

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

**BENHALL INFANT SCHOOL**

**BENHALL, CHELTENHAM**

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115598

Headteacher: Mrs Adrienne Fry

Reporting inspector: Mr David Owen - 1957

Dates of inspection: 30<sup>th</sup> April – 4<sup>th</sup> May 2001

Inspection number: 192465

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Robert Burns Avenue, Cheltenham
Postcode:	GL51 6PS
Telephone number:	01242 234717
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr David Fidgeon
Date of previous inspection:	10 <sup>th</sup> February, 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr David Owen 1957	Registered inspector	Science; Information and communication technology; Design and technology. Equal Opportunities.	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? The school's results and achievements. How well is the school led and managed?
Mr John Baker 9770	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs. Marjorie Archer 20407	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage; English; Art and design; Music. Religious education; Special educational needs; English as an additional language.	
Mr Gordon Tompsett 30717	Team inspector	Mathematics. Geography. History. Physical education.	How well are pupils taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Benhall Infant School is situated in Cheltenham. With 179 boys and girls on roll, aged four to seven, it is average in size compared with infant schools nationally. The pupils live in a mixture of privately owned, council and housing association properties. Although the range of abilities of the children entering the school is wide, overall attainment is above average on entry. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is 28 per cent which is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs, 1.6 per cent, is average. No pupils are eligible for free school meals compared with the national average of 19.7 per cent. 1.7 per cent are from ethnic minority families and less than one per cent speak English as an additional language. There are 25.2 pupils for every teacher, including the headteacher, which is above the average of 22.7 for infant schools in England. However, the school compensates for this by employing eleven learning support workers.

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

Benhall Infants is a good school which is very well led and managed. Attainment is above average with pupils of all abilities achieving standards that are at least appropriate for them. The teaching is good and the school provides a good range of learning opportunities. Consequently the pupils learn well, they have very positive attitudes to their work and their behaviour is good. There are good procedures for ensuring the pupils' welfare. The school has very good links with parents. It gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school.
- Standards of attainment are above average in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and physical education.
- The pupils have very good attitudes to school and relationships are very good.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- There are very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.
- There are very good links with parents.
- A very good range of extra-curricular activities is provided.

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

- The opportunities for pupils to develop as independent learners, particularly in Key Stage 1.
- The quality of pupils' writing. [This is recognised in the school development plan].

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

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

The school has improved considerably since it was last inspected in February 1997. In mathematics the results achieved by seven-year-olds in the national tests have improved and they are now above average. Standards have also improved in the Foundation Stage and they are higher in information and communication technology in Key Stage 1. Throughout the school teaching is now good rather than sound and pupils' attitudes to work are now very good rather than good. Leadership and management,

assessment arrangements, the quality of information provided to parents and attendance have all improved. All the key issues identified in the 1997 inspection report have been dealt with well.

## 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
Reading	C	B	B	C
Writing	C	A	B	C
Mathematics	C	A	B	C

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

In 2000, in comparison with schools nationally, the results were above average in reading, writing and mathematics with all pupils reaching the expected level in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools the results were average. Over the five year period from 1996 to 2000 standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have risen in line with the national trend. In reading and mathematics the school achieved the targets which it set for the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000. Although most of the targets specified for writing were reached, the proportion achieving the higher level 3 was below that forecasted. The school has analysed the reasons for this and has placed a particular emphasis on writing this year, including making good provision for more able pupils in Year 1 and Year 2. The teachers' assessments in science at the end of Key Stage 1 showed performance in this subject to be above average also.

Lesson observations and other inspection evidence show that most children in the Foundation Stage reach or exceed the nationally specified standards in the six areas of learning by the time they are five. The pupils' work is above the national expectations at the end of Key Stage I in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and physical education. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. The pupils' work in all other subjects meets national expectations. Children of all abilities in the Foundation Stage achieve well and make good progress. Achievement in Key Stage 1 is sound overall with pupils making good progress in mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology, geography and physical education. In response to good teaching pupils with special educational needs, the higher attaining pupils and those with English as an additional language make good progress in all subjects.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils are enthusiastic about all aspects of school life. They are very interested in all the activities provided for them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in lessons and as the pupils move about the school. There is no bullying or oppressive behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good throughout the school. Pupils respond well to limited opportunities to show initiative and responsibility. They respect the feelings of other children and they show a good



	understanding of how their actions affect other people.
Attendance	Good.

## 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 poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

In the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is good overall and as a result the pupils learn well. All of the teaching seen was satisfactory or better, three-quarters was good or better, with 16 per cent of it very good. In Reception all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum are well taught. Apart from history where it was not possible to make a judgement as no lessons were seen, the teaching of all subjects is at least satisfactory at Key Stage 1. The teaching is good in English, where the basic skills of literacy are well taught. Good attention is given to developing the pupils' skills of numeracy within mathematics lessons. Science, information and communication technology, design and technology and physical education are taught well throughout Key Stage 1.

Throughout the school the management of pupils is good and the teachers make good provision for the needs of individuals, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Generally the teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they are teaching. They make good use of resources, and they deploy learning support workers and voluntary help well. Although the teaching is good, some lessons, particularly in Key Stage 1, are over-directed by the teacher and thus the pupils make limited progress in acquiring the skills of decision-making, researching information and investigating. Furthermore, although the pupils apply the skills of literacy and numeracy well when given the opportunity, they are given insufficient opportunities to write at length in English and in other subjects. As a consequence of the overall good teaching, pupils understand the work they are doing, they behave well and they acquire new skills and knowledge effectively.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school has implemented the Foundation Stage Curriculum very well. A good curriculum is provided for Key Stage 1 but insufficient consideration is given to developing pupils' independence. The school makes very good provision for personal, social and health education and for extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. In response to good teaching the pupils progress well throughout the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school supports these pupils effectively. They are well taught and they make good progress throughout the school. Their achievement is good and they attain appropriate standards.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good attention is paid to fostering the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Good use is made of visits and visitors to the school to help the pupils understand and respect different cultures.

How well the school cares for its pupils	There is a good level of care, with very good arrangements for child protection and very effective procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.
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The parents and carers think very highly of the school and the very effective links which it has with them. The school provides good information about children's progress and very good information about the curriculum. The parents make a very good contribution to their children's learning both at school and at home.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and a very clear educational direction for the school. She is well supported by the senior management team and by the very good work of the subject co-ordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The work of the governors is sound. They help to shape the work of the school and they have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. However, they do not fulfil all of their statutory duties with regard to the governors' annual report for parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school uses national test results well to set targets for improvement. There is a very strong, shared commitment to improve. There are good arrangements for monitoring, evaluating and developing the quality of teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Well thought out educational priorities expressed in a very good school development plan are supported through good financial planning. The school uses financial and other resources well, for example by ensuring that it obtains the best value when spending money.

The accommodation is satisfactory and there are good resources in most subjects. The strengths of the teaching and non-teaching staff are appropriately matched to the demands of the curriculum and the needs of the pupils. Both the teachers and the non-teaching staff make a good contribution to the life of the school.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The good quality of the teaching, and the fact that pupils are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• Their children are making good progress and they like school.</li> <li>• The system known as 'Golden Time' which is used to provide rewards and sanctions.</li> <li>• The school is led and managed well.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents. They feel very comfortable about approaching the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The behaviour on the playground at lunchtime.</li> <li>• The behaviour of a small number of pupils in Year 2.</li> </ul>

school with questions.	
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The inspectors' judgements support the parents' and carers' positive views. Although a small number of pupils have behaviour problems these are dealt with well by the staff. Behaviour seen on the playground at lunchtime during the inspection was good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The children entering the school have a wide range of abilities but their overall level of attainment is above average. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall and consequently the children make good progress. By the age of five almost all of the children in the Reception classes achieve the nationally specified Early Learning Goals in the six areas of learning, and many exceed them. Overall, standards of attainment have improved since the last inspection.

2. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 7 were above average in reading, writing and mathematics in relation to all schools nationally. When compared to similar schools the results were average in reading, writing and mathematics. All of the pupils reached the expected level in mathematics, an above average proportion achieved the higher level in writing and mathematics, and a well above average proportion achieved this level in reading. The rate of improvement in standards in reading, writing and mathematics over the past five years is roughly the same as that found nationally. The teachers' assessments in science in 2000 indicated above average attainment overall, with an average percentage reaching the higher level.

3. In the Foundation Stage the children achieve good standards in relation to their abilities. Overall achievement in Key Stage 1 is judged to be satisfactory. The pupils make good progress in mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology, geography and physical education. Progress in other subjects is sound. The higher attainers, the pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress in all subjects. Where progress is good, this is attributable, in the main, to the good teaching found throughout the school, the very effective arrangements for assessment, the skilful analysis of test results, the good strategies for literacy and numeracy, and good leadership and management. A number of factors limit pupils' achievement. In Key Stage 1 the pupils are given insufficient opportunities to make decisions and choices, exercise initiative, conduct individual and group research, and investigate. Furthermore, pupils do not often write at length in English or in other subjects.

4. The school analyses test results on the basis of gender and, whilst there have been no significant differences in English and mathematics over the last three years, the school has taken sensible steps to promote equal opportunities; for example, by ensuring that girls use constructional toys and that boys play in the home corners. During the inspection there was no overall difference between the attainment of boys and that of girls.

5. The school sets itself challenging targets in reading, writing and mathematics, based on the predicted performance of each pupil by the end of Key Stage 1. The school achieved the targets for reading and mathematics which it set for itself in 2000. Although most of the targets specified for writing were reached, the proportion achieving the higher level 3 was below that forecasted. The school has analysed the reasons for this and has placed a particular emphasis on writing this year, including good provision for more able pupils in Year 1 and Year 2.

6. Inspection evidence shows that pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 reach standards above the national expectation for seven-year-olds, in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Standards are also above average in mathematics - including the skills of numeracy, science, information and communication technology and physical education. Seven-year-olds reach standards in religious education which are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Attainment in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music is in line with expectations. The school has improved standards in mathematics and in information and communication technology since the previous inspection.

7. In the Foundation Stage the children know single letter sounds and letter blends and use these to help them in the early stages of reading. They make good progress in their understanding of number and they can count forwards and backwards and double numbers up to six. They draw simple maps well in connection with an imaginary 'bear hunt'. They understand how they can study the past by thinking about themselves as babies and about the lives of their grandparents. They know what equipment will be found in a 'vet's surgery' and how to use it, and they use a computer skilfully. They make good progress in physical and creative activities such as drawing, painting, sticking and making things from clay. They sing well.

8. By the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils are able to read from books of an appropriate level of difficulty with considerable confidence, and they are able to work out unfamiliar words by sounding out the letters. They speak confidently in a variety of situations and are keen to discuss their work with adults. They write well but have limited experience of writing longer stories or accounts, or of writing at length in other subjects. They reach above average standards in mathematics where some pupils can record calculations such as  $17 \times 5$ , and a few can tackle multiplications that result in an answer up to 1000.

9. Year 2 pupils have above average observational and investigative skills in science when, for example, they study the habitats of small animals in the school grounds. By the end of the key stage they are very adept at controlling a computer and other information and communication technology devices. They also have a satisfactory knowledge of the major Christian festivals and stories from the Bible, including events in the life of Jesus. They understand certain aspects of Hinduism.

10. In art and design the work of the pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 is satisfactory as they paint in the style of different artists, for example Kandinsky and Van Gogh. They use their artistic skills well in topic work when they look at the lives of pirates, where their knowledge of design and technology is also applied. In much of their work in geography and history the pupils reach good standards as they study the locality, make visits to great buildings and study famous people such as Florence Nightingale. However, they are much less skilled in researching topics, either on their own or in co-operation with others. They have a satisfactory knowledge of rhythm and they can use a good range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. In dance the pupils are able to move sensitively and with expression and many pupils are agile and well co-ordinated in all aspects of physical education.

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

11. Pupils' attitudes to school have improved since the last inspection and they are now very good. All like school, are eager to attend and take part enthusiastically in all aspects of school life. These attitudes have a positive impact on their progress and attainment. Most are attentive, keen to answer questions and contribute well to lessons. They undertake tasks enthusiastically and work hard to complete them.

12. Behaviour is good in the classrooms and in all other areas of the school. Pupils are aware of the high standards expected and respond well to discipline which creates an orderly environment conducive to learning. There are no signs of aggressive behaviour. Year 2 pupils organise their own games of football which are played in a sporting manner and pupils of all age groups make good use of the playground equipment available. There has been one temporary exclusion in the past year, the result of unacceptable behaviour.

13. Pupils care for one another and are aware of the feelings of others. For example, when a pupil was in tears in the playground after falling, others comforted him and sought adult assistance. Also they show respect for other people's property and the environment, for example, they do their best to keep the school litter-free and collect materials for re-cycling. These traits were clearly demonstrated by a group of Year 2 boys who had made a litter bin out of empty soft drink cans which was unveiled with due ceremony in assembly.

14. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory, they mature as they progress through the school and willingly take on responsibilities appropriate to their age. These range from simple duties in Reception such as taking registers to the office to whole class duties in Year 2 such as putting out resources. Year 2 pupils also undertake specific tasks outside the classroom such as watering plants and helping Reception pupils in the playground when they start school. However, opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning are limited.

15. Relationships between pupils are very good. They play together harmoniously, and work very well together in lessons when in pairs or groups. For example, in a Year 1 English lesson, a group of pupils organised themselves very well and agreed amicably who should take what part in reading a play script.

16. Relationships between pupils and staff are also very good and pupils are secure and confident in their relationships with other adults. The teaching and non-teaching staff give a very positive lead in engendering good relationships, for example, by giving praise and encouragement at every opportunity as well as acting as good role models.

17. Levels of attendance are good, being above the national average with no unauthorised absence. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Also nearly all pupils arrive punctually. These factors contribute positively to the standards achieved. Registration is carried out in accordance with statutory requirements.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is good. All of the teaching seen was satisfactory or better; it was good or better in three-quarters of lessons and very good in 16% of them. These findings represent a significant improvement over the sound teaching found at the time of the last inspection.

19. Teaching is good throughout the school. The teaching of English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, design and technology and physical education is good. It was not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in history as none was seen. In all other subjects teaching is satisfactory overall.

20. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they have to teach. Planning and assessment procedures are sound with some good on the spot assessments seen in the Foundation Stage. In Key Stage 1 ongoing assessment is sound. In most lessons pupils are well managed, and this is achieved mainly by the good relationships which teachers have with them. The pupils understand that their teachers care for them and that they expect them to work effectively. The atmosphere is not oppressive, rather it is one where there is shared pleasure and enjoyment in what is achieved. Allied to this, teachers take care to display pupils' work well and this creates an exciting and interesting learning environment. It also indicates the value that teachers attach to the work of their pupils. Homework is used well and makes a good contribution to progress.

21. The teachers' expectations of high standards of behaviour and conscientious work contribute to the good progress made by pupils. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in most lessons and the pupils settle to work quickly. The rate and pace of learning by most pupils is good. They are motivated by the teaching, concentrate well and improve their understanding and their skills. The pupils are given interesting activities which often use common everyday items such as children's toys. The teachers also make good use of their own childhood experiences. For example, in one design and technology lesson for Year 2, the teacher told the pupils about her unfortunate experiences with her grandmother's mangle; a missing bowl led to very wet feet!

22. The teaching of English and the skills of literacy is good overall. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced effectively and planning is good. However, the teachers provide insufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length, not only in English, but also in other subjects. The school recognises that there is a need to develop the quality of pupils' writing and this is a priority in the current school development plan. In English the strengths of the teaching lie in the good management of the pupils, the pacing of lessons, the good teaching of the higher attaining pupils and the good use of learning support workers.

23. The successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a beneficial effect on the quality of mathematics teaching and the pupils' skills of numeracy. Teachers have a good understanding of what they have to teach and their management of the pupils is good. This ensures that pupils understand what is required of them in terms of attitudes and application and so they learn well. Teachers use time and resources well and, as in English, make good use of learning support workers and other adults. Planning is good and in the best lessons teachers make their objectives clear with the result that pupils know what they have to do and are well aware of their own learning.

24. The pupils with special educational needs are taught well and, at times, when they are withdrawn from class, the teaching is very good. Learning support workers have received good training from the school and, as well as working with the pupils, they play a full part in planning and

assessment. Their work is of high quality and they make a significant contribution to the pupils' attainment.

25. The quality of support given to pupils with English as an additional language is very good. They make rapid progress in acquiring an understanding of English and other subjects. A specialist teacher, from the county's Ethnic Minorities Support team works in the school for two separate hours each week and also liaises with pupils and families at home. This very good support contributes well to progress.

26. In the Foundation Stage the children learn well in response to good teaching across six areas of learning which are specified nationally. They have very good relationships with their teachers and other staff and the high expectations of all the adults mean that most children are very well behaved, concentrate well, enjoy their work and achieve an appropriate degree of independence in their learning.

27. There are some areas where teaching needs to be improved. Teachers do not always use the accommodation to the best effect, in order to maximise the use of the available area when working on group activities. In Key Stage 1 pupils are given insufficient high quality opportunities to conduct personal and group research, or to work on open-ended investigatory tasks that foster initiative and independence in learning.

28. The good quality of the learning observed during the inspection is inextricably linked to the good quality of teaching, the good learning environment and the school's good ethos. Pupils respond well to carefully planned lessons which ensure that work is matched to pupils of various abilities, including the higher attainers. All pupils actively engage in their learning, they are eager to participate and perform and they know that they can do so without embarrassment. They show good levels of intellectual, physical and creative effort, and they make sound progress overall. However, in Key Stage 1, where some lessons are over-directed by the teacher, they make limited progress in acquiring the skills of decision-making, researching information and investigating.



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

29. The overall quality and range of learning opportunities in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 is good. This is because of the thought that has gone into the very good introduction of the nationally produced Foundation Stage Curriculum and the good use of schemes of work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

30. All subjects, including religious education, meet statutory requirements. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been used well and this is having a good effect on the pupils' overall learning. The breadth and balance of the curriculum is satisfactory. The school is fully committed to the provision of good quality education and to ensuring that there is equality of opportunity so that all pupils have a chance to take part in the full range of social, physical and academic activities.

31. In Reception there is very good planning to ensure the pupils' personal, social and emotional development and their knowledge and understanding of the world, as well as fostering their skills of communication and their mathematical, physical and creative development. In Key Stage 1 long- and medium-term plans are made for all subjects and give a very clear indication of what is taught. Apart from insufficient planned opportunities for the pupils to write at length, the skills of literacy and numeracy are used effectively in most subjects; the curriculum also ensures that information and communication technology is used well across the whole curriculum. However, the planning does not recognise sufficiently the need for pupils to be given opportunities to work independently.

32. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good. It is taught through specific lessons and within other subjects. It has a positive impact on the whole school, particularly in the good behaviour and attitudes of the pupils. There is a good policy for sex education which appropriately emphasises family life and how people change as they grow. The school meets the need for education about the misuse of drugs well, with a particular focus on what children should do if they find medicines.

33. The range of extra-curricular activities for pupils is very good. It includes sports activities as well as information and communication technology, science, French, recorders and choir. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection where only clubs connected with sport were reported.

34. An 'Arts Week' is held regularly and is an experience of high quality, providing the pupils with the opportunity to meet and work with authors, storytellers, artists and musicians. Sponsorship of this week by local businesses contributes well to the school's very good links with the local community. Many local groups and visitors to the school greatly enhance the experiences offered to the pupils. The relationship with other schools is also very good. The very good links with the adjacent junior school contribute well to the pupils' continuity of learning as they move from one phase to another. The study of schools in contrasting areas, for example, an inner city school and a school in the Cotswolds makes a good contribution to geography and to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

35. There are detailed, thorough policies for pupils with special educational needs and for higher attaining pupils. The school makes careful judgements about the time and frequency of withdrawal from class for extra support, and the pupils with special educational needs have access to a broad, balanced curriculum. Following an analysis of National Curriculum test results in 2000 able writers are

withdrawn in Year 1 and Year 2 to work with the headteacher. This is a well organised and very successful arrangement and these pupils are making good progress.

36. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual development. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when spiritual aspects were reported to be under-developed. All pupils attend a daily act of worship and assemblies provide an opportunity for learning about the world and moral issues. Two assemblies that were observed during the week provided good examples of spiritual moments of awe and wonder, where the pupils' spiritual senses were set alight by good teaching. An assembly on the social and moral issues of waste, pollution and litter was concluded by four pupils who had made a litter bin out of soft drinks cans; the rest of the pupils were very moved by this close association with one of the causes of litter and one way of dealing with it. In the other assembly on the social, moral and cultural aspects of how lucky we are to be living in a country that has clean water, comparisons were drawn with other parts of the world. Fresh, clean water was mixed with soap and detergent to represent what happens when people wash themselves and their clothes in rivers. When mud and sand was added, to give a fuller picture of the quality of the drinking water in some parts of the third world, the reaction of horror from the pupils was spontaneous, deeply felt and spiritual.

37. The provision for moral development is good. The adults set a very good example for the pupils and there are clear codes of behaviour. Pupils are taught right from wrong through their daily interaction with staff and through lessons and assemblies, which indicate examples of good moral practice. A strong moral dimension is seen in most lessons, where teachers constantly emphasise good behaviour so that pupils understand what is acceptable conduct. This is reflected in the pupils' behaviour. Adults in the school also set a good example by their courtesy, care and respect for pupils. Pupils respond well to this and, in turn, relate well to others.

38. There is good provision for pupils' social development. Teachers plan opportunities in many lessons for the development of pupils' social skills, such as working together, taking turns and sharing. A range of visits during the school year provides opportunities for pupils to extend and develop their social relationships with each other and with their teachers and other adults. The social implications of behaviour, such as dropping litter, are well developed and understood.

39. The provision for cultural development is good with wide opportunities for pupils to study the richness of both their own and other cultures. This is an element in many assemblies and lessons. Religious education also makes a good contribution, through the study of Christianity and other faiths. History and geography provide links with other cultures, and traditions from the past and present. Visits, the school staff and visitors are used well to support the pupils' cultural development. The school's 'Arts Week' also makes a very good contribution.

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

40. This is a caring school which provides good support for pupils' personal development as well as good provision overall to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. This provision includes very good child protection procedures, good arrangements for promoting appropriate behaviour and avoiding bullying, good health and safety procedures, and satisfactory systems for promoting regular attendance.

41. Looking after pupils' personal and emotional needs is the responsibility of class teachers who, together with the learning support workers, know their pupils very well, are sensitive to their needs and are thus able to provide good personal support and guidance. This makes a significant contribution to the pupils' personal development. The very good relationships between pupils and staff encourage pupils to raise any concerns they may have knowing that they will be dealt with sympathetically. Personal development is monitored through the setting of personal targets which are reviewed termly.

42. Child protection procedures are very good. The designated person and the headteacher are suitably trained and all staff have a copy of the child protection policy and receive annual training. This ensures that they are fully aware of the procedures and their importance. Also, there is good liaison with other agencies.

43. Procedures for promoting appropriate behaviour and avoiding bullying are good and are consistently applied by all staff including learning support workers and mid-day supervisors. The emphasis is on making pupils aware of the standards expected and reinforcing this by praising good behaviour. All pupils discuss and agree class rules which helps their understanding of the reasons for rules. A very effective feature of the behaviour policy is the use of a 'Golden Half-Hour' which deters bad behaviour as well as promoting good. For example, pupils who retain all their 'Golden Time' are praised in assembly. Parents are made fully aware of expectations for behaviour through the prospectus and the home/school agreement.

44. Procedures for monitoring and promoting regular attendance are satisfactory. Register details are entered into the computer weekly, so data is available to monitor individuals as necessary. Ensuring regular attendance and punctuality is part of the home/school agreement.

45. Health and safety procedures are good and ensure a safe working environment. Checks of the premises are carried out termly and findings are brought to the attention of the school management and reported to the premises committee of the governing body. First-aid arrangements are good and all members of staff are aware of these through the staff handbook. Care is taken to make sure that the teaching and non-teaching staff know of any pupils with medical conditions. Pupils' safety, personal hygiene and general well-being are covered very well through the personal, social and health education curriculum which is well supported by outside speakers such as the road safety officer.

46. Assessment procedures were identified as a key issue for development at the time of the last inspection. They have improved significantly since then and are now very good. The use of the information gained from these procedures is having a very positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. Pupils are tested regularly in English and mathematics and records are kept for each pupil. Good use is made of assessment to inform long-term planning. End of year test results are used to predict end of key stage results. Actual results are compared with predictions and curriculum planning is modified accordingly. Pupils are well supported and guided in their academic progress through the setting of termly targets and day-to-day assessment which is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Key Stage 1.

47. The requirements outlined in statements of special educational needs are met well. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are detailed, specific and are reviewed regularly. They are shared with the learning support workers and are easily accessible. They are well used.

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

48. The very good partnership with parents reported at the time of the last inspection has been maintained and is a significant strength of the school in supporting pupils' successful learning.

49. Parents and carers are very satisfied with all aspects of the school. They confirm that their children like school and are unanimous in feeling comfortable about approaching the school if they have concerns. Also, nearly all consider that their children are making good progress, judge that the teaching is good, believe that the school is led and managed well and strongly agree that the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. The inspection team fully supports these positive views.

50. A small proportion of the parents feel that behaviour is unsatisfactory on the playground at lunchtime. They also say that the behaviour of a small number of pupils in Year 2 disrupts lessons. The inspectors found that although a small number of pupils have behaviour problems these are dealt with well by the staff. Behaviour seen on the playground at lunchtimes during the inspection was good.

51. Parents are very well informed about the school through the prospectus, very good newsletters and frequent correspondence related to specific events or activities. Information to parents about the curriculum is also very good. In addition to the good curriculum outline in the prospectus, they receive detailed information on the work to be covered by their children each term and have the opportunity to attend curriculum meetings for each year group at which this information is discussed and explained.

52. Information to parents on their children's progress is good overall and is provided through termly consultation evenings at which targets are agreed and through satisfactory annual reports. Parents are also welcome to discuss concerns at any time and they appreciate this opportunity for informal discussion. When children are identified as having special educational needs their parents are fully involved, and they are provided with regular opportunities to discuss progress, both formally and informally. Individual targets for improvement for pupils with special educational needs are shared with parents and amended regularly.

53. There is very good parental help in the classrooms which makes a very significant contribution to pupils' learning. Many of these helpers have attended a Workers' Educational Association course for parent helpers. Parents also provide good support on trips and visits and raise considerable funds for the school through the Phoenix Fund Raisers Group. In addition, parents help in practical ways such as making a maypole and assisting with playground markings.

54. Parents are encouraged to help with their children's learning at home and guidelines in the prospectus and home/school agreement give a clear message about homework expectations. The good use of homework throughout the school enables parents to make a positive contribution to their children's learning and 'SHARE' meetings provide guidance to parents on how to help their children.

55. The vast majority of parents have endorsed their support for the school and its aims by signing the home/school agreement. The school values parents' views and seeks them on a regular basis. For example, a survey of views is conducted and taken into account when the school development plan is being prepared.

56. The current governors' annual report to parents is very brief and does not fully meet statutory requirements, as not all the necessary items are included.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. The headteacher provides very good leadership. She has a very clear vision for the educational direction of the school. There is a strong focus on monitoring, evaluating and developing the quality of teaching, which has led to a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. The school's aims and values are reflected well in its work, although in Key Stage 1 there are insufficient opportunities for the pupils to develop the skills of independent learning. The quality of management is very good. The school does not have a deputy headteacher but the senior management team provides good support for the headteacher and the co-ordinators for subjects and other aspects of school life make a very good contribution to leadership and management.

58. Apart from weaknesses in the governors' annual report to parents the governing body meets its statutory requirements and plays its part in shaping the direction of the school through its input into the school's plans for improvement and its support for the headteacher and staff. It has a good understanding of the strengths and also of the weaknesses of the school. Overall, it makes a sound contribution to improving the school and to accounting for its performance.

59. The provision for special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator has made a good start in what is a new role for her. The governing body is kept appropriately informed through the headteacher's reports. The school finds it particularly helpful that the governor with responsibility for special educational needs works in the nursery attached to the school and, as a result, she is familiar with many of the pupils. Good use is made of information and communication technology to produce individual education plans.

60. The school has a very good school development plan to which all those connected with the school contribute in various ways; children, parents, governors and staff. It is linked directly and unambiguously to the raising of standards. The school has put in place a good strategy for performance management and is implementing this well. Good use is made of national tests and the performance of individual pupils to set targets for literacy and numeracy. There is a very clear commitment on the part of the headteacher, governing body and teaching staff to improvement, and the school is well placed to improve further. This commitment also underpins the way in which the school has dealt with the key issues from the previous inspection and the considerable effort put into raising standards of attainment. Currently, for example, the headteacher teaches the higher attaining pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 as part of the school's drive to improve standards in writing.

61. The school's financial planning is good, clearly supporting the priorities in the school development plan. The school at present has a substantial contingency fund of approximately 13 per cent, but this is clearly earmarked to meet the cost of proposed new building work. The school's use of information and communication technology, both in administration and in teaching, is good. The governing body monitors spending, and the day-to-day financial management is carried out very efficiently by the headteacher and school administrator, who together with her colleague in the office, plays an important role in the life of the school, ensuring that as far as possible the teaching staff can concentrate on their teaching. The school is applying the principles of best value well, for example, on building projects. The most recent auditor's report confirms that financial control is good, and all its recommendations have been acted upon.

62. Staffing, including that for pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory overall. The number of teachers is adequate and there is a good balance of experience and expertise to enable the curriculum to be taught effectively. The pupil-to-teacher ratio is above the national average but this

is compensated for by having a generous number of learning support workers who work closely with the teachers and contribute well to the pupils' learning and their attainment. The school has very good procedures for the induction of teachers who are new to the school, and also for supporting student teachers through its partnership with a nearby training institution.

63. Accommodation is satisfactory overall and enables the curriculum to be taught effectively. Classroom space is generous for the number on roll and consists of a carpeted teaching area with an adjoining activity area which, in the case of Year 1 and Year 2, is shared between two classes. However, this accommodation is not always used to the best effect during group activities.

64. The accommodation also includes a computer room and a cookery room, which enables information and communication technology and design and technology to be taught effectively. The attractive grounds include a nature garden and an adventure playground, which are used well, but there is no enclosed play area for Foundation Stage children.

65. Resources for learning are good in English, science, information and communication technology, design and technology, music, physical education and for the Foundation Stage, and they make a significant contribution to the quality of education provided in these areas. In all other subjects resources are satisfactory. The library has a good number of books but it is not used extensively. The pupils with special needs are supported well by information and communication technology. Otherwise the resources for them are satisfactory.

66. The pupils come from a diversity of home backgrounds, socially, economically and educationally. Attainment on entry is above average and the school has an above average proportion of pupils on its special educational needs register. The expenditure per pupil is above average. Pupils leave the school at the end of Key Stage 1 with attainment which is above average in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and physical education. They are well taught throughout the school and their attitudes to work and school life are very good. Taking account of all these factors the school is judged to provide sound value for money.

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

67. In order to improve the quality of teaching, which is already good, and consequently standards of attainment the governors, headteacher and staff should ensure that:

- a) pupils, particularly those in Key Stage 1, have more opportunities to work independently so that they:
  - make decisions and choices;
  - exercise initiative;
  - conduct individual and group research;
  - investigate.(Paras. 3, 10, 14, 27, 28, 31, 57, 65, 81, 93, 113 and 115)
  
- b) the quality of pupils' writing is improved and they are provided with increased opportunities to write at length in English and other subjects. [This point is recognised in the school development plan].  
(Paras. 3, 8, 22, 31, 82, 95, 113, 115, 120 and 133)

## **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school should also consider the need to ensure that:

- all statutory requirements are met particularly with regard to the governors' annual report for parents;  
(Paras. 56 and 58)
- teachers make more effective use of teaching areas available to them.  
(Paras. 27 and 63)



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	56

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	16	60	23	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**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	179
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	50

#### **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	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.2

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1***

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	26	33	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	23	26
	Girls	30	30	33
	Total	54	53	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (97)	90 (93)	100 (98)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	26	26
	Girls	30	33	31
	Total	54	59	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (98)	100 (98)	97 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	117
Any other minority ethnic group	2

*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	1	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)	7.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.2
Average class size	29.8

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	145

***Financial information***

Financial year	00/01
	£
Total income	350939
Total expenditure	363907
Expenditure per pupil	2033
Balance brought forward from previous year	59002
Balance carried forward to next year	46034

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	179
Number of questionnaires returned	60

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	31	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	68	29	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	43	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	52	5	2	2
The teaching is good.	71	27	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	34	5	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	25	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	20	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	62	30	5	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	72	22	0	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	38	3	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	43	5	3	3

## **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**

68. Assessments carried out as soon as the children begin school show that the majority of them enter with standards of attainment above the expected average. These 'baseline assessments' suggest that most children will exceed the nationally specified Early Learning Goals for the end of the Foundation Stage in all six areas of learning by the age of five. Further assessments at the end of Reception confirm this to be the case. This is an improvement on the standards reported at the time of the last inspection. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and they are confident and happy. They enter school at the beginning of the year in which they are five. Most have attended an independent nursery and/or a playgroup, both of which are attached to the school, and they are familiar with school routines and personnel, due to well-planned liaison. All staff work hard to ensure that both parents and children have a good introduction to school, and are familiar with the curriculum and how it is taught. Children attend on a part-time basis at first, increasing their attendance quickly so that all are attending full-time after a few weeks. The children benefit from good arrangements whereby the youngest attend in the mornings. The children in the Reception classes benefit from the full-time assistance of learning support workers.

69. The Reception classes are housed at either end of the school building. The accommodation is appropriate for the number of children and the staff make every effort to create a stimulating attractive environment and to give the children the experiences specified in the Foundation Stage curriculum. Although each class has access to the outside, there is no securely fenced area and little hard standing near to the classrooms.

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

70. Children make good progress in their personal social and emotional development and most attain the standard expected by the age of five. Their very good relationships with the staff and the high expectations of all the adults mean that most children are very well behaved, concentrate well, enjoy learning and achieve some independence. These factors are also fostered by the very good relationships evident between adults, and the fact that they support and care for each other. Staff know each child very well, clearly enjoy being with them and take a pride in their success. Learning is challenging and fun.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

71. The majority of the children come to school with attainment at least in line with that expected for their age. They are interested and eager to talk. They make good progress so that by the age of five most have exceeded nationally expected standards. The quality of teaching is always good or very good. The teachers provide an environment designed to foster language and literacy skills. Children are encouraged to listen attentively and the members of staff listen to them. When the children contribute to discussions they are given time to answer and their ideas and opinions are valued. Opportunities to speak are provided through the use of well resourced role play areas, for example an animal hospital, and in planned sessions where children describe to others what they have done. They listen to taped stories and poetry in designated listening areas, and rhymes, poetry and songs are part of their daily routine. Much emphasis is placed on literacy and children are taught the skills necessary for reading and writing in a structured way. Using a reading scheme they are taught single letter sounds and letter blends and use these to read and write. They are confident writers

forming letters clearly and demarcating letters into words. They write, both with their teachers and independently, for a variety of purposes, such as asking a 'bear' questions and giving him information about themselves. The children spell familiar words correctly and make good attempts at others. They read their work back to adults confidently. They clearly enjoy stories and some are becoming competent readers. Parents are partners in their children's learning and most are involved in sharing books and contributing to reading diaries.

### **Mathematical development**

72. Children's attainment is generally in line with expectations on entry to school. They make good progress and most exceed expected standards by the age of five. The quality of teaching is always good or very good. Children learn to recognise and write numbers to twenty and beyond. They can count forwards and backwards and can double numbers up to six quickly. They use correct mathematical vocabulary and learn to measure through a variety of activities, such as making bears' ears on a headband for a 'teddy bears' picnic'. Teachers recognise the importance of mental competency and work hard to make lessons interesting. Children are alert, quick to answer and aware of their achievement. The importance of mathematics is highlighted by the way in which teachers bring the subject into other lessons, such as singing and physical education. High expectations make a positive contribution to children's achievement.

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

73. On entry to school most children's knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory. Thoughtful provision and good teaching enables them to make good progress throughout the year. Most reach expected standards by the age of five. Children apply what they know well, such as when they make simple maps in connection with a 'bear hunt' story. They are made aware of chronology through discussions about themselves as babies and through thinking about their grandparents or older people. High quality interaction was seen in the role play area where a group of children worked in a 'vet's surgery', using equipment and terminology correctly and showing an understanding of the feelings of others. Children learn about the seasons and growing things and visit the school's garden and pond where they can observe these at first-hand. They work in the computer suite regularly where they use the mouse and operate the keyboard with increasing competence.

### **Physical development**

74. Children make good progress in their physical development and most had exceeded the Early Learning Goal at the time of the inspection. Because of the nature of the accommodation, access to outside climbing apparatus and wheeled toys is only possible for two sessions each week, when the whole class goes outside together. It is not possible to use the outside environment as an extension to the classroom so teachers do the best they can. A hall session each day compensates and gives children opportunities to experiment with and control their movements and, in these sessions, teaching is very good. Teachers plan well and have high standards. Children make good progress in the development of manipulative skills and use brushes, pencils and scissors capably.

### **Creative development**

75. In response to the good teaching children make good progress in creative development and most attain the Early Learning Goal by the age of five. Children paint, using colours carefully, and use other media, such as pastels and wax relief to convey their ideas. They talk about their work happily. Although painting is largely a structured activity children are allowed independence in their choices and their learning is taken forward by thoughtful questioning. There is evidence that children experience a

good variety of activities including three-dimensional work, collage and clay. Artists visit school and the biannual 'Arts Week' gives children the chance to explore and develop their ideas at length. Rhymes and songs are an everyday part of life. Children use parts of their bodies and untuned instruments to accompany stories. They sing well.

76. The Reception curriculum is very well developed and is firmly based on the Foundation Stage Curriculum and the early parts of the National Curriculum. It caters very successfully for children at different stages of attainment, including the most able. The very good early year's policy emphasises the setting of high standards and caring practices within a structured curriculum.

## **ENGLISH**

77. Standards of attainment have been maintained since the last inspection. In the national tests in 2000, the school's results for pupils at the age of seven were above the national average in reading and writing. The results were average in both aspects in comparison with similar schools. The percentage of pupils who achieved the higher level 3 in reading was well above the national average and in writing it was slightly above it. In the work seen during the inspection standards were above the national expectation in all aspects of English.

78. The pupils are assessed when they begin school and at regular intervals afterwards. These effective assessments help to identify able pupils as well as those with special needs. The existence of this system is one of the reasons why these groups of pupils make good progress. However, overall, pupils make sound progress and achieve standards that are appropriate in relation to their prior attainment. Regular analysis of pupils' work and test results give the school a very clear picture of where priorities for development lie and last year this process identified the need to improve standards in writing which is the current focus. Each pupil has identified targets for improvement in literacy which are shared with parents.

79. Attainment in speaking and listening is at least satisfactory on entry, and improves steadily throughout the school, so that it is above the national expectation by the end of the key stage. The pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other in lessons and in assemblies. They contribute sensibly to discussions and are given opportunities to express their feelings and ideas, which are valued. Good opportunities for listening include the provision of taped stories, poems and songs. Pupils speak confidently in different situations, such as in assembly, and are eager to discuss their work with adults. They are enthusiastic learners.

80. Attainment in reading is above average by the age of seven. The school places great emphasis on the importance of both reading and writing and works hard to ensure that pupils become proficient. They are taught phonic patterns in a structured way and many use these to help them to read unknown words. Initially pupils read from a graded scheme, but later this is supplemented with general fiction or books from other schemes. They share big books, following the text with close attention. Pupils know about authors and illustrators and the more able can explain the use of contents and index pages. There is a school library with both fiction and non-fiction books. Pupils have a library period each week when they visit in small groups with an adult to choose a book. However, books are arranged alphabetically rather than by a recognised numerical system and most pupils cannot find or replace a particular book independently. Opportunities for developing library skills and for pupils to retrieve information are underdeveloped. The quality of reading resources is good. The school has invested in big books and is currently focusing on the acquisition of play scripts. There is a good selection of books both in the library and in classrooms and these are supplemented by loans from the county library each term. Reading diaries track coverage, although not all of them make evaluative comments.

81. Attainment in writing is above national expectations by the end of Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs have individual educational plans and receive good help from the learning support workers. The more able from Years 1 and 2 are withdrawn from class each week by the headteacher for very effective extended writing lessons. Support for pupils of all abilities is good and they make steady progress, with particularly good achievement by the higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils write for a variety of purposes; for example, poems, lists, book reviews and stories. They use phonic knowledge to support their writing and many spell well. Spellings are taught well and parents support the school in helping their children to learn words. Regular tests and dictation are carried out. Although pupils write well, there are few examples of longer stories or accounts, or of writing at length in other subjects. Handwriting is taught, but there is no clear evidence of a universal script being used and few pupils join their writing. The presentation of work is too variable.

82. The quality of teaching is good overall and this, together with the good support given to the pupils with English as an additional language, to the more able, and to those with particular needs makes a positive impact on learning. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject, plan lessons carefully, and have clear aims and expectations. In the best lessons these are shared with pupils. As a consequence of this good teaching, pupils in all classes work hard and maintain a high level of concentration. Often they co-operate well and can be heard discussing work in order to help one another. They always behave well and rarely become restless unless the pace of lessons flags.

83. The subject is well led with two teachers sharing responsibility for co-ordinating it. The policy, although satisfactory, is under review. Good use is made of the National Literacy Strategy. The learning support workers work with teachers and report back at the end of lessons. They have been given training so that they understand their role clearly and have had release time to read documentation and discuss matters with each other. They are fully involved in the pupils' learning and make a very positive contribution to the good results achieved. In these ways and through the thorough analysis of tests the school knows its pupils very well. The curriculum is enhanced by the fact that storytellers, authors and poets visit the school regularly.

## **MATHEMATICS**

84. The attainment of the oldest pupils in the 2000 National Curriculum tests was above average at the expected level 2, which all pupils reached, and also slightly above at the higher level 3. In comparison with similar schools the results were average.

85. Inspection evidence is based on lesson observations, work seen in pupils' books, discussions with pupils and teachers and the results of national tests. From this evidence it is judged that current standards are above what is expected at age 7. This represents an improvement since the last inspection where the standards were found to be average. Both boys and girls, including those with special educational needs and the higher attainers, make good progress in mathematics.

86. In Year 1 most of the pupils can count to 20 and some to 30, they know number bonds to 10 and can add and subtract at this level. Most of the pupils are able to make a number sentence, such as  $3+7=10$ , mentally with the correct signs and then record it in their books. Some are able to add numbers and correctly reach an answer that is 20 or more. Some of the pupils can place numbers up to 100 in order and they understand that the number 87 represents 8 'tens' and 7 'units'.

87. In Year 2 the pupils are able to add 2 digit numbers together. They know odd and even numbers, can measure simple lengths in centimetres and many have started to tell the time. They have



knowledge of simple shapes and can identify coins and carry out simple calculations in money. They recognise simple fractions and have started to multiply and divide. During the inspection pupils were seen doubling and halving and learning that repeated addition is the same process as multiplication. Some of the pupils were able to record multiplications involving numbers with 1 and 2 digits giving answers up to 100; a few could manage calculations that resulted in answers that were up to 1000. The pupils in both years use the correct mathematical language when dealing with problems.

88. The quality of teaching and learning is good, with 60% of lessons being good or better. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen, and this represents an improvement on the previous inspection when unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Where teaching is good, the mental sessions are lively, have good pace and all pupils participate fully. In the best lessons the teachers have a clear idea of their objectives and set realistic, achievable and challenging targets. They use the correct mathematical language, give clear instructions and explanations and then set work suitable for the different ability groups within their class. In response to this good teaching the pupils are well behaved and they have positive attitudes to the subject.

89. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well and all staff have received effective training. Numeracy lessons are well structured and give the opportunity for mental mathematics, concept development and the opportunity to reflect on what has been learned. The use of information and communication technology to support the subject is very good. Pupils use an individualised computer program, which greatly enhances their learning and progress.

90. A number of other factors also make a good contribution to the pupils' progress. There is a satisfactory range of modern resources that are used well. Planning is good and the teachers have adopted an extensive system of assessment, tracking and targeting pupils' progress. There has been a good level of monitoring of the teaching of the subject by the co-ordinator and the headteacher and this has had a positive impact on standards. The pupils experience full coverage of the National Curriculum with much emphasis being placed on the understanding of number and mental calculations. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and experienced co-ordinator.

## **SCIENCE**

91. Since the last inspection standards of attainment have been maintained. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum teacher assessments for seven-year-olds were above average and standards were similar in the work seen during the inspection. The pupils make satisfactory progress overall. However, those with special educational needs and the higher attainers, achieve well and make good progress throughout the school.

92. By the end of Key Stage 1, as a result of good teaching, the pupils have above average observational and investigative skills. This was evident in Year 1 as they studied the effects that different forces have upon large and small toys, and in Year 2 as they considered 'minibeast' habitats in the school garden and the playground. During this work they also demonstrated a good command of scientific vocabulary, using words such as 'gravity', 'predators' and 'invertebrates'. However, their attainment and progress is constrained by the fact that they are given insufficient opportunities to decide how they are going to carry out observations and investigations. Despite this the more able pupils in Year 2 have a sophisticated understanding of how predictions and observations relate to one another; they know they must take a disciplined approach, not allowing what they forecast to influence what they observe.

93. The quality of teaching is good and, as a result, the pupils enjoy their lessons and learn well. The teachers have good knowledge of the subject and how to teach it. They use good teaching methods and they make effective use of other adults. In particular, the good teaching provides the pupils with opportunities to learn effectively through first-hand experience. For example, in Year 1 the effect of everyday forces on everyday objects was examined as the pupils were required to blow, push, pull and twist large and small toys which they had borrowed from the Nursery. In Year 2 the pupils visited the school grounds to study the habitats of insects, spiders and other small animals. In both cases the pupils showed a full understanding of these interesting and purposeful activities. Another technique successfully used by the teachers is to refer either to their family or to their own childhood. In a lesson in Year 1, for example, the teacher described how, when she was a child, a broken arm had resulted from the speed with which gravity had taken her scooter rapidly down hill. Attention and excitement was palpable!

94. The teachers are skilful in assessing the pupils' current knowledge and using this as a starting point for further teaching. To help them do this they employ good questioning techniques, encourage the pupils to contribute and respect what the pupils have to say. These factors foster the pupils' skills in speaking and listening well. However, the contribution to pupils' writing is less noticeable, and teachers do not require them to record findings, predictions and the planning of experiments often enough.

95. The pupils are well behaved in response to good class management, the high expectations of the adults working with them and interesting activities. Teachers and the pupils often have fun, but the former show considerable skill in indicating that enough is enough. For example, when Year 1 pupils were helping the teacher to compile a list of animals which they might find in the garden one was suggested a tarantula. This caused great amusement for everyone but further offerings of 'shark' and 'alligator' were simply ignored by the teacher and the pupils quickly returned to the task in hand.

96. Science makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. An assembly focused on the water cycle illustrated clearly what water might contain in a third world country. In another example, respect for the feelings of others was gently but effectively made clear when one child laughed at another who had failed to get a yo-yo working.

97. Work in science sometimes provide the starting point for data collection and interpretation using information and communication technology. This was seen, for example, when Year 2 pupils worked with a program to help them to analyse their 'minibeast' data. Activities of this type also make a good contribution to numeracy.

98. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator. She has a good knowledge of the quality of teaching and attainment throughout the school. There is effective planning and a good policy for the subject. A science club is organised for the Year 1 pupils, resources are good and they are used well - particularly the school garden. These factors all make significant contributions to the pupils' attainment and progress.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

99. Standards of attainment remain similar to those at the time of the last inspection. They are still satisfactory by the end of the Key Stage 1. There has been an improvement in the consistency of the quality of teaching across the school. It is now satisfactory overall. As a consequence the quality of learning is sound.

100. Good work was seen in a Year 1 lesson where, as part of a project on pirates, pupils were making different artefacts for an assembly. These included tie-dye headscarves. With adult supervision pupils managed to make different patterns, producing attractive finished products. There is evidence from work on display that pupils paint, draw spring flowers and work in the style of different artists, for example Kandinsky and Van Gogh. Pupils behave well and clearly enjoy the subject.

101. There is a good policy and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority document for art and design is now used as a framework for planning. Assessment is made through a photographic record of work covered and through the use of individual sketchbooks to monitor progress. These sketchbooks vary in quality and there is not a consistent approach. Through photographs and from discussion with the curriculum leader it is clear that all strands of the National Curriculum are covered satisfactorily. Pupils make sound progress throughout the school.

102. An 'Arts Week' is held every two years when artists and potters, as well as dancers and musicians spend time working with pupils. This gives them the opportunity for extended work and to undertake specific projects. The school has won several competitions and regularly displays work in a local art gallery.

103. The co-ordinator is new to the responsibility and has no specialist qualification. However, she is very enthusiastic, has already reviewed resources, and plans to teach alongside her colleagues should they need help. All of the teachers attended a training day at the National Gallery this year and this made a good contribution to the teaching of art and design.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

104. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are as expected nationally and this is in line with the findings at the time of the last inspection. However, there are instances where the pupils attain standards above the national expectation. An example of this was seen in Year 1 where the teacher provided good opportunities for the pupils to design, make and evaluate eye patches, flags and ship's biscuits as part of the pupils' topic work on pirates.

105. The quality of teaching is good, resulting in good quality learning. Overall progress made by pupils is good and those with special educational needs receive good support and achieve well. Lessons are well planned and prepared. Activities are interesting and suited to the ages and interests of the pupils which means that they behave well, enjoy the work and take care to produce well-finished items.

106. A strong feature of the teaching is the good use of the pupils' world outside of school and the classroom environment. In Year 1 the teacher based a lesson around common and exotic fruits, and in a Year 2 lesson good use was made of the classroom blinds to illustrate pulleys. This everyday emphasis ensures interest and often fascination. So too does the opportunity to evaluate the work of other pupils; this happened for example in Year 2, where good use was made of a crane that had been made by one of the pupils. Good questioning centred around a desire to improve the crane. At times the teachers increase motivation by sharing their own experiences well with the pupils; in Year 1 the teacher confessed that she had to keep the label on one of the exotic fruits, since she had never tasted it and she was worried about forgetting its name. Teachers are alert to matters of health and safety, as in the need to wash one's hands when handling food, and they make appropriate links with other subjects, like mathematics when considering a waste paper bin made from soft drink cans.

107. Resources for design and technology are good and the school is fortunate to have a properly equipped room for food technology. However, this room was not in use for cookery activities during the inspection. The co-ordinator is new to the post and her very good understanding of the role is an appropriate measure of the very good leadership and management in the school.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

108. The standards achieved by the pupils are similar to those reported in the last inspection, and are as expected nationally. Inspection findings are based on the three lessons observed during the week, work seen in pupils' books, displays, samples of work and discussions with pupils and teachers.

109. In Year 1 the pupils are conducting first-hand studies of the local environment by going out of school and looking at local roads, the amount of traffic and the different types of houses. The teachers make good use of photographs and maps to support the pupils' learning. Previous work on the differences between town and country, and a study of holiday areas is of a satisfactory standard.

110. Year 2 pupils make good use of a variety of maps; local, from other parts of Britain and of the world as a whole, when looking at holidays. Routes and ways of travelling to school have been studied. The teachers have planned good links with science; work in the school garden has been used to draw maps of the pond with co-ordinates.

111. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some very good teaching in Year 1. Very good use is made of the well-briefed learning support workers who have a positive impact on the pupils' learning. All the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Teachers' planning, which is regularly monitored by the co-ordinator, indicates that good use is made of local resources and visits.

112. The pupils enjoy geography and work well together. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by extending their knowledge of the world and its peoples. However, not enough opportunities are provided for the pupils to have experience of simple research, and to write at greater length in geography. There is a satisfactory range of resources in the school and they are used well. The subject is well led by a keen and enthusiastic co-ordinator.

## **HISTORY**

113. Because of the nature of the timetable no history lessons were observed during the inspection. Judgements on teaching and learning are therefore impossible to make. Other judgements are based on work in the pupils' books, displays, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers.

114. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection, and those achieved by the pupils when they leave the school at the age of 7 are what might be expected for their age. The pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past and a sense of time. For example, they look at clothes worn and toys used in the past, study old photographs, visit places of local historical importance, and look at houses, churches and household objects from long ago. Both boys and girls, including pupils with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress but there is little evidence of extended writing in history or that the pupils have been involved in historical research.

115. In Year 1 the pupils have studied and compared seaside holidays of today with those in the past. In Year 2 famous people, such as Florence Nightingale, and hospitals of the 1850s have been studied and compared with today. The pupils have also studied the Great Fire of London and they have visited Tewkesbury Abbey.

116. The school uses the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme and adapts it to the needs of the school. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development by extending their knowledge of Britain in the past. The level of resources is good and they are used well. Very good use is made of local museums and their loan services. Teachers' planning and pupils' work have been monitored by the co-ordinator and the subject is well led by an experienced and keen co-ordinator.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

117. The last time the school was inspected, standards throughout the school matched the national expectation at the end Key Stage 1. Standards are now above what is expected even though the curriculum requirements have become more demanding.

118. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have a very good understanding of the computer keyboard and its function. They have good mouse control, using it to move images, supporting well the work they do in other subjects, most notably mathematics. Pupils in Year 2 can change font size and move text down the screen. They are able to save and print their work. They have a good knowledge of how computers are used outside of school. They know technical vocabulary and use it fearlessly! For example, in one lesson in Year 2 two pupils had accessed a start-up menu which had 'uninstall' as one of the options. "No, not that one", said one of them "That will take it out!" The pupils in Year 1 can plan a series of commands for someone else to follow and they know how to program a device, such as a floor robot, to make it do what they want.

119. Teaching throughout the school is good. Teachers generally have a good knowledge of information and communication technology. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning and also on their attitudes and behaviour, which are both good. The teachers make good use of learning support workers and voluntary help to support pupils in their work. They ensure that the pupils are provided with plenty of opportunities to make decisions but information and communication technology does not often provide the starting point for longer pieces of writing. The quality of questioning is often good, particularly when it encourages the pupils to think. In one Year 2 lesson when the computers were producing graphs the teacher asked "Would you prefer to do this by hand?" and then "How would it be different?". The responses to this latter question provided a lot of information about the pupils' knowledge, understanding and attitudes.

120. The pupils are well behaved, they concentrate hard and work at a good pace in response to the good lesson planning, effective organisation, and the interesting activities which they are given to do. Work is sometimes linked directly to the current topic work and this provides additional motivation. So too does the chocolate 'treasure' which the pupils have to instruct the floor robot to find on a 'treasure island'! The good teaching also ensures that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and the higher attainers, make good progress.

121. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and she manages the subject well. She has a very good knowledge of the subject, supports other staff with planning and in their understanding and use of both hardware and software. She has provided very good training and she monitors both teaching and attainment well. Resources are good and they are used well. They are particularly good for mathematics where an individualised program contributes well to the learning of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. The school benefits from having a separate computer room. These factors contribute well to the progress which pupils make and to their attainment..

## **MUSIC**

122. Standards of attainment have been maintained since the last inspection and remain in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils make satisfactory progress in music throughout the school.

123. Pupils have a large repertoire of songs, which are sung with enthusiasm and with evidence of a growing awareness of the importance of pitch and volume. Singing is a part of the daily routine in school, more particularly with the younger pupils where teachers and children frequently break into song. Pupils can clap rhythms and use a good range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. They listen attentively and are beginning to develop a good musical vocabulary.

124. The quality of teaching is sound overall. It is good when teachers' subject knowledge is good and they are confident in what they are doing; otherwise it is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is a musician and brings both expertise and enthusiasm to her responsibility. She has worked hard to update the scheme of work, to organise resources and to support her colleagues. She has taped songs, accompaniments and pieces of music so that colleagues, less musically talented, can give pupils good experiences. She sees their planning and is able to give support where it is needed. Because of this, pupils cover all aspects of the music curriculum.

125. Apart from lessons a number of other factors make a good contribution to the pupils' progress. Musicians and dancers from their own and other cultures visit and work with pupils during 'Arts Week' and at other times. Pupils take part in local festivals and there is a school choir of thirty pupils, open to whoever chooses to join. It meets each week and sometimes performs in assembly. Similarly, a recorder group, taught by the headteacher also meets weekly and performs for other pupils. The school is well resourced with both tuned and untuned percussion instruments which are in good condition. They are held centrally but are organised so that they are readily accessible. This helps teachers to make music an integral part of lessons if they wish.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

126. At the end of Key Stage 1 levels of attainment are above that expected for pupils at the age of 7. This means that the school has maintained the standards seen in the last inspection. Pupils experience a range of activities in line with the requirements of the National Curriculum. In gymnastics, movement and games lessons all pupils make good progress in the development of their skills and in the way in which they work together.

127. Pupils learn to move around the hall with increasing control, balance, co-ordination and poise. Many are agile and well co-ordinated. They use the large physical education equipment in the hall very well by incorporating it into their movement sequences. The pupils are beginning to evaluate each others' performances and see how they can improve on their own. They are aware of the effect physical exercise has on their bodies and the importance of warming-up. In dance they are beginning to be able to move sensitively and with expression to the mood of the music and put together sequences as the music changes. All the pupils work well together in pairs or small groups and thoroughly enjoy their lessons.

128. The teaching is good overall. The teachers place good emphasis on the need for safety in the hall and this is respected by the pupils, who behave responsibly. The teachers generally provide a good role model by changing for physical education lessons, and all of the pupils wear suitable clothing.

129. There are extra-curricular activities that are open to all in football and dance; these are well attended. The dance group performs regularly both for the parents and outside the school at local festivals. The school has a much deserved reputation for the good standard of dance. There is an annual sports day where the emphasis is on improving one's own performance as well as joining in



competitive team games. The school has benefited from outside help, especially from parents, which contributes greatly to the pupils' progress in physical education. Resources are good, they are regularly maintained and used well. The co-ordinator is experienced, keen and enthusiastic and leads the subject very well.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

130. Standards of attainment in religious education remain in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus, although there has been an improvement in the quality of spirituality in pupils' experiences since the last inspection. Only one lesson was seen, so judgements are made on that, the policy, a scrutiny of the pupils' work and discussions with the co-ordinator.

131. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and the pupils make steady progress. The pupils learn about Christianity and Hinduism. They have a satisfactory knowledge of the major Christian festivals, stories from the Bible and they know about events in the life of Jesus. They are successfully taught to reflect on the wider aspects of events and to try to imagine why people acted as they did and what their feelings were. The school has links with local churches and pupils visit these regularly. Local clergy also visit school to take assemblies. On one recent visit a mock christening was held to help pupils understand the significance of the ritual. At the time of Divali, Diva lamps are made and the story of Rama and Sita is told. The fact that the one of the learning support workers is Hindu is of great benefit to the school.

132. During the inspection there was little evidence of written work in the subject, other than a small number of work sheets. No religious education work was on display. There is a good policy and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority religious education document is used well as the basis for teaching. A policy for spirituality has been developed since the last inspection and this, covering all subjects of the curriculum, has made a major contribution to improving the provision for the pupils' spiritual development.

133. The co-ordinator has had responsibility for the subject for some time. She has a good understanding of her role and provides helpful support to the staff. Although the school has some resources, most are borrowed from local museums, churches or from the staff.