year group to ensure that pupils build on previous knowledge without repetition or omission. This is particularly so in science. The school clearly recognises the value of introducing pupils to investigative work and independent learning at an early stage and this has a significant impact on the fast pace at which most pupils learn. This is assisted by good development of information technology and design and technology skills, complemented by valuable support from parents who work in classrooms with small groups of pupils.

24. The school is successfully implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Lively oral mathematics sessions are increasing pupils' ability to manipulate numbers mentally. In English, reading and phonic skills are enhanced through the use of a stimulating range of texts; the pupils' enthusiasm for literature and creative writing is exemplified in the good displays seen about the school.
25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is outstanding and considerable effort is made to ensure that these pupils are fully involved in school activities. They have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum, including all aspects of the National Curriculum. The school has developed a very well-organised system for identifying and supporting such pupils at an early stage. They are mainly taught within the normal class lessons; withdrawal is extremely rare and is monitored by the co-ordinator. Progress for all of the 23 pupils on the register of needs is monitored through tracking in the regular review system. Year group teachers plan carefully together, particularly when planning for literacy and numeracy and individual programmes of work are reviewed at least once a term. The school uses a planning sheet that identifies targets for each term.
26. The school offers a sound range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are keen to take advantage of such opportunities, for example the sports and wildlife clubs. The 'summer school' is particularly good in providing extra facilities to consolidate basic academic skills. This activity is well-targeted on pupils who need more help to prepare for work in the subsequent year.
27. The school makes good provision for personal, health and social education. This is inclusive in the main curriculum and is enhanced by visiting specialists, such as a nurse and the police. There are good links with the local junior school. Exchange visits between pupils of the two schools are valued and help to reassure pupils as they approach the time to move on.
28. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils in Key Stage 1, and for children under five, is very good. It has a very positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection, which judged spiritual development to be sound, and moral, social and cultural development to be good.
29. Pupils are helped and encouraged to develop a spiritual awareness through subjects such as religious education, art, music and science. Collective worship meets the statutory requirements and makes a significant contribution to spiritual development. Time is provided for stillness, prayer and reflection and singing and music contribute to the feeling of spirituality. In one classroom act of worship, pupils' understanding of the wonder of God's creation and prayer were promoted well. Pupils contributed to a group prayer, which was to be added to the prayer tree on display in the classroom. Displays of candles and religious artefacts, such as a Muslim prayer mat, enhance pupils' development.
30. Across the school, moral development is promoted strongly through the consistent implementation of the behaviour policy, by adults and pupils. Key Stage 1 pupils and children under five are made aware of the need to take responsibility for their own actions. Adults provide very good models of sensitive and caring behaviour, which are readily followed by pupils and pupils know the difference between right and wrong. Good behaviour and

achievements are actively promoted, for instance through the weekly 'Gold Book' assembly. An effective assembly observed during the inspection conveyed a very strong moral message about actions being more important than what a person looked like or how rich they were. This was portrayed through the story of St. Francis. The story was told in an interesting way, involving some pupils in acting it out and all pupils were encouraged to reflect and comment.

31. The provision for social development is very good. The promotion of independence, initiative and responsibility is an outstanding feature of the teaching and learning. Pupils of all ages are given many opportunities to practise and develop their social skills, such as speaking and listening, working in pairs and groups and taking responsibility for their own learning. Lessons for children under five give them opportunities to work with different children and adults and promote confidence to take part fully in the life of the school, such as lunch in the dining room and assemblies. For example, in a creative lesson, a group of children worked independently on a group picture and one child was in charge of the work. Through discussion, they decided where their individual pictures should be placed on the paper and how they should be attached. This provision continues in Key Stage 1. For instance, in a dance lesson, pupils worked together in small groups and then combined this work to produce a whole class performance about a magic carpet. Pupils are expected to be courteous, to access their own resources and to tidy them away. They are frequently asked to comment upon the good features in the work of other pupils during lessons and they readily praise others' achievements. Year 2 pupils are encouraged to befriend reception pupils at lunchtime. Regular educational visits into the local community, such as to the local shop and visitors from the community, such as parents and grandparents, enhance pupils' social development.
32. Pupils' own cultural traditions and the diversity and richness of other cultures are promoted well through subjects such as art, geography, history and religious education. Their development is also enhanced by educational visits into the community, for instance to the local church and by visitors, such as artists who work with the pupils. Developing pupils' understanding of the multi-ethnic nature of society is a significant part of the curriculum. Last year Krishna dancers visited the school and the dance workshops involved pupils and parents. The main religious festivals of Christianity and other faiths are celebrated. Pupils study the works of a range of artists and illustrators and displays around the school contribute to pupils' development. Music enhances pupils' development well; for instance, a variety of music from different cultures is used in assemblies. Story time in the classroom is often related to traditional tales from around the world, for instance Africa.

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

33. The school provides a very happy, relaxed and stimulating environment and the friendliness and courtesy of the pupils and staff are strengths of the school. There is a very good range of policies and procedures that are applied consistently by all staff and promote pupils' welfare effectively. There is now an appropriate policy for sex education, which was lacking at the time of the previous inspection.
34. There are good links with pre-school providers and good induction arrangements which ensure that children settle well into school routines. The staff for children under five know the children very well, provide a secure environment and the encouragement of children's independence is outstanding. This promotes children's self-esteem and learning effectively.
35. The teachers and support staff cherish the pupils and, as a result, they all achieve as well as they can. Pupils and their families are well known and this helps teachers monitor each pupil's progress and personal development. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and parents are very well involved and informed of progress. Relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are very good and pupils are seen caring and supporting each other. Pupils are confident and articulate and more than willing to talk about themselves and their feelings and to ask for help when it is needed.
36. The school is committed to a positive discipline and behaviour policy and, consequently, it functions as an orderly and caring community. Supervision of the children during lunchtime and other breaks is very good. Parents are encouraged to contact the school should a problem arise

and report that staff are always willing to discuss any difficulties. The school has a good child protection policy and staff are aware of their responsibilities in this area. Good arrangements are in place to deal with sick children.

37. There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting children's attainments and attendance. Very good assessment procedures are in place, which meet statutory requirements and provide information to set challenges for all pupils. Procedures are very well organised and provide class teachers with detailed information about pupils' achievements and progress. This is used well in setting 'small step targets' which are shared with parents. Both higher and lower attaining pupils are targeted, for extension or corrective work, which enables them to gain maximum benefit from their work in class. This is a significant factor in the above average levels of attainment. Parents' comments reflect appreciation of the way in which the assessment system promotes pupils' academic and emotional development. In religious education, assessment is informal and not yet as rigorous as in the other core subjects of English, mathematics, science and information technology.
38. The governors regularly monitor the effective health and safety policy and an audit of the site takes place each term. The main items of concern are the need for safety chains on the main hall overhead lights and the 'castle' with its steep steps and lack of handrail.

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

39. The partnership between parents and the school is very good and is a strength of the school. Parents report that the school is a very good school, where all the staff care deeply for their children. Many say how much they appreciate being part of the school's extended family, with ample opportunities open to them to become involved in school life.
40. The impact of parents' involvement with the school is excellent. A large number act as volunteers in the school, working closely with the teachers. During the inspection, many were seen helping small groups of pupils across all areas of the curriculum, as well as supporting breaktime supervisors. Each week, different classes organise and take the Family Assembly to which parents are invited. Large numbers attend and parents' comments in the Assembly Book indicate just how well the assemblies are conducted and enjoyed. Parents are also involved with the Parents and Friends Association, organising social events and fund-raising for the school.
41. The level of information given to parents is very good. Parents are kept informed of their children's progress through two target setting and review meetings and one achievement day each year and through a well-written report. Very good use is made of reading diaries, which are used by many parents to comment and check on their child's progress. Many parents said how hard all the teachers strive to help each child accomplish as much as they can and how much their child has developed whilst in school.
42. Parents of children with special educational needs are informed at the earliest possible stage when their child is placed on the special needs register. They understand the procedures used and are kept very well informed of their child's progress, both informally and at termly reviews.
43. At the meeting with parents and when interviewed during the week of the inspection, they all spoke highly of the quality of relationships between themselves and the staff and expressed appreciation of the approachability and openness of staff. They particularly commented on the qualities of the headteacher who is held in very high regard.
44. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is very good. Parents support the homework policy and are particularly pleased about the way in which their children generate their own homework following stimulating lessons. Effective procedures are in place for taking parents' views into consideration and keeping them informed about the curriculum.

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

45. The school benefits greatly from the strong leadership of an exceptional headteacher, who is



held in high esteem by staff, governors and parents. Not only are her leadership skills of high quality but she is an inspirational classroom teacher. In order to support the school's aim of providing single age classes under thirty, she gives much of her time to teaching, which means that she has a very heavy workload. She copes with this with great skill and is very successful in leading improvements in standards of teaching and learning throughout the school. The whole staff share her commitment to high standards in a nurturing environment and all work hard to achieve the school's aims.

46. The deputy headteacher has worked very effectively to establish a new mathematics policy, incorporating the National Numeracy Strategy, and this has been very effective in raising standards, which were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. She checks planning and teaching of the subject and supports teaching effectively. She also manages the excellent provision for pupils with special educational needs effectively, displaying an excellent understanding and a deep commitment. Provision fully meets national requirements and the school is to be commended for the very high level of support provided for pupils. The roles of the literacy and information technology co-ordinators are also well developed, but few others have yet had the opportunity to check the teaching of their subjects, which limits their overview of whether skills and knowledge are taught progressively and effectively.
47. The role of the governing body has developed considerably since the last inspection. Governors are very well informed and involved in the daily life of the school. They are keen to extend their expertise, as, for example, the new governor for special educational needs who is undertaking training. Most governors pay focused visits to classrooms to see the results of their decisions in action. They very carefully evaluate the success of their decisions and curriculum developments by checking their costs and standards against those of similar schools. Funds allocated for the pupils with special educational needs are used effectively and efficiently to provide a curriculum and support which matches their needs. This has a very positive impact on their attainment and achievement.
48. The headteacher makes a very thorough analysis of the results of national tests to identify areas of the curriculum for development and this is shared with governors and parents. On-going assessments are also analysed to identify pupils who need support with basic skills.
49. The school development plan is a very well-constructed document to which staff, governors, parents and pupils all contribute. It has appropriate priorities and is funded carefully, through very good financial planning, to provide for these. Its recent success is shown by the establishment of single age classes, a high priority of governors, staff and parents and the rising standards. The plan is regularly checked and amended if necessary. Governors are committed to getting the best value for their money and make very good use of the purchasing services offered by the local education authority.
50. The level of staffing, both teaching and non-teaching, is good and staff are well qualified, with a good balance of experience. They are effectively deployed and well supported by many well-informed parents and volunteers. There are good procedures for informing new staff about the school and there are appropriate policies for newly qualified teachers and the appraisal of staff. The administration assistant is very experienced and efficient and ensures that this work does not impinge on classroom teaching.
51. The accommodation is very good. The school is spacious, light and attractive and is greatly enhanced by very well-presented displays of work. It is maintained to a high standard by the caretaker, who has also given of his time to successfully support a child with behavioural difficulties. The outdoor hard play area for the under fives is small and teachers compensate for this through the excellent opportunities they provide for physical development in the school hall.
52. Resources to support teaching and learning of the curriculum are good in both quality and range. They are at least satisfactory in all subjects and, for the children under five and in English, mathematics, physical education and art, they are good. Resources are very good for the design aspect of design and technology. Those for pupils with special educational needs are appropriate and sound resources are purchased for the highest attaining pupils. All are well organised and efficiently used.

53. Overall, the standard of leadership and management is very good and that of the headteacher is outstanding. The role of some curriculum co-ordinators needs to be further developed so that they can have a better overview of their subjects. In view of the quality of leadership and teaching, the high achievement of pupils and the very good attitudes to school, the high standard of behaviour and the average cost per pupil, the school is judged to be giving very good value for money.

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

54. In order to improve further, the school should:

- a) Introduce plans for the progressive teaching of skills in all subjects to ensure that there is no omission or unnecessary repetition.

(Paragraphs 23, 82, 90, 100, 115)

- b) Fully develop the role of curriculum co-ordinators to enable them to have a clear overview of teaching and learning in their subjects.

(Paragraphs 46, 83, 90, 115)

The following minor issues were also noted during the inspection, in paragraphs 74, 104, 119, and may be included in the action plan:

- information technology is not fully incorporated into all lessons; and
- there are some inconsistencies in assessments in religious education.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	33
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	53

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
18.2	27.3	33.3	21.2	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	145
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	23

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	23

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	31	24	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	29	29
	Girls	23	22	21
	Total	53	51	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (76)	93 (84)	91 (86)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	29	28
	Girls	23	22	20
	Total	50	51	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (76)	93 (86)	87 (92)
	National	82 (81)	86 (86)	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	2
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	141
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

### Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	24

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	61.25

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	239,260
Total expenditure	245,170
Expenditure per pupil	1,612
Balance brought forward from previous year	26,044
Balance carried forward to next year	20,134

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	145
Number of questionnaires returned	79

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	91	9	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	80	19	0	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	70	27	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	62	30	6	0	1
The teaching is good.	87	11	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	39	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	92	8	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	87	13	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	67	32	1	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	89	11	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	81	18	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	42	5	4	11

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

## **CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

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

55. The provision for the children under five is very good and has a significant, positive effect on their learning and progress. Children enter the reception classes with a range of social and early learning skills. These are usually similar to what is expected for their age. This year, owing to an imbalance of birthdates, the year group is, overall, younger than usual. Attainment was slightly below average in speaking skills, knowledge of initial letters and number. This is confirmed by the initial assessment of children's achievements. Children, including those from ethnic minorities and a gifted and talented child, make very good progress in all the areas of learning. Children with special educational needs make very good progress in relation to their previous learning through the provision of carefully planned work and effective, sensitive support from teachers and support staff. At age five, children's work is above the levels expected in all the areas of learning, except personal and social development where it is well above. A significant minority of children achieve well above the level expected in writing.
56. There have been very good improvements in standards since the last inspection. Children receive an excellent start to their education and are prepared very well for the next stage of their learning in Key Stage 1.
57. The quality of teaching is very good, overall, ranging from good to excellent. During the inspection, excellent teaching was seen in literacy, mathematics, creative development and physical development. Teachers have excellent knowledge of how young children learn and of the curriculum for this age. They use interesting, good quality resources that gain children's interest and they have high expectations of work and behaviour. Children are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and the lessons are organised to help them to do so. For example, children make choices about the activities they are to undertake. This promotes high levels of initiative and independence and the mature approach that children have in taking responsibility for their own learning.
58. Teachers make very good use of reviewing children's work to reinforce learning, raise children's confidence and encourage them to evaluate one another's work. For instance, at the end of a lesson in creative work children spoke confidently about what they liked about each other's pictures. Achievements are assessed carefully and the work is matched very well to children's needs. For example, in an excellent mathematics lesson children of all capabilities were given work on money that was challenging. This enthused them and they generated additional games, based upon this work. They were supported successfully by all adults so that they made excellent progress in relation to their previous learning. Children's interest in their work continues at home and they often generate their own homework, for instance in writing. This work is displayed on a board in the classrooms and later transferred to a book so that children can refer to it during the year.

### **Personal and social development**

59. Excellent provision underpins the ethos in the reception classes. Adults work successfully together as a team and are very caring, supportive and encouraging, for instance in praising children's achievements. They are very good role models; listening with genuine interest to what children have to say and speaking with courtesy and consideration. This promotes children's self-esteem and confidence, fosters the development of very good relationships and promotes very good behaviour. Children are eager to learn, co-operate very well with each other in pairs and groups, sharing equipment with one another. Children's attitude and responsibility for their own work are outstanding. They work purposefully, persevere with their work and their levels of initiative, independence and concentration are high.
60. Children develop a good awareness that some actions are right and some are wrong. They learn about different cultures in the world around them. For example, they have studied African basket weave patterns and the patterns on the dress of an Indian pupil. Religious education lessons and class assemblies enhance children's learning. For instance, being kind to one's friends was linked effectively to a Bible story.



## Language and literacy

61. Initial assessment of children's achievements and day-to-day assessments are used effectively to match the work to their different needs or to group children for some work, such as in reading or writing. Through conversations with the children and questioning adults develop children's understanding and extend their vocabulary effectively. Most children speak in phrases and sentences and their vocabulary is increasing quickly. Children's reading skills are extended effectively through structured teaching of the early stages of reading, such as phonics, and through interesting literacy lessons. Most children have a good vocabulary of key words and use a range of strategies to read unfamiliar words, such as the sounds of letters and the pictures. Children of all abilities have a good knowledge of letter sounds.
62. Very good classroom displays provide a stimulating print-rich environment for the children. Staff have high expectations that children will write independently and provide excellent opportunities for them to do so. This has a beneficial effect on children's learning. For instance, children are encouraged to place messages for one another on the messages board. All the children have a good understanding of oral and written story telling. Most children write their own names independently; high-achieving children write several phrases independently and are beginning to use full stops correctly; a gifted and talented child writes stories of a high standard. Most children use knowledge of letter sounds and a word bank to write a sentence independently. They are beginning to use simple dictionaries to check words. Lower-attainers copy words with developing pencil control. Teachers have high expectations of presentation and handwriting and this leads to very good progress in these areas. Most children's handwriting is neat, letters are correctly formed and the standard of presentation is high.

## Mathematics

63. Most children carry out addition to five using objects to help them and higher attainers carry out addition to ten and order numbers to twenty competently. Lower attainers recognise and write numbers up to five. Children identify larger numbers in their environment. For example, following a walk to the chip shop, they drew a map of their walk, numbering the house doors and moving pictures of themselves along the route using magnets. In one lesson, a gifted child working on addition of money calculated change from ten pence. Children complete sequential patterns, make simple bar graphs and weigh a variety of objects. They begin to use the correct terms confidently, such as *shorter*, *longer*, *heavier*, *lighter* and *altogether*. Children have good knowledge of simple shapes.

## Knowledge and understanding of the world

64. Children talk about the conditions needed for plants to grow and predict what will happen when they plant seeds. Most record their work independently. They join different materials together successfully, for instance when they make glove and stick puppets and toys with moving parts which are of a good standard. They use the computer keyboard and the mouse with increasing skill to word process their work or work the program menu. Children's learning is enhanced by visits linked to the work in the classroom, such as to the local shop and church.

## Creative development

65. Children observe pattern closely, such as in African prints and the work of Mondrian, and the detail in book illustrations, for instance by Brian Wildsmith. They work in a similar style, using a range of resources, such as paint, pencil and pastels, to produce pictures of a high standard. Children take part confidently in imaginative play situations, such as in the area organised as a chip shop this term. In music, children sing songs and rhymes with confidence and enthusiasm and clap and play rhythms with increasing skill and a good understanding of tempo.

## Physical development

66. Children show increasing control and co-ordination when using a range of tools in their work, such as scissors and pencils. They handle construction apparatus competently. Excellent

teaching in physical education leads to high levels of achievement in this area. For example, in a gymnastics lesson, children took responsibility for their own learning by choosing a partner and independently producing sequences in which they mirrored one another's actions. Children constantly look for how they might travel in different ways, or practise and improve their performances. They show a very good awareness of space and of each other and good co-ordination and control of their movements, for instance when landing on mats.

## ENGLISH

67. In the results of national tests for seven year olds, in 1999, attainment in reading was well above the national average and that for similar schools. A well above average proportion of pupils exceeded the level expected for seven year olds . In writing, attainment was above average, both in comparison with all schools and with similar schools and the proportion exceeding the expected level was about average. This shows improvement on the standards in both reading and writing, particularly for boys, over the previous three years since the last inspection. At that time, there was a significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls and this was much more so than nationally. Following a thorough analysis of results, action was taken to improve boys' reading and writing and the difference between the attainment of boys and girls, in 1999, was in line with that nationally in reading and was smaller than the national one in writing.
68. Inspection evidence confirms these levels of attainment and indicates that standards in writing are improving, with a larger group of pupils working at a level beyond that expected for their age. The results for 1999 have been analysed and spelling has been highlighted as the reason why some pupils did not attain a higher level in writing. Consequently, a new system of teaching phonic knowledge has been introduced and, although its effect is not yet felt at the end of the key stage, thanks to the raised awareness of teachers, spelling is now good.
69. Achievement for most pupils is very good because of careful planning by teachers. It is promoted very well for those who are identified, at the end of Year 1, for support in the "Summer School". This concentrates on teaching basic skills to enable lower attaining pupils to improve those skills and gain confidence in applying them. It leads to many of these pupils attaining at the level expected at age seven. Achievement of higher attainers is well promoted by careful planning by teachers and also by a Year 2 weekly writing extension lesson taken by the headteacher. This has a significant impact on these pupils' reading and writing skills and is increasing the proportion of higher attainment. Provision for those pupils with special educational needs is excellent and they make excellent progress towards the targets of their individual education plans. They are well supported by informed support staff and volunteers.
70. At the end of the key stage, standards in speaking and listening are well above average and pupils achieve very well. Teachers are active in promoting a range of good quality activities that are provided to develop their skills. They give lively and interesting introductions to lessons and pupils listen attentively. Pupils accurately recall information and express ideas and opinions with great confidence. For example, in a whole school family assembly taken by a Year 2 class, children from the reception classes and pupils in Years 1 and 2 stood up and said what they had enjoyed most. They have many opportunities in all areas of the curriculum to discuss, ask questions and offer opinions and do so with confidence. For example, a history lesson provided a very good opportunity for pupils to pose questions to a visitor and their responses showed how well they had listened. They make good progress in using a widening vocabulary and increasingly complex sentence structure.
71. At the end of the key stage, standards in reading are well above the level expected at age seven. Pupils read text with fluency, accuracy and understanding and recall the correct sequence of events in a story. Lower attaining pupils make good use of phonic skills to help them read new words and higher attaining pupils make good use of the index and contents pages when using reference books. Most pupils use a range of ways to help them read unfamiliar words, such as letter sounds and context clues. Most use their knowledge of the alphabet well when using a simple dictionary. All classrooms have a very good selection of good quality books and there is a well-stocked library area. Progress in reading is very good for all pupils and they benefit from the amount of time that both staff and parents spend hearing

them read.

72. At the end of the key stage, standards in writing are above the level expected for seven year olds and are improving, because of the diligent way in which teachers remind pupils of the standards of handwriting, spelling and punctuation they expect. Most pupils are aware of different styles of writing needed for different purposes and are enthusiastic and independent writers. They write about their own experiences and use their imagination well in writing stories and poetry of good length. Most use simple punctuation, such as full stops and capital letters, with increasing accuracy and higher attainers begin to apply speech marks, question marks and exclamation marks. Lower attaining pupils usually write at good length, and make reasonable attempts to spell simple words. Pupils think carefully about an appropriate choice of words, such as when describing the Great Fire of London. Handwriting is well formed, neat and legible and, by the end of the key stage, pupils are developing a joined style. This is an improvement on the last inspection when letter formation was inconsistent.
73. The quality of teaching is very good and was so in four of the six lessons observed. In one lesson, it was good and in one it was excellent. All teachers have secure subject knowledge and use the strategies of the literacy hour with a high measure of success. Planning is very detailed and effective and work builds well on pupils' prior attainment. Where lessons are very good, teachers have high expectations and present lessons at a challenging level. They know their pupils very well and select a good range of resources and activities appropriate to meet their needs. Whole class sessions are very well conducted and teachers provide very good models when reading stories with expression. Pupils are enthralled and listen intently. Instructions about tasks are very clear and teachers take great care to encourage and develop independent learning. Pupils understand what it is that they have to do and quickly settle to work productively, discussing work quietly and supporting each other where necessary. Teachers use praise, coupled with firm control, and encourage pupils to think for themselves. The closing sessions of lessons are used very well to allow pupils time to share their work and reflect on what they have learned. All teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and there is an atmosphere of mutual respect in the classrooms. This results in the development of very good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour. Where teaching was good rather than very good, instructions to some groups of pupils were not as full as they might have been and they led to some uncertainty, which the teacher quickly recognised and corrected. Where teaching was excellent, in the writing extension group, there was a very high level of challenge in the study of poetry and the exciting learning environment created stimulated deep thought amongst the pupils.
74. The co-ordinators have very good subject knowledge and expertise and manage the subject very well. They observe and support classroom teaching and analyse the results of assessments effectively to promote improvement. The curriculum is broad and creative and there are very beneficial links with other subjects, such as history, but, although pupils have good word-processing skills, computers are not incorporated into literacy lessons. Assessment procedures are very good and provide very good information to allow the teachers to track the progress of individual pupils. The subject contributes well to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, through the study of a wide range of literature and poetry.

## **MATHEMATICS**

75. Pupils' results in national tests for seven year olds, in 1999, were well above average when compared with all schools and with similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching a higher level than expected for their age was also well above average. These results were similar to those achieved in the previous year and reflect the consistently good standard being maintained. At the time of the previous inspection, attainment in mathematics was below the nationally expected level. The significant improvement made since then is due to the implementation of a new scheme of work, more highly targeted teaching with a whole-class focus and good assessment procedures which highlight the ongoing needs of individual pupils. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is resulting in better understanding of basic number concepts which pupils apply with confidence in simple investigative work. Boys and girls work equally well and achieve similar standards. Scrutiny of pupils' work, observation of lessons and discussion with pupils indicate that, overall, pupils achieve very well and standards

of work are well above average at age seven.

76. The teaching in the early part of the key stage builds up confidence in the application of number skills, through the use of a wide variety of stimulating materials and techniques. By the end of Year 1, most pupils have a sound understanding of number bonds to 20, and many work beyond this. By the end of the key stage, pupils are successfully applying their basic knowledge of number to shape, space and measure. They successfully learn to handle data and make reasoned judgements from its display on bar charts. Teachers are quick to recognise when pupils do not understand and they then use alternative strategies to assist learning. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, some pupils found it difficult to grasp the relationship between one quarter and three quarters of a given number. The teacher transposed the question to a familiar everyday situation – the number of pupils in each of the four equal size working groups in the class. The majority of pupils then worked out the answer for themselves and correctly tackled similar problems in the group activities that followed. Teachers encourage pupils to look for alternative ways of finding answers and to cross check their work for accuracy. Since the previous inspection, problem solving and investigative work have been given prominence in teachers' planning. This approach is working well. Pupils are stimulated and it is a pleasure to see their excitement when they discover some new feature of mathematics for themselves. Mathematical terminology is introduced at the earliest opportunity and pupils use it well. Teachers are quick to capitalise on opportunities to challenge pupils, for example, in the Year 1 lesson in which some pupils were considering 'more than' and 'less than'. Pupils correctly categorised numbers in the appropriate section and, in addition, confined them to fixed ranges such as between 0 and 30, over 30 and so on. Higher-attaining pupils used numbers in the 100s and one pupil correctly read out numbers in the millions when he reported back to the class. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to use their initiative, resulting in enthusiastic response and good achievement. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress from their starting point at the beginning of the key stage.
77. Pupils enjoy mathematics and consider it fun. As a result, most are self-motivated and they maintain fast momentum throughout the lesson. The school provides especially well for this through the 'mathematics baskets', which contain mathematical games, puzzles and challenges, to be worked on independently when pupils complete the classwork for that lesson. The system is very effective in promoting discussion between peers and in testing mathematical ideas. Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations in respect to the presentation of written work, which is neatly presented and indicates a logical and organised approach to mathematics. They react positively to teachers' comments, which are constructive and helpful in showing them how to improve their work.
78. Overall, the teaching of mathematics is good throughout Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching was never less than satisfactory and was good, sometimes very good, in four of the five lessons observed. It contributes significantly to pupils' learning. Teachers have effectively embraced the new techniques for teaching numeracy skills. The well balanced, three-part lessons are providing good opportunities for pupils to gain and extend knowledge, practise new skills, and share ideas. The short concluding element to each lesson succeeds in summarising what has been learned and in setting parameters for subsequent work. A particularly effective aspect of the teaching is the organisation of the group activities. The teacher's input into the work of a different group each day ensures that the progress of every pupil is monitored on a regular basis. It also provides opportunity for the teacher to use graded exercises, so challenging pupils at their own level. When not working with the teacher, pupils work independently, benefiting from the chance to work through problems and share ideas with each other. The ethos of the school and the pupils' good behaviour make this a profitable means of advancing learning. Information technology is satisfactorily used to support mathematics, especially when individual pupils set challenges for themselves on programs graded in difficulty. Numeracy skills are usefully incorporated into other areas of the curriculum. Measuring skills are used very effectively in design and technology, whilst in geography and science the visual impact of data handling and graphs exemplifies the reasons underpinning conclusions.
79. The significant improvement in mathematics in recent years reflects the school's commitment to providing every pupil with the opportunity to maximise their potential. This has been

achieved through detailed and flexible planning, a good team spirit amongst the staff and the development of a rigorous assessment system which highlights an individual pupil's specific needs. The school meets these well through a variety of appropriate means. The subject co-ordinator's plans have proved very effective to date and there is still capacity for further development.

## **SCIENCE**

80. Teacher assessments of work, at the end of 1999, indicated that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for their age was similar to that found nationally. The proportion of pupils exceeding this level was well above the national average. Evidence from the inspection, including scrutiny of work, observation of lessons and discussion with pupils indicates that these standards are being maintained. This is consistent with the findings of the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.
81. Pupils show an inquisitive interest in science, which frequently initiates discussion about issues across the curriculum. Teachers take advantage of this to promote awareness of the application of scientific principles in aspects of everyday life. A typical example emanated from work on 'forces'. Pupils successfully worked out for themselves how forces affected the direction and speed of movement of a vehicle and then went on to investigate the effect of changing the angle of incline of the ramp. In design and technology, they extended this work to the making of a four-wheeled chassis and they explained why accurate construction was necessary to facilitate smooth motion. Some pupils talked about friction and knew that this too affected the quality of the movement. The pupils' knowledge of life processes and living things is good and is strongly linked to healthy eating and the need for exercise. Pupils know that food and water are required to sustain life and they enjoy testing their predictions through simple investigations. They observe closely and recognise the importance of reporting exactly what they see. By the end of the key stage, most pupils can explain their findings in simple terms and justify their conclusions. Some pupils find it more difficult to record their results in writing, but, given assistance, they all make satisfactory progress in this aspect of the work.
82. It was possible to see only one whole-class science lesson during the inspection but the overall quality of pupils' work indicates that teaching is good. The mixture of whole-class / group teaching at different times is effective, particularly when teachers use the latter to challenge individual pupils to higher levels of reasoning. For example, a group of pupils from Year 2 set up experiments to investigate the conditions needed for plant growth. The lower-attaining pupils satisfactorily identified the basic requirements whilst higher-attaining pupils included the principles of 'fair-testing' and 'control tests'. The emphasis on learning through investigation is stimulating pupils to think for themselves and reach conclusions based on firm evidence. Recording skills are systematically being introduced and are providing teachers with good information on which to base their planning. The marking of pupils' work is helpful and informative. Teachers have high expectations, which they transmit to the pupils. Lesson plans are usefully co-ordinated within each year group, but sometimes, with too little reference to the work in other years. Consequently, the overall progression of work in science is slowed and there is repetition in some topics.
83. The subject co-ordinator is relatively new to the position and does not yet check classroom teaching of the subject. Good progress has been made in auditing the provision for science and the school is now in a strong position to further develop its work in this area. There is good capacity for further improvement and the raising of attainment to match that in English and mathematics.

## **ART**

84. It was possible to see only one lesson during the inspection and judgements are supported by discussions with pupils and the subject co-ordinator, analysis of teachers' planning, pupils' past work, sketch books and displays.
85. Pupils make very good progress in their learning and work is of very good quality. At age seven, it is better than that of most pupils of a similar age. Displays show a range of impressive

work in drawing and painting, which reaches a high standard. Pupils' work shows very good attention to detail, such as the spots on the petals of the lily and the features and stance in pastel pictures of swans. They use technical vocabulary accurately, such as light, dark and shade. Pupils achieve a good standard in all aspects of art, including three-dimensional work with clay and in sculpture. Textile work is enhanced by regular opportunities for sewing, weaving and collage.

86. Teachers are enthusiastic about the subject and this is conveyed to pupils who show enjoyment, great interest and pride in their work. Through sensitive, effective support from staff, pupils with special educational needs achieve very well in relation to their previous learning. Observational skills, drawing and the composition of pictures, using a range of techniques and media, such as painting with watercolours, are particularly well taught. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning. For instance, Year 2 pupils produce illustrations in the style of Quentin Blake's book "Mrs. Armitage on Wheels". Their watercolour pictures show how carefully the pupils had observed the original illustrations and successfully captured the features and movement of the character.
87. Teachers make effective use of good quality resources, examples of their own work and that of famous artists in their lessons. This gains pupils' interest and motivates them to learn. Work is linked very well to other subjects, such as geography, history and science. For instance, in a Year 2 lesson, some pupils were recording their science work about plants and some were acting out the role of a customer or shop keeper in the imaginative play area which was structured as a garden centre. The teacher linked the work in art to these activities. She used attractive pink and white lilies and her own sketch successfully to teach the skills of observation, drawing and painting.
88. Basic skills are taught well. For instance, in the lesson observed, the teacher ensured that the parent volunteer was well briefed. This ensured that the technical vocabulary was emphasised, and that brush techniques and attention to detail were taught effectively by both adults. This led to improvements in pupils' work. The teacher had high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and challenged pupils to produce accurate and lifelike pictures. For instance, she encouraged pupils to draw the correct pattern and shape of the petals. Pupils were enthused and drew and painted with great care and high levels of concentration to produce attractive, realistic pictures of a high standard. Discussion with these pupils shows that they have a sound knowledge of famous artists and the techniques they used, such as Monet and the local painter Ashley Jackson.
89. Information technology, literacy and numeracy are used effectively. For instance, pupils use drawing programs about famous artists and work on pattern and shape. The curriculum is enriched by visitors, such as an artist in residence and parent volunteers who help with activities, such as sewing. The standard of display is very good. Pupils' work is displayed attractively and is enhanced by three-dimensional objects and artefacts. This successfully promotes pupils' self-esteem and learning and enhances the accommodation.
90. The co-ordinator provides effective support and guidance to staff and this has a positive effect on pupils' learning. However, she does not check classroom teaching of the subject. Further improvements could be made by ensuring that skills in all aspects of art are built upon progressively, from Reception to Year 2. Improvement since the last inspection is very good. A good policy has been implemented; standards have risen from satisfactory to good, overall, and high standards are achieved in drawing and painting.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

91. At the time of the previous inspection, attainment in design and technology was similar to that found nationally for pupils of this age group. Since then the school has made considerable advances in the promotion of the subject, often through high-profile cross-curricular work. The result of this quality provision, complemented by very good support from parents, is evident in standards of work which are well above those usually seen in pupils of the same age.
92. Throughout the school, emphasis is on the progressive development of skills. Pupils learn at a

fast pace and their good progress is clearly evident in the range and increasing complexity of the finished products. Teachers set interesting tasks which capture pupils' imagination. Thoughtful planning ensures that pupils acquire the appropriate knowledge and understanding to design, make and evaluate a finished product of which they can be proud. Pupils show great enthusiasm for their work, which they execute with care. Boys and girls work well together, sharing ideas and helping each other. In Year 1, pupils use their initiative to make paper chains without using glue. Subsequently they produce interesting paper puppets of pigs to illustrate a story that had been read to them. Even more advanced in technique are delightful cuckoo clocks, which embrace work in mathematics, science and technology. In Year 2, pupils are benefiting from simultaneous experiences in different aspects of the subject. Parents work with teachers to provide support and technical guidance for individual pupils and small groups. During the inspection, some pupils tasted fruits and designed and made up a fruit salad. They enjoyed evaluating the result – by eating it! - and successfully completed the task by deciding how they could improve on it. In another activity, pupils learnt and practised the construction skills needed in the manufacture of a model chassis for a wheeled vehicle. The patience of the instructor and the pupils' excitement in producing the working model were a delight to see. The parents' involvement in this subject, through a homework project, is also good. Pupils in Year 2 were invited to design and make a vehicle from recyclable materials. The products ranged from industrial machines to futuristic designs. Most striking was the originality and the attention to detail, for example on the locomotive that was shown to the whole school in an assembly.

93. The quality of teaching in design and technology, as judged from the pupils' work, is good. Inspirational planning captures the pupils' imagination and leads to good self-evaluation of finished products. Pupils' attainment has improved significantly since the previous inspection despite the fact that the policy and scheme of work are scheduled for further development.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

94. No lessons were timetabled for geography during the inspection. The quality of the work seen indicates that standards are above those found in many schools, albeit that the range of work is small.
95. The main focus in both year groups is on 'Where in the world is----?'. Pupils enjoy tracking the travels of Barnaby and Oscar – toy animals which 'send messages' as they travel the world by various means of transport. This imaginative way of captivating pupils' interest encapsulates the school's approach to all its work. By the end of the key stage, most pupils know where they live in relation to the British Isles. They can name other places that they know of, some in England, but many in other countries. Higher-attaining pupils successfully begin to use co-ordinates to locate places on maps; this work is at a higher level than normally found in similar schools. Most pupils are aware of different climates, as demonstrated by their understanding of what to pack if holidaying in different parts of the world. The use of weather recording instruments and charts assists them in recording events and making satisfactory decisions based on their findings.
96. Although no geography lessons were observed, evidence from the inspection indicates that teaching in the subject is good. The curriculum is scheduled for review and current work forms a good basis for further development.

## **HISTORY**

97. The previous inspection reported that no judgements could be made because of insufficient evidence. During the current inspection, there was much evidence of work of good quality displayed about the school and this, combined with evidence from lessons and an examination of pupils' work indicates that, at age seven, work is of a higher standard than is usually found.
98. At the end of the key stage, pupils discuss how the childhood years of their parents and grandparents were different from their own. They know that there are different ways of travelling and that their parents and grandparents played with toys that are different from their own. They develop a good sense of chronology for their age and order events in the past. They study the lives of some famous people, such as Florence Nightingale and Samuel Pepys and

know why they are remembered. Several parents, grandparents and governors visit school and provide a good range of artefacts for pupils to examine and discuss. For example, a governor brought in a 100 year-old teddy bear to a Year 1 lesson. This not only provided first-hand evidence, but was used well to develop an understanding of why something so old and battered could be of value to its present owner. Pupils devised sensible questions and listened with a mature respect to its owner. They learn about the importance of different ways of gathering evidence and understand that just looking at an artefact is not enough to tell the whole story of the past. For example, Year 2 know that it is impossible to speak to anybody living at that time and that they must rely on written evidence or reconstructions.

99. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. They develop an appropriate and progressively more complex appreciation of changes that have taken place in the previous century and in particular in the lifetimes of their families.
100. Teaching is good and sometimes very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan work carefully into the termly topics. They are enthusiastic and pupils develop good attitudes to their work and an interest in finding out about the past. Lessons begin with whole class discussions that include effective questioning in order to get pupils thinking. Teachers take a co-operative role in the co-ordination of the subject. Although there is no overall plan for the development of skills and knowledge they plan very carefully to ensure no repetition of work. For example, both reception and Year 1 study toys, but from a different viewpoint. Very good use is made of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and many opportunities are provided to extend these further. For example, in Year 1, displays of teddies include labels to indicate comparative ages: older, younger, oldest, youngest, very old, 41 years old.
101. Resources are satisfactory and are extremely well enhanced by those brought in from pupils' families and friends of the school and by high quality museum loans. For example, the school borrowed a range of old bicycles, including a penny-farthing, when studying transport. Pupils were allowed to sit on them and the quality of their observational drawings and writing was very good. Good use is made of visits to places of historical interest. History makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

102. In the school's previous inspection report, attainment in information technology was above the level expected for seven year olds. This standard has been maintained under the co-ordinator who is new to the post and this is a creditable achievement for the school. Although few direct lessons were observed, sufficient evidence was available from pupils' previous work, teachers' planning, comprehensive and detailed photograph albums, displays and discussions with teachers and pupils to allow judgements to be made.
103. In Year 1, pupils have good keyboard skills and are confident in using the computer, particularly for word processing. They learn the basic skills of using the mouse, enter and delete text, use capital letters and assemble text to make sentences. At the end of the key stage, pupils use the shift and return keys with growing confidence. They learn to identify question and exclamation mark keys to use in their writing. Most print their work and save, retrieve and display it with help. Teachers provide a wide range of experiences and resources to support work in other subjects, such as mathematics, science and geography. In mathematics, for example, pupils use the "click and drag" facility to move and place images on the screen and create a block graph on types of transport used by pupils to come to school. In science, they have collected information about similarities and differences between each other and can retrieve this information according to specific questions. Their own interpretation of a story about 'Mrs. Armitage', linked to their art lessons, clearly illustrates their understanding of the appropriate use of punctuation. They are making a whole-class storybook, with an attractive cover, for the Reception children and are well supported by parent helpers in this task. They use a floor robot and create a simple set of instructions to move it forward and backwards, left, right and turn around in quarter, half and full turns. All pupils enjoy using computers and clearly apply what they have learned to new work. Whilst working with teachers and parent helpers, they listen carefully, which helps them to present their ideas meaningfully and in a variety of ways. For example, some pupils have used Email to send a letter to Greenpeace for information about



their work.

104. The quality of teaching is good and consequently, pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and are enthusiastic. They know their pupils well and create a positive working atmosphere. Planning is clear and provides for rich experiences, taking into account the needs of all pupils, thus ensuring that their skills are built upon in a logical sequence. It includes carefully prepared lesson plans for volunteer helpers. Support assistants provide valuable support to teachers, are sufficiently experienced and committed to meeting the needs of pupils and know them very well. Teaching is very well supported by parents, who provide regular, valuable help. This has a very positive impact on maintaining the good standards within the subject. Despite the good skills that children have in word-processing, computers are not used in Literacy Hours to support pupils' work in independent sessions.
105. The curriculum is broad and balanced and supports work in most subjects in the curriculum imaginatively. It meets statutory requirements and the needs of all its pupils, including those with special educational needs. There is a clear scheme of work that identifies skills to be taught and so ensures progressive teaching and learning of skills and knowledge. The well organised co-ordinator carefully monitors teachers' planning, provides training for staff and encourages the use of individual pupils' assessment records, to ensure that their progress is tracked through the school.
106. Examples of pupils' work are sensitively presented in portfolios that clearly exemplify their achievements throughout school. Colourful and informative displays abound and provide a positive stimulus for all pupils. These illustrate the value that teachers and parents place upon their pupils' work and emphasise how skilfully information technology is integrated throughout most of the curriculum.

## **MUSIC**

107. In the previous inspection, pupils' achievement in music matched that of pupils of similar age and this standard has been maintained. The curriculum places a strong emphasis upon sensitivity, confidence and listening skills. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve appropriately.
108. Pupils make steady progress in performing and composing and listening and appraising. Year 1 pupils interpret high and low pitch by carefully listening and then sitting or standing, according to their interpretation of high and low sounds. They sing simple nursery rhymes and were observed replacing the words of "Three Blind Mice" with some that are linked to their science lessons, called "Green Plants". They use "Oscar" musical puppets to further develop their sense of rhythm. By the end of the key stage, pupils sing an expected range of children's songs and hymns such as "Children of the World" and "Peace Is Flowing Like a River". They sing in tune and time, showing the feelings in their words, particularly in whole-school assembly, where they sing gently and clearly. They are learning about simple notation to perform short sequences on chime bars. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have a developing sense of rhythm, tempo and pitch.
109. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lesson plans clearly indicate the skills that pupils are to learn. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and work hard to improve the quality of pupils' listening skills during these lessons. They have established good relationships with their pupils and offer appropriate praise and encouragement. Pupils' response is usually good. They enjoy making and listening to music and concentrate well when learning new words. Only on the odd occasion, a minority of pupils display silly behaviour and loss of concentration.
110. There is a good policy and scheme of work which contribute significantly to the sound standards in the school. The experienced co-ordinator has successfully set targets to measure pupils' attainment, based on their achievement. The school takes part in visits to, for example, the theatre, to see a variety of musical shows and the Indian Art Week project was successful in promoting the development of multicultural links. All of this, together with other visitors to the school, further enhances the curriculum.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

111. During the inspection, it was possible to see only one lesson of games, one dance lesson and an extra-curricular games club. At age seven, pupils' work in these areas is better than that of most other pupils of the age and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. No gymnastics lessons were observed during the inspection so no judgement can be made on standards.
112. Teaching is good, overall. Lessons are planned and structured well and teachers give clear instructions and explanations. Pupils know what they are to do and begin work promptly. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour, expecting pupils to listen attentively and participate sensibly. They deal firmly and sensitively with the few pupils who, occasionally, do not respond appropriately. This promotes very good behaviour and learning. Demonstration and positive comments are given to maintain the challenge and individuals are encouraged to improve their skills or quality of their performance. For example, when learning how to send and retrieve a ball, Year 2 pupils are taught how to scoop up the ball correctly. Their skills are then applied and developed as they progressively work with partners, in small groups and subsequently in teams. Occasionally, in this lesson, the pace and challenge was improved by increasing the distance or speed of the movement and this strategy could have been used more frequently to motivate pupils and enhance their learning.
113. All teachers have a sensitive approach towards pupils with special educational needs and pupils from ethnic minorities. They support them effectively and a positive attitude to equality of provision is reflected in the mixed pairs and groupings in activities. The good support ensures that they participate fully in lessons and succeed in their learning. For instance, in the dance lesson, the support assistant gave individual support to a pupil, which enabled him to participate confidently in the group work and practise and improve his performance. Basic skills, such as sending and retrieving a ball, are taught carefully and this effectively promotes learning. Many pupils participate in the extra-curricular games club for Year 2 pupils. These sessions are carefully planned and taught and pupils' skills are assessed systematically. This promotes good progress and, in the session observed, pupils' ball skills and co-ordination were above the level expected for their age. Pupils enjoy their lessons, behave sensibly, responsibly and with consideration for others. They listen carefully and show commitment to improving their skills through practice and perseverance.
114. The dance lesson was taught by a visiting specialist, who is also a governor, supported effectively by the class teacher. The instructor had high expectations of what the pupils should achieve and this was shown in the complexity of the sequences they were expected to undertake, such as in linking a variety of jumps, or parts in the story they enacted about a magic carpet. Pupils responded to these challenges with great enthusiasm and concentration and practised and refined their movements. This resulted in very good progress in learning to contribute to group work and in the building up of a story in dance. Pupils show a good awareness of space and each other. Their interpretation of movements and performance of basic skills such as jumping, balancing and travelling are good. Time, resources, praise and encouragement are used effectively and the teacher focuses on key points for development, such as stretching and extending their movements.
115. The co-ordinator is new to the role and has a good view of how the subject needs to be developed. She is an exemplary teacher of the subject and gives useful support and advice to staff. Teaching and learning are supported well by the outdoor play areas and the range and quality of apparatus and equipment. Provision could be further improved by ensuring that pupils' skills are built upon systematically from Reception to Year 2, and by greater involvement of the co-ordinator in evaluating and supporting teaching and learning. The school is aware of this and has plans to review the scheme of work in the next academic year. Day-to-day assessment of pupils' achievements is informal and formal assessments are undertaken at the end of each year.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

116. At age seven, attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus, as it

was at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning and have a sound understanding of Christianity, prayer and other religious faiths, such as Islam. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans, through very good planning and support by teachers and support assistants. During the inspection, it was possible to observe only one lesson and further evidence was gained from analysing pupils' work, displays and teachers' planning, and discussions with the co-ordinator.

117. Teaching is judged to be at least satisfactory, overall. In the lesson observed, the teacher showed pupils a variety of interesting books that were special to her and explained why they were special. This gained pupils' interest, motivated them to concentrate and promoted reflection and discussion. Pupils discussed the books that were special to them and gave clear reasons for their choices. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when pupils were not given sufficient opportunity to reflect upon their work. The teacher's clear explanations and the linking of pupils' experiences of their own special books, the Bible and the Qur'an, extended pupils' knowledge and promoted good progress in their learning. Good gains were made in pupils' understanding that Bibles may be different sizes and have different covers, but they contain the same stories. The clearly structured and organised lesson, the teacher's calm, quiet manner, very good relationships with the pupils and high expectations of behaviour promoted their good behaviour and learning. For instance, pupils were expected to listen carefully, to take turns in the discussion and to move promptly onto the group work and they responded well. Pupils' good knowledge of Bible stories was reflected in the book cover designs they produced. These showed careful thought about how to illustrate the contents. For instance, pupils' designs portrayed the events in the life of Jesus or the love of God.
118. Analysis of pupils' work shows that there is good coverage of Christianity, Islam and the main religious festivals. Literacy skills are promoted well through the opportunities teachers provide for speaking and listening, reading and writing. For instance, pupils write independently about David and Goliath and about Muslim prayer and Ramadan.
119. The co-ordinator gives useful advice and support to teachers and other staff. The curriculum is enhanced by visitors, such as the local vicar, and visits, for instance to the local church for a Millennium celebration. These factors have a positive effect on pupils' learning. The provision could be improved by ensuring that the work in Year 2 builds carefully upon the knowledge and experiences in Year 1. Work is assessed informally and is not consistent between classes. A new locally Agreed Syllabus is to be introduced in the next academic year and the scheme of work and assessment procedures are then to be reviewed. Religious education makes a very good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and to the school's ethos.