

INSPECTION REPORT

STAKES HILL INFANT SCHOOL

Waterlooville, Nr Portsmouth

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 115939

Headteacher: Mrs J Cotton

Reporting inspector: Mr D Speakman
20086

Dates of inspection: 15th – 18th May 2000

Inspection number: 190399

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 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Springwood Avenue Waterlooville Hampshire
Postcode:	PO7 8ED
Telephone number:	023 9226 2078
Fax number:	023 9223 1937
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Munden
Date of previous inspection:	18 th November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr D Speakman	Registered inspector	Mathematics Design & technology Geography Physical education Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught/ How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs C Roberson	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs D Morris		English Information technology Religious education History Special educational needs	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?
Mrs L Simmons		Science Art Music	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Under fives

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Stakes Hill Infant School provides full-time education for 180 pupils aged from four to seven. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs at 45 percent is well above the national average and the percentage of pupils with statements is below the national average.

The vast majority of pupils have English as a home language. Pupils come from a wide range of different backgrounds, but the socio-economic circumstances are below average overall. The percentage of pupils entitled to free-school meals is broadly in line with the national average. Most four-year-olds start school with levels of attainment that typically represent a range from average to below average, and therefore attainment on entry is below average overall.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that provides a good quality education overall and provides a firm foundation on which pupils can build their future learning. The quality of leadership and management of the school is good and there has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection. The school enables pupils to make good progress and achieve standards that are generally in line with those expected for pupils at seven years of age and to develop good attitudes to their learning. The strengths of the school outweigh the areas that could be improved. Setting the above factors against the high cost of educating each pupil, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Achieves high standards in mathematics, science, design and technology, and physical education and all pupils make good progress overall.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school.
- Provides a good curriculum for children under five and for those in Years 1 and 2. It is broad and balanced and provision for pupils' moral and social development is good.
- The leadership and management of the school are good and the school is very efficiently run.
- Shows very good levels of care for pupils.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships with each other are all very good.

What could be improved

- Consistency in how handwriting is taught and presented to the pupils.
- Opportunities for spiritual and cultural development.
- Some resources – particularly in Information Technology and Religious Education.
- Parents involvement in the work of the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection in November 1996 judged that the management and efficiency of the school and the climate for learning to be good, but that standards achieved and the quality of education required some improvement. Strengths have been maintained and now the curriculum is good and the quality of teaching is consistently good. Standards in a significant number of subjects are above expectations for seven-year - old pupils and in line in all others. There has been good improvement in these aspects of the school. Good levels of improvement have been made in addressing the key issues for action. Lesson planning has been improved and this now details appropriate provision for pupils at all levels of attainment. Assessment in English, mathematics and science is used well and informs teaching effectively. This makes a significant contribution to the overall good progress that pupils make. The head teacher and deputy head monitor the quality of teaching, the quality of which has improved since the last inspection. Then 20 per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory and teaching was sound overall. During this inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was seen 70% was good or better. The school has improved opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, make choices and exercise initiative.

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	E	D	C	B
Writing	E	D	D	C
Mathematics	E	E	C	A

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

In reading, pupils achieved standards that were average when compared to all schools and above average when compared to schools with a similar percentage of free school meals. Standards have improved steadily since 1997, when they were below average. In writing, standards remain below the national average, but in line with those of similar schools. There has been a good improvement in standards in mathematics since 1997. Then they were below average, but are now in line with all schools and well above average when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that standards are sound for children under five and they almost all achieve most aspects of the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five, with a small number of pupils showing a weakness in writing. By the age of seven, pupils achieve standards in reading that are average when compared with all schools and above average in mathematics. Standards in hand writing are generally satisfactory, but there is a minority for whom standards in writing are below those expected of other seven-year-olds. When compared to similar schools, standards in reading are above average, average in writing and well above average in mathematics. Standards in science, design and technology and physical education are above average by the age of seven. Standards are in line with expectations in all other subjects. There are strengths in some aspects of geography, art and music.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school. They enjoy their lessons and other learning opportunities offered by the school. Pupils are responsible and carry out their duties well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good both in class and around the school. Very little disruptive or inconsiderate behaviour was seen during the inspection. Behaviour in the playground is good. Pupils move around the school in an orderly and polite way.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils work reliably both individually and within groups. Relationships between pupils of all ages, and between pupils and adults, are good.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils arrive at school on time and lessons begin punctually.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching throughout the school is good and promotes good quality learning. The vast majority of lessons seen were of a good or better quality, and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Of the 46 lessons seen, the quality of teaching in 32 was good or better, in ten it was very good or better, and an excellent literacy lesson was seen taught to children under five. Basic skills are generally well taught across the curriculum. Teaching effectively enables pupils to make good progress and develop good learning skills and attitudes.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is good for pupils at all ages. The school has effectively implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, enabling pupils to make overall good progress. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are well provided within the school. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans and record keeping for these pupils are of a good quality. Teaching support assistants make a valuable contribution to their learning. Pupils make good progress towards meeting their individual learning targets.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is good. Provision for their moral and social development is good, and for their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of its pupils. The procedures for supporting the development of individual pupils, both academically and personally, are very good and contribute positively to progress. The procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality are good. Very good attention is paid to the health and safety of all pupils, including arrangements for child protection.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has a clear vision regarding the development of the school that is effectively communicated to and shared by all members of staff and governors. All staff are fully committed to improving provision constantly and raising standards. A commitment to seeking the highest possible achievement for pupils across a wide range of learning experiences, and the personal development of all pupils, is of high importance to all staff. Governors, staff and parents express confidence in the leadership of the headteacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are effectively involved in the life and development of the school. They know the school well. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and staff work very well with governors to identify what the school does successfully and what can be improved. The headteacher and deputy monitor teaching effectively and know the staffs' strengths and weaknesses.

The strategic use of resources	The financial management of the school is very effective. Care is taken to ensure that money is well targeted and that the best value for spending is achieved. Spending is well linked to priorities in the school development plan. The school evaluates the impact on standards of their financial commitments.
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PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • They feel their children are given the right amount to do at home. • The teaching is good and teachers expect children to work hard and do their best. • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with concerns and that the school works closely with parents. • The school is well led and managed. • The school is helping children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside of lessons.

The inspection team agrees with the positive comments made by the parents. The inspection team does not agree that the range of activities outside of school is inadequate. The school's provision for extra-curricular clubs is good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The percentages of pupils achieving Level 2 or above in the national tests in 1999 for seven year olds in reading and mathematics were both above the national average. It was below the national average in writing. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was close to the national average in reading and mathematics, but below in writing as no pupils achieved this level. When compared with similar schools, standards of attainment were above the national average in reading, average in writing and well above in mathematics. Teacher assessment in science indicates that the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or above was close to the national average, and the percentage of pupils assessed at Level 3 was above the national average. Trends over the last four years are generally similar for reading and mathematics. In 1996 standards in both subjects were above average, but even though they fell in 1997 and 1998, standards in 1999 are again comparable with those in 1996. In writing, standards have kept pace with the national trend, but have remained below the national average.
2. The school has set appropriate academic targets to improve test results in writing and to maintain current levels in mathematics. These are relevant and appropriate to the school and are sufficiently challenging, although improvement in writing remains an area for attention. The school is set to maintain standards in mathematics.
3. Assessments completed within the first few weeks of children's schooling indicate that the overall attainment on entry to the reception class is below average. In the last intake of children, there were very few that showed above average levels of attainment and a greater proportion were achieving below average levels. They have a good start to their education and make good progress so that the majority achieves the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five.
4. Overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is average and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the higher attaining pupils, make good progress. There is no difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Attainment in English is currently in line with the national expectation. In mathematics and science, standards are higher than those expected for pupils at this age. Pupils make good progress in mathematics and science, and satisfactory progress in English. Pupils make good progress in design and technology, physical education and achieve standards that are above expectations for pupils of seven. They make satisfactory progress in all other subjects and achieve appropriate standards.
5. Standards of literacy across the curriculum are satisfactory. Speaking and listening and reading for research are satisfactory. The writing skills of a minority of pupils remain below average by the end of Year 2. This has an impact on pupils' recording in other subjects, such as history and religious education, where writing is important to the progress that pupils make. There are good standards in numeracy in other subjects, and sufficient use is made of information technology to satisfactorily develop capability skills. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy well in literacy lessons. The effectiveness of the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. Overall the pupils have positive attitudes towards the school. They enjoy coming and are keen to participate in the activities provided. They take pleasure in their own successes and are generous in their praise of others. Most are confident in replying to adults, but do not often initiate conversations until the end of the key stage. They listen with attention to what their teachers and other pupils say and offer opinions in circle time, even though their vocabulary is often limited. The use of puppets and other artefacts encourages shyer ones to speak through an intermediary. The great majority of pupils show active interest in school life and are keen to participate in the range of activities, some after school, when extra-curricular clubs are offered.

7. Behaviour is good and this contributes to a mainly industrious working atmosphere during lessons. Parents' views are consistent with this judgement. Occasionally a small number can be restless and inattentive, but teachers and other staff deal with this quickly and sensitively. The behaviour management policy focuses on positive rewards so that sanctions are kept to a necessary minimum. Golden Rules are displayed and most pupils obey them happily. During playtimes and lunch times behaviour is good and they are mainly pleasant social occasions. The pupils are well aware of right and wrong and begin, through good teaching, to be aware of the consequences of their actions. Individually the pupils are polite and courteous when talking to adults. All pupils show respect for property as the state of the building and resources shows. Litter, graffiti and vandalism are unknown and the care taken of school equipment by pupils extends its life. There is no evidence of racism, sexism or bullying, and pupils feel safe and secure at school.
8. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff, are good. Pupils work well together in lessons. When required, they co-operate and collaborate together, helping each other as a matter of course. The previous inspection report noted that pupils readily accept responsibility when it is given to them, but would benefit from being given more. The school has drawn up an appropriate policy and appoints pupil helpers who wear coloured bands and undertake a range of responsibilities on a rota basis. The key issue has been successfully addressed, although on occasions classroom assistants offer unnecessary help in small organisational tasks during lessons which pupils could do for themselves. However, many opportunities are given to pupils to make their own choices and to use initiative so that most do not rely too heavily on adult help. The high expectations of staff help children to develop maturity, self-help and self-discipline when working alone or in groups.
9. Attendance levels are satisfactory overall at just below 95 per cent for the past few terms. The school administration officer carefully records all daily absences strictly in line with statutory requirements and unauthorised absences are above the national average at just over 1 per cent. Parents are asked to let the school know immediately if their child is absent and many do so. Otherwise the school follows up all absences, occasionally with the support of the Education Welfare Officer. The headteacher is rightly concerned that the level of unauthorised absence has risen since the previous inspection and indicates that it is a very small minority who causes concern. However, she monitors attendance diligently and strategies are in place, which aim to encourage all parents to send their children to school every day. Pupils are generally very punctual, which reflects their eagerness to come to school. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

10. Teaching throughout the school is good and promotes good quality learning. The vast majority of lessons seen were of a good or better quality, and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Of the 46 lessons seen, the quality of teaching in 32 was good or better, in ten it was very good or better, and an excellent literacy lesson was seen taught to children under five.
11. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach is good. They have a good knowledge of their pupils and their learning needs. A key issue at the time of the last inspection was to challenge higher attaining pupils more, so that they could achieve standards of which they were capable. This has been fully addressed. Lessons are now planned so pupils at different levels of attainment are given work at an appropriate level. This is based on reliable assessment, which is particularly good in English, maths and science. Individual and group work sheets are provided for all levels of attainment in individual and group work sessions. The good targeting of work extends to oral sessions, when questions at appropriate levels are directed to specific pupils. Higher attaining pupils are also now provided for effectively. A senior member of the teaching staff has specific responsibility for ensuring that gifted and higher attaining pupils are well provided for. She is aware of these pupils and effectively oversees provision for them, ensuring that it is appropriate. Lower attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs, are well supported

- by their class teachers and the support assistants. Teaching effectively enables pupils to make good progress and develop good learning skills and attitudes.
12. Basic skills are generally well taught across a wide range of subjects. The development of literacy and numeracy skills plays important part in the school and all adults promote this effectively. However there are some weaknesses in the teaching of handwriting, which result in some confusion for a minority of pupils.
 13. Teachers' lesson planning is good. Activities are appropriate and effectively enable pupils to achieve the intended learning outcomes of lessons. Interesting activities stimulate pupils, establish their attention at the beginning of lessons and encourage their participation. High interest levels also ensure that pupils sustain interest and that they work hard to acquire good levels of skills, knowledge and understanding. This was seen in reception classes, where pupils were very effectively guided through the planning of a journey and plotting the features of their journey using symbols. Pupils were interested and showed high levels of attention, at the end of the school, for a lengthy period of time and achieved good standards in their work. In Year 2 literacy, high levels of motivation and interest were achieved through relevant and stimulating activities. Teachers' expectations of their pupils are high. Teachers are aware of the levels that their pupils are at and plan appropriately demanding exercises. They also expect high standards of behaviour in lessons. Pupils are managed well and high standards of behaviour are established and maintained in class. Pupils who present instances of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with appropriately and effectively in a respectful, non-confrontational, but firm manner. Expectations of behaviour are made clear and pupils are aware of how they should behave in class to enable lessons to progress appropriately.
 14. Teachers use good methods in lessons and ensure that pupils' gains in knowledge and understanding are good. They use a good balance of teacher-led and pupil activity. In better lessons, a good range of effective teaching strategies is used. The use of focused questions is effective in ensuring that all pupils are involved and that they feel confident to answer questions directed to them. Teachers often use the tone of their voice effectively and a lively approach to teaching in order to stimulate enthusiasm, through effective role model. Clever use of pauses and the timing of questions enables pupils time to think about their responses, but also ensures that lessons move at a brisk pace and sustain pupils' interest and concentration well. Consequently, pupils' learning is effective and they learn at a good pace.
 15. Support staff are effective in their work in class and they make a positive contribution to the learning of the pupils in their care. They are fully involved in the planning of the lesson and are well aware of what they are to teach their pupils. They know the pupils well and have good relationships with them, providing sympathetic but firm guidance. Support staff effectively support the teachers in their work and work confidently and competently, either along side them or with groups of pupils as directed. Resources are used to good effect and provide interest and variety in lessons. In numeracy lessons, for example, digit cards are used to good effect by all teachers to enable pupils to work individually and not rely on other pupils to provide the answers all of the time. Music and physical education resources, for example, are used effectively and contribute well to standards.

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

16. The quality and range of the curriculum is good for pupils of all ages, and has improved since the last inspection. A wide range of good learning opportunities are provided which meet the needs of all pupils. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and all subjects of the National Curriculum, as well as religious education, are taught. Curriculum documentation is beginning to reflect the latest guidance from the Schools' Curriculum and Assessment Authority. Time allocations are appropriate, and requirements are met.
17. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy Strategy, and this is helping to

improve standards, which have improved in relation to all other schools since 1997. A new writing scheme has been introduced across the school. Although it is too early to measure its' impact, there is a lack of consistency about the way it is being implemented. The National Numeracy Strategy has also been introduced this year, and standards in mathematics have risen as a consequence. The curriculum includes good support in relation to health education. Clear monitoring procedures are in place and provision for pupils with additional medical difficulties is good. Links with supporting agencies are strong. The school has built constructive relationships with other local schools, and has worked closely to ensure that the approach to the curriculum is similar to that of the adjacent junior school to which the vast majority of pupils transfer.

18. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. All pupils in Year 2 have access to a very wide range of additional activities after school. These include musical, sports and computer clubs. These activities are open to both boys and girls, and pupils of both genders attend all of them on a regular basis. The schools' policy for equal opportunities is good, and is promoted positively by all staff.
19. Provision for pupils' personal development is good. Opportunities to improve pupils' social and moral development are well promoted, and are good overall. The school creates occasions for pupils to work collaboratively. Pupils are given good opportunities to undertake simple responsibilities within lessons, such as giving out resources, and clearing away at the end of lessons. They are encouraged to behave responsibly and help each other. However, sometimes too much is done for them and, as a consequence, opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility are reduced. Throughout the school day, members of staff seek opportunities to talk to pupils about their understanding of right and wrong. A clear moral code is in place which pupil's respect. Teachers use a range of good strategies, such as use of praise, and stickers to promote good behaviour.
20. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. During assemblies, pupils are encouraged to reflect on a range of issues. For example, pupils in Year 1 were asked to reflect on the story of "The Stork and the Fox", one of Aesop's tales in which the moral is "don't be unkind to others who are unkind to you." The pupils were asked to reflect on their own playground behaviour as they thought about the story. Assemblies take place daily, but do not always meet the statutory requirements for collective worship. Pupils' understanding of their own culture is promoted through subjects such as music and art. They learn to play traditional playground games such as hopscotch, skipping and playing with hoops. Their understanding of other cultural traditions is more limited. Opportunities and resources to enable pupils to learn about the traditions of cultures that are different from their own, are more limited.
21. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. This has been maintained since the last inspection. The provision is still well organised, and effective targets are set and monitored for each pupil. Very effective use is made of staff expertise to support pupils with special needs. For example, staff and pupils are learning to sign, from the signing support assistant so that they can communicate with hearing impaired pupils. Pupils make good progress in relation to their individual education plans, and they enjoy working in small groups either in the classroom, or in withdrawal situations. However they are sometimes confused by the lack of consistency within the writing programme, and this can inhibit the learning that takes place. Provision for more able pupils is also good. This has improved since the last inspection. A good policy now ensures that work is usually, effectively differentiated for the least and most able pupils in the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

22. The school takes sensible and effective measures to ensure the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. They are very well supported in a caring environment, where all adults work together to successfully raise achievement. The good standards of care have been maintained since the previous inspection and all minor issues raised concerning pupil's welfare have been addressed. For example, written records of all fire drills are now kept up to date. There is a relaxed and

happy start to the day for all pupils. They are welcomed into school when they arrive from 8.45 a.m. and go straight to their classrooms. Some make an early start on appropriate work with teaching assistant support in small groups, whilst others read or work on other tasks. Registration at 8:55 a.m. signals the start to the timetabled day and the transition is very smooth.

23. A range of policies are in place which give much good advice and guidance as to good practice for ensuring that the needs of young children are met. Procedures for many aspects of care are understood and implemented by all staff. Risk assessments are effectively carried out with input from outside professionals. First aid procedures are carefully followed. The named first aider, who is also the school administration officer, records attention given to all pupils who are sent to the office for her specific care. All staff, including mid-day supervisors, have had first aid training and adults patiently listen to all pupils throughout the day when they have minor accidental injuries, worries or anxieties. Members of staff are attentive and very caring towards pupils. During the inspection, a child who was feeling cold was encouraged to borrow a warm cardigan from the school's supply of uniform.
24. Teachers consistently use systems for monitoring and recording individual pupil's personal and social development, and procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are very good. These have recently been reviewed and are now more manageable. Information relating to personal and academic achievements is collated in a range of effective ways. For example, daily concerns are recorded in a "concerns" book and there are criteria for helping pupils who are upset or tearful. Teaching assistants are effectively used to spend time with any pupil who needs additional support and encouragement. Circle times, when pupils can talk about their own concerns, are well established. Teachers know their pupils well and take good care of them.
25. Outside support agencies are used well to support certain pupils. A clear policy for child protection, which follows local guidelines, is in place and all procedures effectively followed when necessary. New staff are immediately given guidance on school procedures for child protection. The headteacher and senior staff are experienced in dealing with children and their families who need extra support.
26. The very positive relationships that pupils have with staff encourage pupils to talk to teachers about any concerns they may have. The relatively low numbers of pupils in many classes enable much individual attention to be given to pupils. Circle time is a valuable weekly occasion in every class, which successfully promotes pupil's social and personal development. The mid-morning breaks, when pupils have milk and a snack, are sociable occasions when pupils themselves help look after each other. Praise and encouragement are regularly given to every pupil and their kind deeds are rewarded with certificates.
27. Procedures for promoting behaviour are good. Some pupils have behaviour targets written into their individual education plans, which are reviewed and monitored regularly. Behaviour is usually good for the majority of pupils and pupils are learning to behave very positively. During one outside windy playtime, when pupils became quite high spirited and some older boys began to become boisterous, a teacher in charge immediately blew the whistle, asked all the children to sit down and sensitively reminded them of the school rules. Pupils knew they had been treated fairly.
28. Procedures for encouraging regular attendance are good and very successful for the majority of pupils. The headteacher and school administration officer monitor attendance very closely. Strict statutory regulations are followed to distinguish reasons of absence and the school recognises that it has a higher than average rate of unauthorised absences, but works hard to encourage all parents to send their children to school every day. Pupils begin to arrive at school from 8.45 a.m. and the relaxed and inviting atmosphere created within the school environment means a very happy start to the day for all pupils, who are rarely late. Procedures for the dismissal of children at the end of the day are good.
29. Academic performance is also monitored in several ways, such as through differentiated group

targets in the core subjects of English and mathematics, and through monitoring of assessments at different stages of school life. Overall assessment procedures are very good. Effective baseline assessment is in place and this is used to predict future attainment. During Year 1 pupils are assessed in reading, writing and mathematics at two different stages throughout the year to ensure that they are making progress, and to enable teachers to provide additional help for those who need it. Pupils' work is regularly marked and moderated to ensure that standards across classes are the same. Some good portfolios of pupils' work have been collected, and these help to measure progress. Teachers use assessment to guide planning. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully as they move through the school, and this enables well focussed planning to support those who need it most. The school reports to parents annually and there are opportunities for consultation and discussion. Assessment in relation to pupils with special needs is in line with that recommended in The Code of Practice and is also good overall.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

30. Since the previous inspection report in 1996, there have been improvements in the way parents have been kept informed about their children's progress. Annual reports to parents now set targets under "The Next Step" for pupils and they have an opportunity to respond with their own comments to these reports. Teachers know many individual parents well and communication channels are generally open and effective. Parents receive a range of helpful information about the school and what it aims to teach. Home school contracts have been sent to all families. Over the years, the school has pursued many ways to encourage parental involvement in the life of the school and in pupils' learning, but with limited success.
31. Parents and carers speak highly of the school. All who responded to the pre-inspection parent's questionnaire believe behaviour and teaching to be good, that the school is well led and managed and that it expects children to work hard to achieve their best. Seventeen per cent of parents who responded are unhappy with the range of out of school activities provided for pupils. During the inspection many Year 2 pupils were happily involved in a very good programme of extra-curricular activities, some of which are supported by parents. All four parents who attended the pre-inspection parent meeting were supportive of the school and praised the care and support their children receive.
32. All new parents are invited to help in the school and the few who take up this offer speak very positively about the welcome they receive. Many parents have other smaller children or work during school hours and are therefore unable to involve themselves in school life. Written guidance for helpers is well presented and very informative. The termly class assemblies are very well supported by parents, as are other events throughout the year.
33. The school tries hard to involve parents in the education of their children, but staff, governors and parents themselves admit that success in involving many is very limited. Individual home link books were last year abandoned because so few parents used them. Reading diaries are sent home regularly, but only a few parents communicate this way. Curriculum evenings are poorly attended. A recent Statutory Assessment Test evening included less than 10 per cent of parents. Overall, parents response to the school's efforts to include them are insufficient.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

34. The headteacher was in post at the time of the previous inspection when the leadership and management of the school were judged to be good. This quality has been maintained and this aspect of the school is still a strength. The headteacher has been in her current post now for six years, but she has had considerable experience as headteacher of three other schools. Her experience is evident in her work and her leadership is very strong, ensuring that the school has a very clear educational direction. She has managed the school very well through changing circumstances and has managed to sustain the morale of the staff during contraction and when moving into new buildings. She is well supported by an efficient and knowledgeable team of

teachers, some of whom support her well at senior level. Only recently has there been a deputy headteacher, and the head is now able to delegate more of her significant management responsibilities. The school aims are clearly reflected in the work of the school. The overall aim of “developing each child spiritually, morally, culturally, mentally, intellectually, socially and physically”, is evident in practice. High standards in moral and social aspects of school life and good progress overall fulfil the school aims. All pupils have equal opportunities to the curriculum and to make progress.

35. The headteacher and deputy, together with the assistance of a Local Education Authority representative effectively monitor the performance of teachers. Feedback is provided and the outcomes from observations are discussed with teachers. Although records of observations are not currently kept, monitoring of teaching has been effective. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when teaching was satisfactory, but almost one lesson in five was judged to be unsatisfactory. All teaching seen during this inspection was judged to be satisfactory or better and the quality of teaching is good overall. Curriculum co-ordinators make a good contribution to standards. They monitor provision through scrutiny of teachers’ planning and some through direct observation and support of teaching, such as in mathematics. Some governors visit the school and go into classrooms to listen to readers or work informally in class with groups of pupils. In this way governors are generally aware of standards. The school management team is flexible in its membership. The head and deputy form the core team and other members of staff are included in discussions depending upon their responsibilities and the focus of the meeting. In this way, delegation is effective and uses the strengths of a wide range of teachers well.
36. There is an effective appraisal model. All staff are appraised on a yearly cycle by one of three trained appraisers, the headteacher, deputy head and another senior teacher. They have an initial meeting to set the focus of the appraisal, classroom monitoring, setting development points and targets and then a review follows at a later stage. The appraisal process used by the school is a well established model and it also effectively feeds provision for the professional development of staff and is used to effectively identify some of the areas for whole school development. The appraisal process also guides subject action plans in different subjects. The governors have set performance targets for the headteacher and deputy. Induction procedures for staff new to the school, and for those new to the profession, are good and smoothly introduce teachers and support workers to the life of the school. The school has a good connection with a local teacher training college and students regularly join the school for their training. The tutor speaks very highly of the school as a provider for teacher training and the students evidently gain from their visits to Stakes Hill.
37. The schools’ priorities for development and targets for improvement are appropriate and are identified well. All members of staff contribute to this process. The school priorities are first established and are then considered alongside national initiatives. These are presented to governors, who add any of their own recommendations, and then priorities are decided upon and ranked in the light of available finances and any constraints. Progress towards meeting their targets is well monitored by personnel responsible, who report to the headteacher and the governors. The headteacher is fully involved with the assessment co-ordinator in the analysis of attainment data. They have a good knowledge of strengths and weaknesses of the school and these are effectively reported to governors. Governors have a good knowledge of the school through their involvement with the school and headteacher's reports to them, including information on internal and external monitoring and evaluation exercises.
38. The school’s use of financial resources is very good. Educational priorities are well supported through careful financial management. Funds for specific purposes are used appropriately. Priorities for development are carefully considered alongside available finance. The governors are well advised by the headteacher’s wide experience in these matters and they take her guidance into account when preparing the budget. Financial matters are very well managed throughout the year and the school effectively assesses whether it gets value for money for its financial commitments. The very efficient School Administration Officer keeps the headteacher and governors well informed about the status of the budget at regular intervals throughout the year. She also carefully

monitors spending on a daily basis. The office is very efficiently run. New technology is used to streamline processes and the members of the office staff are well informed. Computers are used very well to monitor finances, attendance, maintain pupils' records, word processing and the school receives e-mail. They effectively use a program to deal with Key Stage 1 National Assessment data.

39. The school is well staffed with teachers and support staff. Maintaining a high adult to pupil ratio has been a priority of the school for a number of years and the school is able to sustain small class sizes with a large amount of adult input. All teachers are suitably qualified to teach this age of pupil. The headteacher knows her staff well and has deployed them effectively so that their individual strengths are used appropriately. All members of staff have full and detailed job descriptions, and they have a clear knowledge and understanding of their general duties and overall responsibilities.
40. The building is very well kept and provides a spacious and attractive environment for all. Adequacy and quality of accommodation is excellent. Currently it has many empty pupil spaces and conditions for work and play are never cramped. Noise is not a problem, even though much of the school is open plan. The grounds are very attractive and pupils enjoy playing in the playgrounds, which are used well.
41. Overall the school has a good range of quality resources to support pupils' learning across the curriculum, but there are some areas for development. Resources for design technology and music are very good. For English, mathematics, science, art and physical education they are good and they are satisfactory for geography and history. There is a shortage of books in Religious Education to support teaching about other faiths and cultures. There is a wide range in the specification of computers. There is a high ratio of pupils to each up-to-date P.C., but when older computers are included, there are sufficient for all pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve further standards and the quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:

1. Improve the consistency of how handwriting is taught and presented to pupils by:
 - Improving teachers' knowledge and expertise in the handwriting scheme,
 - Plan carefully to ensure that what is taught is appropriate to all pupils, particularly younger pupils and those of lower attainment,
 - Monitor displays and resources to ensure consistency.(Paragraphs 2, 12, 45, 53, 54, 56)
2. Improve opportunities for spiritual and cultural development by:
 - Improving the quality and range of resources, especially books, for religious education and for other cultures;
 - Investigate ways of improving provision in lessons;
 - Ensuring that all Acts of Collective Worship meet requirements(Paragraphs 20, 96, 97)
3. Improve resources for Information and Communications Technology by:
 - Upgrading the specification or replacing some older computers,
 - Ensuring that all pupils have sufficient access to appropriate software and hardware.

The governors should also include in their action plan the following minor issue for improvement.

Further develop partnership with parents by seeking more ways of involving parents in the life and work of the school.

(Paragraphs 30, 33)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	9	21	14	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 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	180
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	56

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	71

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.3

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1
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	33	39	72

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	28	31
	Girls	34	31	36
	Total	64	59	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (72)	82 (82)	93 (83)
	National	82 (81)	83 (82)	86 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	31	31
	Girls	30	33	35
	Total	56	64	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (80)	89 (73)	92 (92)
	National	82 (81)	85 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.9
Average class size	22.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	200

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	382,142
Total expenditure	379,217
Expenditure per pupil	1,945
Balance brought forward from previous year	27,936
Balance carried forward to next year	30,861

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	180
Number of questionnaires returned	30

Percentage of responses in each category

My child likes school.

My child is making good progress in school.

Behaviour in the school is good.

My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.

The teaching is good.

I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.

I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.

The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.

The school works closely with parents.

The school is well led and managed.

The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	80	17	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	85	12	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	40	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	54	6	0	0
The teaching is good.	73	27	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	70	20	10	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	83	17	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	27	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	60	34	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	67	33	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	30	3	0	0

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

40	30	17	0	13
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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

42. Children under five are taught in two reception classes. At the time of inspection 17 children out of 53 were under five. Attainment on entry is mainly below the average, especially in the area of language and literacy. This is confirmed by baseline assessments, which are done soon after children begin in the reception classes. They have a good start to their education and make good progress so that the majority achieves the desirable learning outcomes by the time they are five. The planned curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to their needs. Children with special educational needs are given good support and make satisfactory progress. Induction procedures are good and allow children to settle quickly into school. Assessment procedures enable staff to measure children's progress well and are used effectively to plan their next steps in learning.
43. The previous inspection report found that, on some occasions, activities were over-directed and did not give children enough scope for choice. They were not able to experiment freely with materials, explore their own ideas and use their knowledge fully. These issues have been resolved. The under-five curriculum has been firmly embedded in the recommended areas of experience and care is taken to give children opportunities for choice, exploration and independence.
44. The quality of teaching in personal and social development is good and children make good progress in this area of learning. They gain confidence and learn to make positive relationships with adults and other children. They show increasing independence in organising their activities and decreasing reliance on adult help in classroom routines. Most of the time, children enjoy their activities, become engrossed in them and behave well. On the few occasions when a small minority of children show restlessness or inattention, skilled handling quickly minimises any disruption and draws the child back unobtrusively into the activity or lesson. All adults work together well as a team and make good role models, creating a happy, calm and purposeful learning environment. There is a good, well-planned programme of personal, social and health education which encourages appropriate behaviour. Children learn to take turns and share fairly. They help to keep the classrooms and outside play area tidy, clearing away their activities for the next children to use. Most children achieve the expected outcomes in this area of learning and this helps them to transfer easily to the next class.
45. Children enter school with skills in language and literacy, which are mainly below average. They make good progress and the effective teaching allows them to achieve most of the expected outcomes. Adults do all they can to promote the skills of speaking and listening by engaging children in conversation and class or group discussions. Good opportunities are provided for role-play and attractive dressing-up clothes enhance and develop imaginative interaction. The "role play" area currently features Stakes Hill Castle and children are inspired by stories, such as Jack and the Beanstalk, in their creative play. Staff work effectively to develop the early reading skills. Adults share books effectively with children and encourage them to read simple books aloud as a group, which they enjoy. Children acquire a good knowledge of the alphabet and letter sounds. There is good provision for children to write at their own level and they learn that this is a form of communication. Disparities between traditional print script and the cursive writing taught throughout the school causes difficulties for some children, especially those who are lower attaining or have special educational needs. However, the majority of children achieve the expected outcomes in the language and literacy area of learning.
46. The quality of teaching in the mathematical area is good. Children make good progress and, by the age of five, nearly all achieve the desirable learning outcomes and are working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum. Progress in number is especially successful since children under five work from the National Numeracy Strategy on tasks well matched to their age and attainment. They have a good understanding of numbers up to 10, count accurately up to 20 and some show awareness of larger numbers. Most children write figures accurately and are starting to show knowledge of number operations such as addition and subtraction. They experience other

mathematical areas such as time, using sand timers to increase their rate of working on appropriate tasks. An interesting display of different clocks illustrates analogue and digital measurement of time. Members of staff make good use of a range of attractive resources, which are used effectively to develop children's concepts of number, shape and size.

47. Teaching is good in the area of learning associated with knowledge and understanding of the world and this results in good progress. Children explore the attractive open-plan school and its well-appointed grounds and take walks in the surrounding area. These early geographical experiences are extended in the classroom by the use of miniature world toys to recreate their environment and reinforce learning after their explorations. They play indoors and outside with a good range of tracks, play mats and wheeled vehicles, which support their mapping and tracking skills. Children develop early awareness of changes over time by learning about themselves and their families. A mother brought in a three-week-old baby to reinforce children's ideas about growth and change in the passage of time. Children are introduced to early science and benefit from the resources, knowledge and emphasis put on the subject within the whole school. Technological skills are developed through a range of construction games, which offer appropriately increasing challenge as children mature. They have early experience of information technology, but the school lacks sufficient up-to-date computers to give reception children enough good quality experiences. The reception classes benefit from a range of visitors including "Kidsrome" who bring in farm animals, a policeman, school nurse, lollipop lady and parents who talk about their jobs. This introduces children to different roles in society. The good range of experiences allows most children to achieve the expected outcomes in early historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning.
48. Children's physical development is good. They are well taught and make good progress. Their fine manipulative and co-ordination skills are well developed through many opportunities for drawing, painting, cutting and sticking. Children are taught to use appropriate tools safely in making models of grandfather clocks and spiders for Miss Muffet. Children's skills in climbing, jumping and balancing are developed by regular daily access to a well-equipped outside play area with climbing equipment and wheeled vehicles for riding and steering. The very good accommodation and resources are used effectively by staff so that most children exceed the expected outcomes in the physical area of learning.
49. Children make good progress in their creative development. Their drawings and paintings show improving skill. In singing they listen well, learn words and actions and gain the confidence to sing in a large group during assemblies. They have access to the well-equipped studio and use the percussion instruments for shaking, tapping, banging or scraping. The wide range of pitched instruments is useful for exploration of melody. Children play happily and with imagination in different situations. Good quality dressing-up clothes and puppets add to enjoyment and enhance the quality of creative play. The good teaching encourages children to express their ideas and feelings through art, music, dance, stories and imaginative play, so that children achieve expected outcomes in the creative area of learning by the time they are five.

ENGLISH

50. In National Curriculum tests in 1999, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 or above in reading was above the national average and for those achieving the higher Level 3, was close to the national average. Over the four years 1996 to 1999, pupils' performance in reading dropped initially, but has now returned to 1996 levels. In writing, test results have remained consistently below average since 1996. In the National Curriculum assessment tests 1999, the percentages of pupils achieving Level 2 and the higher Level 3 were both below average. In comparison with similar schools, results are above average for reading and average for writing. In both reading and writing, there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls when taken over the last four years.
51. Speaking and listening skills are average when pupils enter the statutory years of schooling and by

the time they reach the end of Year 2 the vast majority attain standards that are average. This is consistent with the findings of the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Pupils listen well to their teachers during lessons and answer questions when called upon to do so. They join in with discussions willingly and offer opinions freely. They are very willing to talk about their work. For example, pupils in Year 2 show high levels of enthusiasm as they talk about their topic on the Great Fire of London. They sequence events appropriately and share information. Similarly, they discuss their use of computers responding well to questions and offering a range of explanations. However, a minority of pupils shows a lack of awareness of the needs of others in conversations. They interrupt and call out without recognising that they cannot all speak at once.

52. Standards in reading are generally average when pupils enter Key Stage 1. All pupils make satisfactory progress and by the time they reach the end of Year 2 standards are average, with some higher than average attainment evident. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were judged as average, so current findings represent some improvement. Pupils show that they can use a range of different techniques to help with their reading. They use phonic and picture clues as they develop their skills. In the reception class pupils read simple picture books and share their thoughts about the stories. In Year 1, they begin to read simple text. They identify letters and sounds and many can build simple words. Throughout Year 2 they read more difficult texts, and develop their reading skills through daily reading sessions. Lower attaining pupils develop their reading through effective support systems. They are given additional help in class, and sometimes in withdrawal groups, to ensure that they achieve their potential. Higher attaining pupils read fluently and with meaning. They show that they are aware of the library systems, and use many different resources to gather information.
53. Pupils' writing and spelling skills are also generally average when they enter Key Stage 1 with a minority of pupils with writing standards that are below average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and the majority attains average standards by the end of the key stage. However, a significant minority remains below average in handwriting by the end of Year 2. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged to be satisfactory. Current standards have a significant impact on pupils' recording in other subjects, such as history and religious education, where hand-writing skills are important. In the reception class pupils begin to learn how to form letters correctly, but sometimes there is an overemphasis on style, rather than content. This leads to a high proportion of worksheets and tracing activities. In Year 1, pupils begin to join writing, but there is a lack of consistency about the style that they should use and some are confused. This restricts the amount of writing that these pupils produce. However, there is clear evidence of progress in writing as pupils move through Year 1, particularly pupils of average and higher attainment. They write for different purposes, as when they write letters to Jack in the Beanstalk, and they generally spell simple words accurately. Lower attaining pupils in Year 1 are beginning to write simple sentences and use capital letters and full stops in their work. However, again there is a high proportion of repetitive tracing and copying, which restricts development of their own style. During Year 2 writing becomes more fluent. Higher attaining and average attaining pupils communicate meaning through narrative and non-narrative ways, as they write accounts of historical or geographical times and places. For example, they write descriptions of Rumpelstiltskin and describe the various characters accurately. They write simple diaries and letters, and develop their own stories. Lower attaining pupils, and those with special needs, learn to use simple punctuation, and to sequence their sentences through having good quality support from teachers and teaching assistants. They play simple word games and practise their letter formation daily. Many are able to spell simple monosyllabic words accurately. Standards in writing show clear evidence of improvement across the school. However, the confusion that some pupils have about the style of writing, as well as the over emphasis on practising by copying and tracing, leads to a lack of free writing for many lower attaining pupils, and some untidy work.
54. Standards of literacy across the curriculum are satisfactory. Speaking and listening and reading for research are satisfactory. Although writing is satisfactory overall, the hand-writing skills of a minority of pupils remain below average by the end of Year 2.

55. Pupils' attitudes to learning in English are good. They respect the views of others in discussions and feel secure in the knowledge that these will be listened to and respected. Pupils move around the classrooms sensibly and settle to their tasks quickly. They are often observed to be absorbed in their work and concentrate on their tasks for long periods. Behaviour in literacy lessons is good. Pupils treat books with care and replace these for others to use. They are courteous to the adults and to other pupils in the classrooms. They work well in pairs when required.
56. The quality of teaching and learning in English is satisfactory overall, with some very good teaching and learning in many areas of the school. For example, particularly good lessons were seen in Reception and in Year 2, where the teachers used some very good strategies during the literacy hour to keep pupils interested and on task. Resources and activities had been carefully pre-planned to ensure that all pupils could see the print and join in with reading. Teachers clearly demonstrated what they wanted pupils to do, and this ensured success by pupils of all attainment. The very good teaching in these lessons had a very positive effect on the learning of all pupils. They were able to join in fully with the lesson, and responded very well to the good questioning by teachers. Examples of good teaching were seen in Year 1 and in the reception classes, where teachers again use questioning well to promote pupils thinking skills. The good organisation and management in these lessons promoted effective contributions from the pupils. Teachers across the school generally manage their pupils well during English lessons. Planning is effective and takes account of the differing abilities and needs of the pupils. Teachers are well aware of the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy, and use some very good resources to promote learning. They use information and communication technology well to support literacy and to enable pupils to begin to search for information. Pupils have mostly positive attitudes to their work, because the relationships in lessons between staff and pupils are very good. Sometimes teachers plan too many repetitive activities, especially for pupils of lower attainment. This is because teachers are anxious that all pupils develop clear hand-writing styles. However, some pupils find it difficult to write for themselves, and the continuous practise of writing the same letters over and over again, inhibits creative writing and pupils become bored. This restricts the progress in writing of a minority of pupils.
57. English is well led with good implementation of the Literacy Hour, and effective targets for improvement. The good quality resources and library have a very positive impact on standards. Clear baseline assessment helps in the monitoring of progress as pupils move through the school. Effective monitoring of teaching and planning is having a clear impact on the quality of lessons in all areas of the school. The good quantity and quality of resources are used well to encourage pupils' interest. The new writing scheme is promoting progress particularly for those pupils of average and higher attainment. Not enough attention, in relation to hand-writing, has been given to lower attaining pupils and those with special needs in literacy. Also the lack of consistency of letter formation in classroom displays sometimes confuses these pupils.

MATHEMATICS

58. At the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 or above was above the national average in the National Curriculum tests in 1999. Ninety three per cent of pupils achieved at least the expected Level 2. Higher attaining pupils scored appropriately with seventeen per cent of pupils reaching the higher Level 3, which was close to the national average. Lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, also achieved well with fewer than average scoring below Level 2. When compared with schools with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to claim free school meals, the performance of seven-year-olds was well above average. Standards are now comparable with those in 1996, although they dipped below average in the two years between. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils are currently working at levels that are above those expected for pupils of this age. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be in line with the national average.
59. In the reception classes, pupils achieve standards that are high for pupils of this age. They understand place value in numbers, some up to a hundred, and know how to estimate how many

objects there are in a sample. Higher attaining pupils estimate, with good levels of accuracy, up to a hundred, average attaining pupils to 50 and lower attaining pupils to 30. They count reliably in tens, starting to count at any unit digit. Pupils then develop counting to be able to count in twos and fives, quickly, confidently and accurately to a hundred. Pupils attain good standards in number work when measured against their prior attainment. Most recognise odd and even numbers and can recite these sequences confidently. They have a good understanding of simple fractions, such as halves and quarters, and find fractional parts of quantities. They recognise and use symbols + and – for the number operations of addition and subtraction, and know such names as “add on”, “take away”, “subtract” and “difference between”. Most pupils readily recall the addition and subtraction number bonds. Most add coins proficiently, giving the total of sums of money. They accurately identify coins from descriptions and, for example, know that a small silver coin that is not round is a 20p coin. Pupils identify shapes such as triangles and quadrilaterals accurately. Older pupils have developed their number knowledge and skills well, and are generally able to estimate and approximate well. They have a good mathematical vocabulary and use words accurately when talking about shapes and their properties, for example. By the end of the key stage, pupils add numbers up to a hundred accurately, multiply numbers together and they are beginning to understand how to share numbers into a number of equal parts. They tell the time well and measure length and weight accurately, using appropriate standard units. They have a good knowledge of shapes and classify them according to the sides or the faces when classifying shapes with three dimensions.

60. Pupils use the skills they gain in numeracy well in other subjects. Year 2 pupils show good measuring (weighing) skills when baking in design and technology. They use co-ordinates well in map-making and have good knowledge of scale, how to preserve size and position when drawing their plans. Pupils have an appropriate range of mathematical vocabulary and use this accurately in lessons.
61. Good progress for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is well supported by the attention which pupils give to their teachers. They show very positive attitudes, and eagerness to participate in question and answer sessions. They respond well to interesting activities and challenge. Behaviour is generally good, and pupils remain on task throughout lessons and are attentive. They work well together in pairs and small groups, exchanging ideas and support each other well, learning well through discussion. There are very good relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults.
62. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good, and is good overall. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when the quality of teaching was sound overall, but was unsatisfactory in a minority of lessons. Teachers give good clear instructions so pupils are aware of what they have to do. Lesson objectives are clearly stated in planning and are made clear to pupils so they fully understand what they are to learn in the lesson. Teachers make good use of resources and classroom support assistants. Their work is effective and results in them having a significant impact on the quality of learning. Teachers use assessment well in planning their lessons to ensure they pick up on the weaknesses in the previous lesson and that pupils at different levels of attainment are given appropriate tasks. Planning is good and activities promote good learning through the progressive development of skills and knowledge and appropriate reference to pupils' prior attainment. Teachers' intervention is appropriate and pupils are generally allowed to work and solve their own difficulties, but support is given when necessary. Teachers are good at questioning which they use well to probe and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. Classes are well managed, partly through strategies and partly through very good relationships. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they are able to discuss and answer questions well. Expectations are high and clearly stated. Pupils respond well and meet the challenge of the demanding activities.
63. The school has prepared the transition of the curriculum to the National Numeracy strategy well in terms of training for staff in the management of its teaching, development of resources and the introduction of planning to match pupils' levels of attainment. This is having a positive impact on standards and pupils use their numeracy skills well in other lessons, such as accurate measuring in design and technology.

The co-ordinator provides good leadership both through the provision of a well-constructed policy to help teachers plan lessons and through monitoring of teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work. This effectively supports teachers in their planning and teaching. Good use is made of analysis of assessments to monitor pupils' performance and to guide future planning. The school has very good, well-organised resources to effectively support teaching.

SCIENCE

64. Standards of attainment at the end of the key stage are above national expectations. Teacher assessments of standard attainment tasks and local authority measurement of trends over five years in science confirm these findings. Progress in learning about science is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Pupils have a good understanding of scientific processes and their skills of observation, prediction and measurement are well developed. Many have a good basic scientific knowledge and are able to use scientific terms. In reception class pupils observe natural objects and study growth in plants and animals. In Year 1 pupils achieved above average standards in a lesson focusing on materials and their properties. They could identify different household materials, find common properties and begin to judge suitability for purpose. Standards in Year 2 are high. An ambience of science permeates all classes with pupils' working groups identified as carnivores, herbivores, mammals or amphibians. Classes observed during a lesson on mini-beasts reached very high standards in identification and recognition of insect characteristics, enabling them to succeed in completing a branching key. This lesson followed the use of appropriate videotape and is being followed up by pond dipping. Good teaching and interesting resources resulted in good learning. Standards of literacy and numeracy in science are satisfactory.
65. There has been good progress since the previous inspection. This found that a significant minority of pupils attained standards, which were below national expectations. Progress in the practical and exploratory skills of science was often less than satisfactory. These issues have been resolved. An appropriate emphasis has been placed on experimental and investigative science. Pupils are now able to predict the effect of a circuit breaking in electricity, for example.
66. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in science lessons are good. They ask questions, use their initiative and employ skills of systematic enquiry, using reference books to find out information. They enjoy science and are eager to learn.
67. The quality of teaching is now good and sometimes very good, which is a significant improvement. The increase in direct teaching has raised standards. Pupils are challenged through probing questions and demanding discussion. Teachers have increased their subject expertise through a determination to raise standards. They have simplified their classroom organisation and used their time more appropriately alongside their pupils, supporting their learning. Planning is now good, lessons are delivered well and assessment is used productively to measure progression and plan the next steps in learning.
68. The subject has been well managed by the headteacher in the long-term absence of the co-ordinator. She has scientific expertise and has led the staff well in their aim of improvement. The co-ordinator and Local Authority Science Advisory Service have carried out in-service training to develop thinking and ideas, which have helped to raise standards in teaching. Helpful schemes of work have benefited teaching and learning. Standards are monitored closely through assessment tasks and oversight of work on display, but there is no system for the regular monitoring of pupils' classroom work. This is not kept systematically enough to be a record of progression through the school.
69. The accommodation both indoors and outside enhances the teaching and learning. The grounds are conducive to work in "life and living processes" and the use of the Junior School pond is a useful resource. Scientific equipment is well supplied and there are sufficient reference books. The computers are not all up-to-date, although they are used well and new ones are planned.

ART

70. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress and reach the standard expected of this age group. This is the same judgement as at the previous inspection. Art has a secure place in the curriculum and standards have been maintained since the previous inspection in spite of the reduced time available for the subject. Pupils benefit from a wide art curriculum, which includes creative work in two and three dimensions as well as art appreciation. By the end of the key stage pupils use a range of materials and media to express their ideas. They achieve good standards in observational drawing and painting. Year 2 pupils produce high quality wax-resist paintings in the art club. Reception class pupils reach good standards in drawing portraits of their friends. In Year 1, attractive flower paintings in mixed shades of green and yellow enhance classroom displays. Paintings of discernible form are done on a computer. In Year 2, pupils achieved high standards in pencil drawings of a bird in a cage. They draw images of themselves seen in a long mirror, and produce very effective prints using blue and gold paint. Using clay and papier-mâché, pupils reached above average standards in three-dimensional sculpture. Year 2 pupils worked successfully in pairs to create insect bodies, exploring and experimenting with different techniques for forming their papier-mâché models. All classes benefited from a recent workshop led by artists-in-residence and pupils of all ages have produced sound artwork in decorating pebbles and stones. Pupils' experiences in art are supported through effective use of subject specific vocabulary. Numeracy, in the form of scale and preserving shape and scale, is well represented.
71. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory. It is good or very good when teachers have expertise in the subject. Staff provide pupils with a good range of activities which, over time, extend the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of art. At the previous inspection insufficient emphasis was given to pupils experimenting and exploring their own ideas and limited opportunities existed for selecting materials of their own choice. These issues have been satisfactorily resolved, extending pupils' personal development and contributing to their good attitudes towards art.
72. Management of art is good. Comprehensive schemes of work and support from the well-qualified co-ordinator give very good guidance to teachers. The well-organised portfolios of work covering all aspects of the wide art curriculum assist teachers in assessing the standards expected. Teaching assistants play a full part in planning, supporting pupils and assessing their progress. They make a significant contribution to the standards achieved and to pupils' learning. Work in art supports other areas of the curriculum well and the good quality of display creates an attractive learning environment. The art club run by the co-ordinator and a parent helper extends art opportunities for the Year 2 participants and good use is made of the artist-in-residence. There are satisfactory planning and assessment procedures and good resources, which are very well organised and accessible.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

73. No design and technology lessons were seen during the inspection, but a good sample of pupils' work and planning were examined. The school portfolio of pupils' work also provided valuable photographic evidence of standards.
74. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2, standards in design and technology are above those expected for pupils at this age, which is an improvement on standards at the time of the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special needs make good progress in both designing and making with a wide range of good quality materials and experiences. Younger pupils successfully design and make hats to keep a teddy bear warm and a bag for teddy to carry his belongings. They choose materials from a limited range and whilst using these materials develop good making skills such as cutting using scissors and joining using glue. They have experience with food and make different sandwiches and types of porridge for the "Teddy Bears' Picnic". They add different

ingredients to porridge and make sandwiches with their own choice of bread and fillings. After they have made their porridge and sandwiches, they test and evaluate their products. Activities such as these provide a good basis on which to build further learning in designing, making and evaluation. Whilst in Year 1, pupils design and make musical instruments, using a wide range of materials such as boxes and tubes. They use tissue paper for drum skins and elastic bands for guitar strings. They also make wind instruments using card tubes. Their instruments are of a high quality and resemble the intended object well. Instruments are well finished with paint and are attractive in design. At this stage, pupils are introduced to the use of wood and axles and make good quality rickshaws that are of a realistic design. Pupils in Year 2 have made a fun-racer. These were based on a chassis that pupils made with square doweling, axles and wheels. They produced good quality bodywork of original designs and which was well finished. Pupils adapt a basic scone recipe to make healthy and tasty scones, adding ingredients such as cheese or honey. They make good quality glove puppets from felt and wool, and are responsible for designing their puppets and cutting out their own patterns. They use a variety of techniques, such as sewing or sticking, to join the different parts. Pupils use a wide range of construction kits of different scale to build models of bridges to support five children or to make large-scale cranes to lift stated weights. Standards of numeracy in the making aspects of design and technology are good, with accurate measurement of length and weight evident in pupils' models and products.

75. Based on planning and the quality and range of materials and products, the quality of teaching is good. Planning is good and effectively addresses the requirements of the National Curriculum well. Pupils are given good opportunities to design and make and to use a good range of quality materials. High expectations are evident as pupils are given experiences with wood, food, fabrics and a good range of ways of constructing and joining materials. Pupils are expected to produce models with a good level in finish.
76. The curriculum is well planned is of good quality. It provides teachers with a good planning tool and guides them well in providing good quality provision. The subject is well managed by the well-qualified co-ordinator who provides good support for teachers in their planning and teaching. Resources are of a very good quality and range. Much of the equipment enables pupils to reach high standards. It is of a high quality, plentiful, conveniently stored and is appropriate to the work planned.

GEOGRAPHY

77. Pupils make satisfactory progress in geography and achieve standards that are appropriate for pupils of this age. However, pupils' knowledge and understanding of maps and map making is above expectations. This is an improvement on judgements in the last inspection, when standards were in line with expectations.
78. By the time they are seven, pupils have a sound knowledge of their own locality and are able to express what they like and what they dislike about their home town of Waterloo. They make valid comparisons with life in their own town and with a settlement of about the same size in India, taking into account how the different conditions affect the lifestyle such as clothes, crops and culture. They consider what they do at different times in the day and compare with what they do in their daily routines. When studying aspects of physical geography, pupils learn to properly identify lakes, fields, mountains and hills as features of the landscape. They use subject vocabulary appropriately.
79. Pupils' understanding of maps and map-making develops well throughout their time in the school. Younger pupils learn that maps are simple plans and they draw accurate plans of their rooms at home for example, accurately placing furniture and having a good idea of the relative size of different items in the room. They develop this understanding well and draw a pictorial representation of their journey into school, some with the help of street plans. They accurately place car parks, houses and other buildings in their hometown on street plans, preserving position well. Some pupils develop the skill to identify location by using two figure co-ordinates as grid

references. Once they have mastered local maps, they extend their knowledge and understanding to maps of the United Kingdom and the world. Through this, they learn the relative positions of countries in the United Kingdom and the positions and names of continents in the world. They also develop a good understanding of the position of England on a world map. Pupils begin to understand the importance of symbols on maps, devise their own to represent landmarks and learn some simple conventional signs. Good standards in numeracy are evident in pupils' map work.

80. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good. They are often "engrossed" in class discussion and show high levels of interest in geography. They sustain interest throughout their lessons and apply themselves to their tasks very well. Standards of behaviour are good. Pupils' relationships with each other are good and they work well together, sharing their ideas to mutual benefit.
81. The quality of teaching, which ranges from satisfactory to very good, is good overall. The best teaching is lively, stimulating and captures the pupils' attention and interest. Planning is good and activities are highly relevant to the work and to the age of pupils. Expectations are high and work is presented in such a way that it is interesting and gains pupils' attention, such as a lesson to reception children that was based on a railway journey. Pupils were expected to chart the journey and draw a simple map, complete with symbols. This was presented in a lively, relevant and stimulating way and promoted good quality learning. Relationships between teachers and their pupils are supportive and of good quality. Through these, high levels of behaviour are established.
82. The curriculum is of good quality and meets requirements well. The co-ordinator provides good leadership of the subject, has identified what needs to be developed and has prepared an appropriate subject action plan. Geography makes a satisfactory contribution to the cultural development of pupils through the study of life in other lands. Numeracy is well represented in geography when pupils, for example, learn about position using two figure co-ordinates.

HISTORY

83. All pupils make satisfactory progress and standards of attainment in history that are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. This has been maintained since the last inspection. Although no lessons were observed, evidence from pupils' work, from discussions and a scrutiny of video evidence, suggests that pupils across the school are provided with valuable historical experiences that enable them to develop appropriate skills and knowledge. In the reception classes pupils begin to learn about life in times past. They look at their own time lines and understand that there is a difference between old and new artefacts. During Year 1, pupils show understanding of chronology and the passing of time. They undertake a range of activities to promote learning, such as looking at household equipment from many years ago. This enables them to develop their historical knowledge and they are able to compare differences between the past and the present. In Year 2, pupils begin to learn about famous historical people, and episodes. For example, they talk at length and with enthusiasm about the life of Samuel Pepys and the Great Fire of London. They are able to sequence the events of the fire accurately and make some judgements about how it began. They also offer opinions about the positive and negative outcomes of the fire. Many pupils, particularly higher attaining ones, use their literacy skills effectively to talk and write about their history studies. Some good extended writing takes place, although some pupils find the written aspect of history difficult.
84. Teaching and learning in history is at least satisfactory across the school. Teachers make effective provision to ensure that pupils develop their skills in a systematic way. They organise a range of events and visits to historical places of interest. These focus pupils and help them to learn well. Teachers across the school build effectively on prior knowledge enabling clear understanding. Pupils in all classes show high levels of interest in the subject, and enjoy talking about their historical experiences.
85. The effective leadership of the subject has a positive impact on the standards that pupils achieve. There is evidence that the monitoring of teachers' plans has led to consistency of practise as well as

progression in learning. Assessment procedures are currently the focus of attention. The school makes good use of the local community to enhance knowledge, such as visits to a local Victorian Farm, and visits into the school by more senior citizens. These activities enable pupils to learn about the past through first hand experiences.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

86. Standards in information technology are in line with national expectations for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and all groups of pupils make satisfactory progress. This has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils are beginning to use simple word processing packages to support their literacy skills. Some pupils can use computers to assemble text, use pictures and explore information. They are beginning to make appropriate choices and choose their options carefully. Higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 1 demonstrate their awareness of how information exists in many differing forms. Many pupils talk about their use of computers and can explain how they use them to support their work in numeracy and in science. In the reception class, pupils use switches to cause something to happen and they know that many every day items need to have switches to work. They use a range of computer games and activities to support learning. In Year 1 pupils learn how to use the keyboard. Many can write a simple sentence using capital letters and spaces where necessary. They are beginning to make a choice and show clear evidence of enjoyment. Almost all pupils in Year 2 know how to use a range of different programs. They comment on the advantages of using information and communication technology to present their work, and are willing to talk freely about their use of different resources. All pupils have the opportunity to use control technology in a limited way. They describe, for example, how to give accurate instructions to a floor turtle to make it move forward and to change direction. They are aware of the need to give these instructions in a certain way to ensure that the robot moves as they intend.
87. Although no actual teaching of the subject was observed during the week of the inspection, pupils were seen using information technology in many different settings in all year groups. Evidence suggests that the quality of teaching and learning in Information and Communication Technology is satisfactory overall. However, although some good, new multi-media computer systems have been introduced into the school, the amount of computers with appropriate specification to effectively support development in the subject is too small. This inhibits learning in some classes. Pupils develop their skills, however, by practising and working hard to achieve their goals. In Year 2, a good after school computer club helps to improve skills and knowledge, and enables pupils to use the Internet with adult support. Teachers use computer systems in lessons wherever possible to help pupils find information, and to help them improve their literacy skills.
88. The school has identified information technology as an area for development, and there are plans to improve resources through specific funding and to develop teacher expertise by implementing whole-staff training. Further identified areas for development are to monitor and assess standards of pupils work more closely.

MUSIC

89. Music has a secure place in the curriculum. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and reach standards appropriate for pupils of this age. This is an improvement on judgements made at the time of the last inspection, when progress was unsatisfactory. In singing and rhythm work, standards are above those normally expected at the age of seven. Pupils sing a range of songs and hymns from memory with satisfactory control of pitch, dynamics, and breathing. They enjoy varying tempo and volume, and do this well. Younger pupils sing confidently and with articulation that is clearer than in their speech. They can tap or clap a steady beat at the same time as singing familiar songs. Many use actions to illustrate the words, increasing the performance element. Year 1 pupils listened to a recording of "Peter and the Wolf" with great enjoyment and were able to name several of the orchestral instruments. They could choose appropriate percussion to illustrate parts of a story and play them rhythmically.

They reached satisfactory standards in composing sequences of sounds matched to the story line. By the end of the key stage, pupils are tuneful and enthusiastic singers in unison or two parts. In one lesson, they tackled a complicated new song with several rests which necessitated counting two and four beat silent pauses in their heads. Another lesson illustrated cross-curricular work with a mini-beast theme when pupils followed a pictorial score well to identify and perform different rhythmic patterns. Pupils attain high standards through good teaching and resources. Their very good behaviour enables them to work with concentration and enjoyment.

90. The teaching of music is good. It is very good when teachers have expertise or specialist skills, which raise standards. There are good relationships between teachers and pupils and good class management, which encourages pupils to respond quickly to directions. Pupils work well together and try their best to achieve success.
91. The subject is led and managed with enthusiasm and expertise. There are good schemes of work, which support teachers' planning well. The previous inspection reported that some tasks were not being appropriately matched to pupils' abilities and that there was a need to ensure that work builds successfully on pupils' previous learning. The co-ordinator has taken a strong lead in addressing this issue and it has been satisfactorily addressed. There is no longer a significant minority of older pupils whose progress and attainment is unsatisfactory. Teachers are supported well by the co-ordinator and the peripatetic music teacher, who both lead lessons with different year groups. These lessons provide valuable school-based in-service training for teachers who have no specialist skills. The attention paid to training and support has given all teachers confidence and raised standards. Pupils in Reception receive valued extra help from a parent volunteer who accompanies the music making and singing on keyboard.
92. The accommodation is very good, with a comfortable studio available for music work. Resources are very good. They are well organised and accessible. During the previous inspection there were no instruments from other countries and cultures to broaden pupils' experience. This has been addressed. They are clearly identified and linked to their country of origin on a world map. Public performances by pupils and visits to the school by professional players enrich the curriculum and extend pupils' experience. Pupils record their performances on audiotape, but more recording of their work in writing is necessary to fully monitor their work throughout the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

93. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieve standards that are above those expected for seven-year-olds and all pupils make good progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were in line with expectations. Younger pupils begin to develop movement skills well. They learn to skip, march and jump with good levels of control and develop these movements effectively into short combinations of movements. They imitate the actions of rising early in the morning well by waking, jumping out of bed and stretching, and then washing and walking around. They show a good awareness of different movements, how these are appropriate to a variety of situations, and with increasing control as they move. As pupils progress through the school, they begin to refine and improve their physical skills. They combine simple movements into sequences and develop control well in their performance. Their actions become more creative, as in dance, when they create shapes that imitate the posture of a scarecrow, holding these shapes well and with increasing control and balance. By the end of the key stage, pupils demonstrate good levels in movement skills and control for their age. They combine their movements well into more complex sequences, using equipment and apparatus well. This requires good levels of balance and control and this is evident in their work. They balance along benches and jump from heights safely whilst managing their movements effectively. By the time they are seven, pupils achieve high standards in gymnastics and dance.
94. Pupils' response in lessons is good overall. It is never less than good and is often very good. They are very keen and eager to respond and participate. They try hard to improve their own

performance in response to the comments from their teacher and other pupils when evaluating their performance. They listen carefully to instructions and to music to which they should respond with interest and enthusiasm. At all times, pupils show high levels of interest, sustain concentration well and stay on task.

95. The quality of teaching, which varied from satisfactory to very good, is good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Lessons are well planned and pupils' skills are effectively developed and based firmly on previous learning. Teachers within year groups plan together to ensure pupils of the same age are provided with the same learning experiences. Basic skills of movement are well taught and teachers encourage effective learning and thus provide a good foundation on which to progress. Assessment of pupils' performance is effective. Teachers give a wide range of pupils the opportunity to demonstrate good practice and to comment on what they think is good and what could be improved. Teachers add their own meaningful assessment of performance to pupils' comments. Teachers' expectations are high, are made clear to the pupils and as a result, pupils try hard to achieve high standards and meet these expectations. Teacher pay good attention to the health and safety of pupils and, for example, test the security in the assembly of apparatus before allowing pupils to use it.
96. The curriculum is broad and meets the requirements of the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum well. There is a satisfactory scheme of work in which the development of skills is well sequenced. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator, who has identified areas for development, including the sharpening up of learning objectives in planning and the development of the scheme to meet revised National Curriculum requirements for primary schools. Resources are good and the use of these makes a positive contribution to the standards achieved.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

97. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected in relation to the locally agreed syllabus and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. This has been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils make a satisfactory start to their studies in the subject as they show understanding of bible stories. Pupils demonstrate their knowledge as they discuss the story of The Good Samaritan. They are aware that the bible contains stories that Jesus told, and that it is a special book. They develop their knowledge through role-play, and through assemblies. They are beginning to discuss their feelings, and the meaning of certain stories. In the reception class the pupils talk about special things and special places. They discuss their understanding about "heaven", and know that it is "somewhere special". In Year 1 they learn about the meaning of Easter, and the story of Jesus' birth and childhood. During Year 2 they begin to learn about other faiths. They find out about Divali, and learn about Hindu Gods. They investigate their own feelings as they learn about "The Creation". They use their literacy skills to record their thoughts, although some find the written aspects of religious education difficult. However, overall there are few examples of when pupils have thought about faiths other than Christianity, and this inhibits standards overall. This is largely due to the lack of appropriate books to support learning about the Hindu religion, which is the alternative religion that the school has chosen to study.
98. Only one lesson of religious education was observed during the inspection and in this lesson teaching and learning were satisfactory. Evidence from other sources, including a scrutiny of work and discussions, suggests that overall teaching is also satisfactory and that pupils make sound progress in developing their knowledge and understanding. Pupils learn about the bible through a range of different strategies, such as discussion, stories, drama, and through visits to local churches. They benefit from careful planning and good staff commitment. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' personal and moral development, but the spiritual and cultural aspects of the subject are under-developed.
99. Religious Education has recently been a focus for improvement and the new syllabus and effective leadership are having a positive effect. Advice and support have been sought and the school is now

in a position to raise standards in the subject. The school has made arrangements to improve book resources for the study of alternative religions and to further support learning.