

# INSPECTION REPORT

**EASTFIELD INFANTS AND NURSERY  
SCHOOL**

Louth

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120458

Headteacher: Mrs B Carr

Reporting inspector: Mr J Earish  
23216

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> June 2001

Inspection number: 192571

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:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lacey Gardens Louth Lincolnshire
Postcode:	LN11 8DQ
Telephone number:	01507 603376
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Barber
Date of previous inspection:	10 <sup>th</sup> – 13 <sup>th</sup> February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23216	J Earish	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils achievements. How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? Assessment
19374	W Sheehan	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?
12658	M Beardsley	Team inspector	English Geography History Music	How well are pupils taught?
22545	V Hobson	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Physical education Equal opportunities	
18842	G Peet	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Religious education Special educational needs	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**

Eastfield Infant and Nursery School is situated on the edge of a large council housing estate in Louth. There are currently 286 pupils on roll, including 52 children who attend the nursery part-time, either in the morning or afternoon. There has been a significant drop in pupil numbers since the last inspection. Local Education Authority predictions based on current data show that numbers will continue to fall in the Louth area in the foreseeable future. The vast majority of the pupils live in public sector housing on local estates, where there are significant amounts of deprivation<sup>1</sup>. Twelve per cent of pupils take up free school meals, and this is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs, at 24 per cent, is broadly average in national terms. Thirteen pupils have a statement of special educational need, and this is well above the national average. Attainment on entry to the school for children under five is well below average when compared with those of a similar age. Almost all of the pupils are of white, UK heritage.

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

Eastfield is a rapidly improving school. The quality of leadership and management is excellent. Pupils are very eager to learn, are very interested in their work, and behave well. The quality of teaching is good overall, with a significant proportion of very good and excellent teaching. Standards achieved in speaking and listening, and mathematics are above average by the age of seven years. Although the school has above average income, it provides good value for money.

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

- Standards achieved in speaking and listening, and mathematics are above average by the age of seven years.
- The headteacher, senior teachers and governors provide excellent leadership.
- The monitoring and supporting of pupils' academic progress is excellent.
- The partnership between home and school is very good, and the information provided for parents is excellent.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how well they are achieving and what they have to do to improve even further.
- Provision for children under five is very good, and they make very good progress.
- Pupils' very good attitudes to learning and good behaviour contribute to the very good relationships within the school.
- Teaching is good overall, with three out of ten lessons being very good or excellent.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

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

- The rate of attendance.
- Standards in design and technology at Key Stage 1.
- The standard of handwriting across the school.

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

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

The school has made good progress since its last inspection in 1997<sup>2</sup>. Considerable improvements in the quality of leadership and management have been made since the appointment of the new headteacher in 1998. The quality of teaching has been improved, and is now good overall. Declining standards in reading and mathematics have been reversed, and good improvements have been made in information and communication technology. Standards have been raised because the quality of teaching is better than it was and because great emphasis has been placed on accurately

<sup>1</sup> Department of Environment, Regions and Transport Indices of Deprivation updated in 2000.

<sup>2</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> February 1997

assessing pupils' achievements; this has resulted in significant improvements in planning and in personal target setting. Work is now well matched to pupils' abilities, so that all pupils are properly challenged. All of the key issues from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. The current professional partnership and dialogue between all teachers and governors reflects the school's good capacity to move forward and sustain further improvements.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
Reading	E	D	D	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	C	C	D	D	
Mathematics	E	E	D	D	

This information shows that in National Curriculum tests in 2000, standards in mathematics, reading and writing were below average when compared with those of similar schools. When compared to those of all schools nationally they remained below average. On appointment two years ago, the headteacher identified that standards had been falling in reading and mathematics since 1996. She implemented wide-ranging changes to teaching and learning across the school in partnership with staff. Standards are now improving rapidly. Inspection findings show that standards achieved in reading and in writing are now average. Standards in speaking and listening, and mathematics are above average. In all other subjects, standards are in line with those found nationally, except in design and technology, where they are below expectations. In religious education, pupils' attainment matches the requirements of the Local Agreed Syllabus.

The majority of the children in the Foundation Stage are achieving their learning goals in communication language and literacy, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They are achieving above expectations of the learning goals in mathematical development, physical development, and personal and social skills.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils show respect for their teachers and for one another.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils greatly benefit from the well-integrated, family atmosphere within the school.
Attendance	Well below average.

Pupils are keen to learn, and work and play together happily. They behave well and relate very well to each other and to staff, so the school is a very harmonious community. Well below average attendance is largely due to parents taking pupils on short holidays during term time, and a small but significant minority of parents who fail to give legitimate reasons for their children's absence.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Very 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.

The quality of teaching is good overall. Of the 57 lessons observed, three were excellent, 14 were very good, 27 were good and 13 were satisfactory. No lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. For the Foundation Stage, teaching was very good, with three in five lessons being very good or better. At Key Stage 1, teaching was good, and seven out of ten lessons were good or better. Teachers are enthusiastic, and are very clear about what they expect pupils to learn. They have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. A particularly good feature of teaching is the high quality of planning which ensures that lessons are interesting, varied and challenging to pupils of all abilities. Literacy and numeracy are well taught, and the quality of learning is good overall. No significant weaknesses were observed in the quality of teaching during the period of the inspection. A particular strength in pupils' learning is their excellent understanding of how well they are achieving and what they have to do to improve even further.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The quality and range of learning opportunities for the Foundation Stage are very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils benefit from the extra help they receive, and learn at the same rate as their classmates.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Arrangements for developing pupils' spiritual awareness, moral development and social skills are very good. Provision for cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. All adults manage pupils well, treat them with respect and listen carefully to them.

The school has a very good partnership with parents. There is a good curriculum in place that meets statutory requirements. The provision for developing literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills across subjects is securely established. The new scheme of work for design and technology has yet to be consistently implemented across the school. Excellent procedures are in place for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress, which underpins many of the improvements made since the last inspection.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior staff provide excellent leadership and clear educational direction.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very good at fulfilling their responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is very good at analysing overall strengths and weaknesses, and using this information to set priorities.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Additional funding received for specific purposes, such as for special educational needs, is well spent.

The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She provides a very strong sense of purpose and direction for all members of the school community. Teamwork is a very strong feature of this school, and this is a major factor contributing to the school's recent successful development. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are very good. Good use is made of all sources of funding, and the effects of spending decisions are very carefully monitored and evaluated. The principles of best value are well applied through the comparison of costs and competitive tendering.

**PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of teaching.</li> <li>• Children like school.</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• Children's good progress.</li> <li>• The behaviour of pupils.</li> <li>• The way in which the school helps children to develop mature and responsible attitudes.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.</li> <li>• The school working closely with parents.</li> <li>• The way that the school is led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about how children are getting on.</li> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. A few parents expressed some concerns about the amount of homework their children were expected to complete at home, and the range of activities outside lessons. However, inspectors consider that homework tasks are appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils, and there is a good range of activities at lunchtimes, visits to places of interest, as well as fieldwork in the local environment. Some parents felt they were not kept sufficiently well informed about how children are getting on. However, the range and quality of information provided for parents, and the opportunities to meet teachers to discuss children's progress, are judged to be excellent.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average when compared with that normally expected for children of a similar age. Many children have very poorly developed skills in speaking and listening, and personal and social skills. By the time they are ready to start the National Curriculum in Year 1, the majority of children have achieved the goals expected of them in communication, language and literacy, creative development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. They exceed the goals in mathematical development, physical development, and the development of their personal and social skills. This is largely due to the very good teaching they receive, and the support of classroom assistants and the nursery nurse, who are very effective in their roles. Planning is very good, expectations are very high, management of children is very good, and the interaction between children and adults is very effective.
- 2 Results of the National Curriculum tests for 2000 show that, when compared with all schools, the attainment of seven year olds is below the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. When these results are compared with those of similar schools, standards remain below average. Standards in reading and mathematics have been falling since 1996, and when the present headteacher took up her post in 1998, standards in reading and mathematics were well below the national average. Working closely with staff and governors, she successfully introduced wide-ranging changes to both teaching and learning. These changes have been very effective, and inspection findings show that attainment is now above average in mathematics, and speaking and listening, and average in reading and writing. Standards in other subjects are in line with national expectations, with the exception of design and technology where they are below these levels. Attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The inspection did not show a significant difference in attainment between boys and girls.
- 3 Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported, and have full access to the curriculum. They are keen and enthusiastic about work, and join in all classroom activities. They benefit from very good support in the classroom and are making good progress in relation to the targets in their individual plans. Children with special needs are identified early in the Foundation Stage. They receive very good teaching, and this enables them to make very good progress in the Foundation Stage and good progress at Key Stage 1.
- 4 Pupils make good progress in developing their literacy skills. By the age of seven years their speaking and listening skills are well developed, and they are confident and fluent speakers for their age. Teachers use good open-ended questions to promote oral skills, and provide regular opportunities for pupils to engage in group and classroom discussions about the work they are involved in. Pupils' oral skills are actively promoted across the curriculum. For example, they listen carefully to recordings in music, and then discuss the meaning of words to describe what they have heard. This occurs in other subjects such as drama and in physical education, where pupils are encouraged to evaluate their work and suggest ways to improve each other's performances. They listen carefully and sensitively to each other, and most are confident in making helpful suggestions.
- 5 Standards of reading are average. Pupils are enthusiastic about books, and higher attaining pupils read independently. Average attaining pupils have a good understanding of what they are reading, and when they make mistakes use their knowledge of letter sounds well to help them to decipher unfamiliar words and to produce phonetically acceptable attempts at spellings. Lower attaining pupils receive good support from class teachers and classroom assistants. Pupils' improving research skills help them to quickly locate information in non-fiction books, and most know how to use the index and to skim pages for information.

- 6 Standards of writing are average. Pupils' improving use of punctuation and good knowledge of grammar, together with the wide range of opportunities to write in a range of different styles, results in generally clear and fluent written work. Higher attaining pupils write at length with an increasing degree of confidence and accuracy. They use a range of punctuation including speech marks and apostrophes. Average attaining pupils' work is less accurate, and spelling and punctuation are not as secure, although simple sentences are usually correctly punctuated. However, the quality of handwriting is below what would be expected nationally. Although letters are correctly orientated, pupils do not always form them correctly, many do not hold their pencils properly, and writing is rarely joined up.
- 7 Good progress is largely due to the good quality of teaching during the Literacy Hour, and the effective use of the new monitoring and assessment procedures. Teachers use every opportunity to extend pupils' language skills: they examine and discuss new words; they make links with other subjects; and they constantly remind pupils of what they have learned previously. Small group reading has also been introduced to improve fluency, expression and comprehension. Books are being added to the reading scheme as relevant materials of good quality are found. All these initiatives are having a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning.
- 8 Pupils make good progress in mathematics. Their understanding of number and their skills in using numbers develop well. By the time they are in Year 2, pupils show a good knowledge of the place value of numbers up to 100 and accurately add and subtract two-digit numbers. A good emphasis is placed on developing pupils' skills in recognising the patterns created by numbers. These skills help them to learn about odd and even numbers and to understand concepts such as 'lots of' or 'sets of' when learning about multiplication. Their skills in manipulating numbers also develop well, and they show speed and accuracy in mental arithmetic.
- 9 Good progress in mathematics is the result of good teaching, and a number of initiatives that have been put in place since the last inspection. These include the effective introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, a thorough analysis of past results and areas of weakness, more effective criteria for determining what pupils have achieved, and the setting of individual targets.
- 10 Progress in science is good, and attainment is in line with the national average. Pupils have a good understanding of different properties of materials. They can name a range of different materials such as plastic and wood and suggest uses based on these properties. Pupils can name the external parts of their bodies and know what they need to stay healthy. Work in science is also well integrated with other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils' mathematical skills of measuring help them record distances accurately, and recording tasks enable pupils to practise their writing skills. Teachers carefully plan their lessons to ensure that the work is interesting, challenging, and builds on pupils' natural curiosity about their environment.
- 11 Improvement in information and communication technology is one of the school's priorities, and a new range of skills has been successfully introduced. Pupils are making good progress at Key Stage 1, and standards are in line with national expectations. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report. Pupils enjoy using computers, and are confident at using a range of software. They acquire satisfactory research skills, and software is used well to support learning in most areas of the curriculum.
- 12 A particular strength of the school's drive to achieve high standards is the excellent procedures for monitoring and supporting academic progress. The school successfully uses assessment data and target setting in individual education plans to set appropriately challenging targets for individuals and groups of pupils. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy is also having a positive impact on pupils' attainment in all areas of the curriculum. The pupils' very good attitudes to school help to promote effective learning, and they form very positive relationships with adults and other children.

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

- 13 Attitudes to work have improved since the last inspection, and are now very good. This is a significant factor in the recent improving standards of attainment across the school. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and this is reflected in their very positive attitudes to their work. For example, Year 2 pupils spontaneously expressed to an inspector their pride in their school and in the work they were doing. Pupils settle quickly to their tasks and are eager to learn. They listen attentively, respond well to teachers' questioning, and are motivated and enthusiastic about their work. From the nursery through to Year 2, pupils show a great interest in what they are doing, and sustain very good levels of concentration. For example, children in the nursery were totally engrossed in their activities and concentrated very well when 'singing' number rhymes and playing mathematical games. In most lessons, pupils of all ages move quickly and sensibly from whole class activities to individual tasks.
- 14 Pupils behave well, which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. The school provides a calm, challenging and purposeful learning environment, where pupils are able to flourish in an atmosphere of trust and cooperation. The good behaviour in and around the school has a positive effect on the quality of learning. On entry to the school, the very youngest children quickly conform to the school's code of behaviour. Pupils are polite and courteous, and show respect for their teachers. They are aware of the rewards and sanctions, and respond positively to adults' high expectations of good behaviour. At playtimes pupils are generally well behaved, and they play happily together. During the previous academic year no pupils were excluded from the school.
- 15 Children at the Foundation Stage quickly settle into the caring school environment. They are able to sustain interest and concentration, learn to share appropriately, and listen carefully to their teacher's guidance. Even the youngest children concentrate well, and join in activities. Their behaviour is good. Children willingly talk to adults and each other about their work with growing confidence and independence
- 16 Pupils' personal development is very good and is greatly influenced by the very good relationships that exist throughout the school, both between pupils and adults and amongst pupils of all ages. In classrooms, pupils work together happily and constructively. For example, in information and communication technology pupils share computers and help and support each other. A group of Year 2 pupils expressed their enjoyment of working with others: "friends get to help you and you help each other". Pupils show an eagerness to take on responsibility, and this is encouraged from an early age. For example, children in the nursery are expected to tidy up after activities and to listen carefully to instructions. From an early age, pupils have a very good understanding of their own targets for improving their work, and refer to them during lessons. They understand when they have achieved their targets because their teachers tell them how well they are doing.
- 17 The school's energetic commitment to working with the community helps to foster pupils' understanding of citizenship from an early age. For example, the school has developed business reading partnerships, has invited the Chamber of Commerce to officially open the pond and wildlife areas, and has organised an 'Investors in People' open day. This is enabling pupils to develop a very good understanding of the values and beliefs of others and an awareness of the world beyond school.
- 18 Attendance for the last reporting year, 1999/2000 is 93 per cent, which is well below the national average. This is worse than at the time of the previous inspection. Unauthorised absence at 0.8 per cent is above national figures. Analysis of attendance for the current year shows that despite the school's effort to increase the rates of attendance it remains at the level of the previous year. Trends identified by the school show that a number of pupils take short holidays during school term time, and a small but significant minority of parents fail to give legitimate reasons for their children's absence. The great majority of pupils come to school on time. Registration is effectively organised, and pupils settle quickly to their work. Pupils' poor attendance has a detrimental effect on their standards of attainment, as they are not able to make regular, uninterrupted progress in their work.

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

- 19 At the time of the last inspection teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall, with 'poor teaching in a few lessons'. All of the concerns about poor teaching have been successfully addressed, and it is now judged to be good overall, and a strength of the school. Teaching has improved to such an extent that three out of every four lessons observed during the inspection were good or very good, with three lessons being judged excellent. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Teaching is good in all subjects apart from art, where it was judged to be satisfactory. There were no opportunities to observe teaching in design and technology or history. Examples of very good teaching were found in English, mathematics, music, religious education and the teaching of children in the Foundation Stage. Excellent teaching was seen in English, mathematics and in the nursery. The impact made by good teaching is seen in the good levels of achievement among pupils.
- 20 A strength in teaching is the very good planning which is consistent throughout the school. This means that time and resources are used to the best effect. Lessons are well structured, start promptly and progress at a brisk pace with no time wasted. Teachers often set clear time limits for tasks, and pupils respond well to this, concentrating on their work, and keeping fully involved. This is particularly noticeable in numeracy lessons, where lessons start briskly, often with warm up exercises that make pupils think more and more quickly as the pace is increased. Work is planned at different levels to meet the needs of pupils of different attainment, and pupils have extension activities to follow when they finish the main task. For example, in a literacy lesson, pupils who had been reading independently were then given a comprehension exercise on the story to complete. This is accompanied by very good assessment and monitoring procedures which teachers use well to plan the next stage of learning, and to set individual targets for pupils. This allows pupils to have an excellent idea of their own learning, and what they have to do to improve.
- 21 A further feature of teaching which contributes to pupils' knowledge of their own learning is the way in which teachers always share their learning objectives with pupils at the beginning of lessons. Even the youngest pupils are able to explain what they have to do to improve, and one child commented that 'they had to keep letters the same size when writing sentences'. These provide a focus for the lesson not only for the teacher, but also for pupils, so that they know what they have to achieve by the end of the lesson. Teachers then quickly recap on what has been learned previously, before starting the new learning. This way, pupils are reinforcing what they have learned to give them a solid base before moving forward. Throughout the lessons, teachers remind pupils of their individual targets, for example, in writing, a group of Year 1 pupils were reminded to leave spaces between their words, which had a positive effect upon the presentation of their work. Teachers review the objectives at the end of the lesson to reinforce what pupils have learned and also to set targets for the next lesson.
- 22 Teachers are skilled at making sure that all pupils are working at an appropriately high level. Through skilful questioning, they continually check that pupils have understood, or can remember what they have learned previously. They direct their questions to specific pupils or groups of pupils depending upon the degree of difficulty, to ensure that all pupils are included. For instance, in a numeracy lesson, Year 1 pupils were asked to count forward in 2's, whereas Year 2 pupils then counted backwards. In literacy, a pupil who had been learning the phoneme 'sh' was asked to spell 'shell'; Year 2 pupils were asked to put in the apostrophe in the phrase "snails' enemies", which they did accurately. During the lessons, pupils are given tasks appropriate to their level of attainment. For example, after a visit to a church, higher attaining pupils wrote an independent account of their visit, whereas lower attaining pupils had a prepared sheet to help them write simple sentences about their favourite part of the church.
- 23 Basic skills are very well taught. In literacy, pupils are given a good grounding in phonics, which helps them to become independent readers and writers quite quickly. Teachers place a strong emphasis on language development and exploit every opportunity to make teaching points about language, to question, talk and listen to pupils. In physical education, for instance, pupils are encouraged to discuss the differences in their performances and make suggestions for improvement, thus developing their critical thinking and their oral skills. The good teaching of numeracy is having a positive effect upon raising standards in mathematics, as witnessed in the improved National Curriculum test results. In science, pupils are taught well how to conduct

investigations and have a good understanding of what makes a fair test. The skills of information and communication technology are also well taught and pupils use these skills effectively, for instance to research information in geography. However, there are insufficient opportunities within design and technology for teaching designing and making skills, including the process of improving designs by modification when limitations are identified in the original plans.

- 24 There is a very good whole school commitment to the inclusion and integration of all pupils with special educational needs. A strong team of support staff are very well used to work with the teachers to consider pupils' needs. They work conscientiously together to provide a good level of high quality support. Within the classroom, teachers' expectations of achievement for pupils with special educational needs are appropriately high and effectively match those for all pupils. Planning generally includes specific consideration of this special group of pupils; consequently, they make good progress towards the targets on their Individual Education Plans.
- 25 Pupils with special educational needs are identified soon after they begin school. Diagnostic testing identifies specific difficulties and good quality Individual Education Plans are written to help pupils make good progress. In the foundation classes there is a high level of support for children with individual needs and for some pupils, individual therapy programmes are carried out on the advice of professional advisers. This, together with the very good teaching in these classes, helps children make very good progress in the Foundation Stage. In the older classes, teachers plan work that takes account of the Individual Education Plans, and special needs classroom assistants continue to provide a high level of good quality support for these pupils. This helps them make good progress.
- 26 Teachers manage their pupils well. They create an orderly atmosphere that is conducive to good learning, and pupils find it easy to learn. Their relationships with pupils are very good and this creates an ethos where pupils feel comfortable in expressing their ideas, can share gentle humour, and generally enjoy learning. They are keen to ask and answer questions because they know their contributions will be valued.
- 27 Despite the concerns expressed by some parents, the inspection found that teachers make good use of homework to extend pupils' learning. They mark pupils' work regularly, praising and encouraging pupils. Sometimes their comments show pupils how they can improve their work, but this is not consistent practice.

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

- 28 The curriculum provided by the school is good. It meets legal requirements and has both breadth and balance. It is relevant to the needs of the pupils, including those with special educational needs. The National Strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented effectively. There is a scheme of work for personal, social and health education, and teaching of drugs awareness and issues of personal safety is included within this. The governors have a policy for sex education, and pupils are taught about human growth and the life cycles of animals and plants within the science curriculum. Religious education is taught, and there is a daily act of worship. The allocation of time to individual subjects is appropriate for the age of the pupils.
- 29 A key issue from the previous inspection identified "the need to improve the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum by more fully involving all teachers in the planning of the subjects. This has been tackled well and teachers plan together in key stage groups. Responsibilities for the different subjects of the curriculum and aspects of the school's work are shared among them, so that each is responsible for a specific area. In most subjects the school has adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority planning documents. The school has developed a satisfactory new scheme of work for design and technology, but this has yet to be consistently implemented across the school.

- 30 The quality and range of learning opportunities for children at the Foundation Stage is very good. All six areas of learning are very well covered<sup>3</sup>. There is an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy, and in developing children's personal and social skills. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education and for working to the National Curriculum. The curriculum at Key Stage 1 is good, and covers all required elements of the National Curriculum.
- 31 There is a consistent approach to planning throughout the school. The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented, and are now having a positive impact on pupils' progress in both areas. The focus on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills has been particularly successful in raising standards. Good attention is paid to the development of literacy skills across the curriculum, but the development of numeracy skills is less well developed. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is satisfactory, and the school is currently identifying opportunities to use information and communication technology across the curriculum. There is a homework policy, and this is consistently implemented throughout the school. The use of homework diaries supports this consistent approach, and ensures that parents, teachers and pupils are all clear about homework expectations.
- 32 Provision for pupils with special educational needs was judged to be very good at the time of the previous inspection and is still very good. The requirements of the Code of Practice are fully met, and pupils have full access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that is matched to their individual needs. There is effective liaison with all external agencies' services, including speech therapists and an Autistic outreach support teacher. Individual Educational Plans are consistently monitored and regularly reviewed. This ensures continuity between teaching and planning, and is effective in ensuring that consistently good progress is being made. The school has strong links with the neighbouring junior school, and the needs of all pupils are discussed before transfer at the age of seven years.
- 33 The school makes good provision for extra curricular activities, which are mainly held during the lunch break. Booster clubs give opportunities for pupils to have extra practice in subjects like mathematics, information and communication technology and science. Other clubs provide opportunities for pupils to learn to play musical instruments such as the recorder, and to share books together. There are a number of educational visits to enhance classroom experiences, for example, to the Methodist Church, the supermarket, and fieldwork in the local environment. A number of visitors come into school to talk to the pupils or perform for them. These include visiting musicians, actors, and theatre groups. For example, the local Methodist minister answered pupils' questions about his vocation during the inspection week. These visits and visitors enrich the curriculum and support pupils' personal, social and cultural development.
- 34 The school is well integrated into the local community. There are effective links with pre-school organisations and good liaison with the junior school. Pupils sing at a home for retired people, at the local hospital, and perform a Christmas concert for parents and friends of the school. The community is also involved in activities such as the "Family Literacy Group". This was a 20-week course held over two terms for 12 reception children and their parents, and was the result of partnership between the Community Education Tutor and the Foundation Stage coordinator.
- 35 The school makes very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report, when it was judged to be good overall. The ethos of the school is very positive, and a strong sense of caring prevails throughout the school and is an integral part of daily life.
- 36 Provision for spiritual development is very good. Pupils learn about a good range of other religions, including Judaism and Hinduism. This helps them to appreciate the need to be sensitive and open to values that are different from their own. In religious education lessons

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<sup>3</sup> The six areas of learning are: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development, and physical development.



there is a strong emphasis on pupils' own feelings and thoughts. In one lesson, pupils were moved to applaud when the teacher read out one of her favourite poems about the nature of God. Assemblies contribute very well to pupils' spiritual development, are conducted in a calm and purposeful manner, and provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own lives and the lives of others. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate nature and the environment through the very good outdoor provision. The outside environment has been carefully planned to provide a resource where pupils can appreciate the beauty of nature in a calm and ordered setting. There are quiet areas where pupils can sit peacefully to read or reflect on the wonders of nature, or simply play with their friends. Nursery children were observed gently touching plants in the nursery playground, and marvelled at the shape and beauty of a garden spider, which they found under the leaves.

- 37 Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Differences between right and wrong are emphasised throughout the school and make a positive contribution to pupils' moral development. All adults in the school are good role models and encourage pupils to be fair-minded, to share and care, and to consider the effects of their actions on others. For example, children in the nursery were asked to consider whether Goldilocks did a 'bad' thing. Teachers use praise effectively, and aim to foster in children a sense of value, dignity and worth, and an appreciation of achievement in themselves and others. Pupils treat resources and the school environment with respect.
- 38 Provision for social development is very good. There are many opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to develop social skills. All pupils are given opportunities to take on responsibilities within their class as monitors for various jobs. These responsibilities are extended as they mature, providing opportunities to develop social skills and confidence. In personal and social education, pupils are encouraged to express their views, knowing that they will be given respect. Older pupils are encouraged to help younger ones in the playground, and every Friday afternoon during 'Golden Time', older classes pair with the younger ones to work together. Pupils learn to appreciate the needs of others through their involvement with charities. Each year the school collects for a children's charity and this year's collection went to support homeless children. Pupils also have opportunities to act in front of an audience, for example during assemblies and the Christmas concert.
- 39 The provision for pupils' cultural development is good overall. Pupils gain a good understanding of their own culture through local studies and visits. Visitors, such as musicians and theatre groups, add to this experience. Pupils' cultural development is supported well by their work in religious education. Pupils have studied aspects of other world religions, such as Judaism, and the festivals of other religions and cultures are celebrated throughout the year. For example, at Diwali the pupils made Diva lamps. When it was the Chinese New Year, pupils made Chinese food and tried eating it with chopsticks. As part of their topic on Mexico, pupils have listened to a speaker recount her experiences of living in Mexico and have made Mexican masks. History lessons and the wealth of historical resources around the school help pupils know more about the culture of their past.

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

- 40 At the time of the last inspection the school 'provided very good support and guidance for its pupils'. The school continues to provide a caring and supportive atmosphere where children are valued as individuals, and where they feel happy and secure. Staff know their pupils very well, and pupils show high levels of concern for one another's welfare. The vast majority of parents or carers who returned their questionnaires felt that the school helped their children to become mature and responsible.
- 41 Overall, the procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. The school is clean, tidy and in good repair, and provides a safe environment for pupils. There is an appropriate number of staff trained in first aid skills, as well as very good procedures for recording accidents and for notifying parents. Child protection procedures are firmly in place and training of staff is up to date. The school promotes pupils' awareness of their own safety through science, physical education, personal and social education lessons, and through visits to

school by the school nurse, dental hygienist and local police. For example, a physical development lesson for reception children included instruction on how to correctly hold and carry apparatus for physical education.

- 42 Overall, the school has good arrangements for monitoring and promoting good attendance. There are good procedures for monitoring and analysing attendance; the office checks registers every day and if no reason for absence is received within a few days, efforts are made to find out the reason for this. Each half term, the school analyses attendance data to identify patterns of non-attendance. Parents are constantly reminded of the need for regular attendance and punctuality through newsletters, verbal communication and leaflets. The school has introduced attendance certificates each half term for pupils with a record of full attendance. Support from the educational welfare services is minimal, and no regular visits currently take place. In order to try and minimise absences, parents are required to complete holiday forms in advance, and the ten-day limit is constantly stressed.
- 43 The school has good arrangements for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for eliminating oppressive behaviour. The behaviour and anti-bullying policies promote openness by encouraging children to talk about their concerns and by fostering strong relationships with staff. There is a simple set of school 'golden rules' which pupils know and respect. Pupils know and understand how they should behave and they respond accordingly. Any pupils with behavioural problems are closely monitored. Staff meet weekly to monitor these concerns and to discuss individual progress.
- 44 The school actively promotes the acceptance of all pupils, and pupils show effective care and consideration for children who require the full time support of an adult. The progress of pupils on the special needs register is carefully monitored both formally and informally. Test data is analysed by the coordinator for special needs and is shared with the teachers. The learning support teacher is used to investigate pupils' specific difficulties, for instance, poor auditory or visual memory, and she continues to assess them at regular intervals. Individual Education Plans are regularly reviewed and updated. Statutory requirements for assessment, recording and reporting relating to special needs pupils are fully met.
- 45 Excellent procedures are in place for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress. The school has developed a detailed strategy for monitoring and supporting pupils' progress. Teachers keep regular and comprehensive notes of pupils' achievements. Each child is assessed at the beginning of the academic year and targets for improvement are set at the beginning of each term. Individual progress is continually assessed, and this data is used to ensure that pupils are placed in correct groups, and within those groups work is fully matched to their individual needs. Three times a year, pupils and parents take part in a review of their work with their class teacher, looking at their previous targets, evaluating progress, and seeking ways to work together to achieve further improvements. Parents receive a very detailed annual written report about their child's academic progress, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- 46 Overall, the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, and the use of assessment to guide curriculum planning are very good. This is central to the drive to raise standards, and enables teachers to judge the effectiveness of learning activities. There are particularly well-developed procedures for assessing pupils' progress in English and mathematics. The criteria used to assess pupils are precise, and are based on the effective use of tests and teacher assessments. The half term and end of term literacy and numeracy assessments are useful in tracking what pupils have been taught, and for identifying the next steps that need to be taken to develop learning further. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how well they are achieving and what they have to do to improve even further.
- 47 Monitoring of pupils' personal development is very good and is based on the very good knowledge which all staff have of the pupils. The school is a caring community, where teachers show a high commitment to their pastoral role. Eastfield's positive ethos enables very good standards of personal development to be praised, and challenging behaviour and low standards to be modified and improved. This makes a very positive contribution to the good progress and development of all pupils.

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

- 48 The school has continued to improve the good relationships with parents reported in the last inspection report, and these are now very good. It is constantly looking for ways to develop the relationship further. The quality of information provided for parents is excellent.
- 49 Parents have very positive views about the school, and express considerable support for the progress their child makes at school. All parents who replied to the questionnaire agree that the teaching is good. The standards achieved by pupils, their attitudes to work and the behaviour which school demands from pupils are all much appreciated by parents. Some parents felt that the provision of activities outside school was unsatisfactory. However, inspection evidence shows that the range of extra-curricular activities provided at this school is good, and includes information and communication technology, Bookworm and mathematics clubs. Some parents expressed concern over the amount of homework their child receives. The school has a homework policy, which is within government guidelines. Homework of 10 minutes a day is provided regularly and includes reading, spelling and mathematical activities, and this is consistent with the level expected for their age range. Some parents also felt they were not kept sufficiently well informed about how their children are doing at school. However, inspectors judged the range and variety of information provided for parents, and the opportunities to meet teachers, to be excellent.
- 50 The overall contribution of parents to children's learning at school and home is very good. The school and parents work closely in partnership. The school encourages parental involvement through the family literacy scheme and workshops on topics including information and communication technology, numeracy and literacy. In addition, social opportunities through the Home School Association (HSA) further strengthen this partnership. The funds raised by parents have paid for improving the reception class courtyard and creating a stimulating outdoor area for imaginative play. A small number of parents come into school regularly as helpers and their contribution is effective, well planned and valued by the school. The school actively encourages parent helpers to gain qualifications. Weekly family assemblies enable the school and parents to jointly celebrate the achievements of their children. Attendance is the key area where a significant minority of parents fail to support their child's learning.
- 51 The quality and quantity of information provided for parents is excellent. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents meet statutory requirements. The termly newsletters are detailed, and provide excellent information about the teaching programme in each class. The homework diary provides excellent opportunities for two-way communication between home and school. It records weekly targets in reading and mathematics for each child, as well as hints on how parents can help their children learn at home. Parents meet with teachers each term to discuss their children's progress towards their targets. The annual report is very detailed, and includes a system for grading pupils' attainment and effort. Parents of nursery and reception children have useful informal opportunities to discuss any concerns during the shared activity at the start of the session.
- 52 Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to regular reviews of their children's progress and achievement, as well as to the consultation evenings each term. Parents are involved in the setting of new targets and in discussions on ways in which they can help their children.

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

- 53 The quality of leadership and management is excellent. The new headteacher has been in post for just over two years. She quickly established that the school was heading for a £30,000 overspend, and that standards in reading and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 had been falling since 1996. Working closely with staff and governors, she was able to introduce wide-ranging changes to both teaching and learning, and the management of the school finances. These measures have been successful in addressing both the standards achieved by pupils and

the deficit budget. There is now a very close partnership with the governing body, and a very good partnership with parents and the wider community. All adults are committed to improving pupils' attainment and are very good at reflecting critically on their practice. There are very good relationships within the school and a strong sense of teamwork among all staff. All policies and documents seen during the inspection met statutory requirements.

54 One of the significant strengths of the leadership of the headteacher and assistant headteacher is the degree to which they have created a shared unity of purpose within the school, focused on developing positive attitudes to learning and improving standards of attainment. The structure of management responsibilities is now very effective in promoting communication and consultation, and in monitoring progress and implementing change. Whilst teachers recognise that progress has been made, they are united in their determination to pursue even higher standards throughout the school.

55 The commitment of governors is considerable. The governing body is effectively organised and successfully fulfils its statutory responsibilities. Its role in shaping the direction of the school is very good. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and make frequent visits. These visits often have a specific focus, since each governor has an overview of an area of the curriculum or an aspect of the school's work. Governors have formed appropriate committees to monitor aspects of the school such as finance, the curriculum, premises and health and safety. Those governors who were interviewed displayed a very clear view of the long-term strategic development of the school, and are making very good use of data to compare the school against others in terms of its performance and income.

56 Following the last inspection in February 1997, an action plan was prepared in response to the key issues identified for future improvement. Most of the points contained in these key issues have been successfully addressed. They are as follows:

57 **Key Issue 1**

*"Improve the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, and provide appropriate support and guidance to teachers in order that they increase the pace and challenge in lessons."*

Significant progress has been made, and procedures are now very good. A wide range of strategies for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning have been introduced and include lesson observations, work sampling, tracking pupils' achievement against their personal targets, and effective use of short and long-term assessment data to provide challenging activities for pupils of differing abilities. At the time of the last inspection teaching was judged to be satisfactory, with 'poor teaching in a few lessons'. The concerns have been successfully addressed, and teaching is judged to be good overall.

58 **Key Issue 2**

*"Improve the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum by clearly defining and developing the role of the curriculum coordinators and more fully involving all teachers in the planning of the subjects".*

Progress has been good. Responsibilities for the different subjects of the curriculum and aspects of the school's work are shared among the teachers, so that each is responsible for a specific area. In reality, however, the teachers work well as a team, and help one another as needed. They are sampling work from high, average and low achieving pupils in core subject areas. All teachers and support assistants are jointly involved in lesson planning.

59 **Key Issue 3**

*"Raise standards in information and communication technology [ICT] through the systematic teaching of skills to the pupils and by providing appropriate in-service training for the staff".*

Progress has been good. Development of information and communication technology was initially slow because the teacher responsible for the subject had been absent from school for almost four terms. However, progress since then has been rapid. The newly appointed

coordinator has enthusiasm, knowledge and expertise in the subject. She has received support and advice from the Local Education Authority adviser for information and communication technology and put in place a new scheme of work and provided help and support for staff. A new computer suite has been built, and all pupils have weekly access to these new facilities.

- 60 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The coordinator has established clear systems for the identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs. Documentation is clearly recorded. All staff are well informed about pupils' individual needs. Support assistants are well managed and are effectively deployed. The support from the many outside agencies for pupils who have a special need is well managed within the school. The school fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs.
- 61 Planning for school improvement is very good, and reflects the aims of the school. There is a clear framework for development planning linked to the budget cycle. An effective system for monitoring progress towards development priorities culminates in an annual review and update of the plan. Governors have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching, and the standards attained by pupils of differing abilities and ages.
- 62 The school plans its expenditure effectively. The governors are well informed about finance, and principles of best value are well applied by comparing costs, and effective tendering arrangements, which ensure competition. They make good use of the detailed analysis of assessment results, including comparisons with other schools, to target their spending strategically. This is well matched to the long-term strategic financial plan to secure improvements in standards. The school has a budget surplus above the recommended level. However, this includes money saved as a result of the headteacher covering for the extended absence of colleagues.
- 63 The greatest challenge currently facing the school is the management of the falling school roles. The headteacher and governors have already given a great deal of thought to it, and have developed a very good long-term strategy. In previous terms, the governors wisely decided to use part of the contingency fund in their budget to maintain staffing levels. Money has also been put aside to maintain these levels for the next academic year. The way in which the curriculum has been planned, in a two-year cycle, also allows the school to manage its future size without having to re-write its schemes of work.
- 64 The school makes good use of its resources. Staff are effectively deployed and all available space is very well used. The premises are well maintained and are cleaned to a good standard. The school secretary is both hardworking and capable. The day to day administration of the school is efficient and effective, enabling teachers to concentrate on their work with the pupils.
- 65 There are very good numbers of qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to meet the school's needs. The match between teaching qualifications and subjects taught is good. Job descriptions clearly identify both general and specific responsibilities. The non-teaching staff make a very valuable contribution to the smooth running of the school, and support teachers' work effectively.
- 66 Resources are good, and the accommodation is very good. The provision of a new computer suite is having a positive effect on the standards that pupils are able to achieve. However, the room has inadequate ventilation and quickly becomes hot and airless, and does not provide a comfortable working environment. The school has responded quickly to these concerns, and has plans to install air conditioning equipment. The school is realistically assessing the quality of class-based computers and peripherals to ensure skills learned in the computer suite can be practised back in the classroom.
- 67 A wide range of indicators, including the quality of teaching, the improvement since the last inspections, the quality of leadership and the standards achieved, shows that the school is effective. Although unit costs are high, the school gives good value for money.

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

68 In order to improve further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

(1) Improve the rate of attendance.  
(paragraphs 18, 42, 50)

(2) Raise attainment in design and technology by:

- improving teachers' knowledge and skills,
  - ensuring the new scheme of work is effectively implemented, monitored and evaluated,
  - ensuring the coordinator has opportunities to monitor standards, and to use the information gathered to share good practice and provide support where needed.
- (paragraphs 2, 23, 29, 110, 111, 112)

(3) Improve the standard of pupils' handwriting by rigorously monitoring the handwriting policy to ensure consistency in all classes.  
(paragraphs 6, 89)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5.3	24.6	47.4	22.8	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 – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	260
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		32

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7	61

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	25

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.2
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.8
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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	52	32	84

<i>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</i>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	42	42	47
	Girls	23	27	26
	Total	65	69	73
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (75)	82 (89)	87 (69)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	42	45	47
	Girls	26	26	26
	Total	68	71	73
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (79)	85 (73)	87 (80)
	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	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	1
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	177
Any other minority ethnic group	1

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### Exclusions in the last school year

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

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



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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.9:1
Average class size	28.9

**Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	199.5

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26:1

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.7:1
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Financial information**

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	670188
Total expenditure	603749
Expenditure per pupil	2104
Balance brought forward from previous year	14990
Balance carried forward to next year	81429

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

328

Number of questionnaires returned

82

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	33	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	30	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	45	5	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	34	11	4	2
The teaching is good.	65	35		0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	38	11	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	21	5	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	24	1	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	60	34	5	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	44	48	7	1	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	38	4	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	32	18	5	18

## **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**

- 69 Provision for children under five is very good. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when it was judged to be good overall. The school provides a very good education for all the children, including those with special educational needs. Teachers and all support staff create a calm and purposeful working atmosphere in which children feel safe and secure.
- 70 At the time of the inspection there were 52 part-time children in the nursery, attending either the morning or afternoon session, and 79 children attending full-time in the reception classes. There are well-planned opportunities for parents and carers to attend induction meetings and to take part in the assessments of their children throughout the Foundation Stage. Parents are very welcome in the classrooms, and continue to bring their children into class and settle them to their activities at the beginning of the school day. A description of the activities is displayed each day in the nursery so that parents can continue with the activities at home.
- 71 The children enter the nursery aged three years with well below average attainment. This is particularly noticeable in communication, language and literacy, and personal and social development. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1, the majority of pupils are achieving their learning goals in communication language and literacy, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They are achieving above the learning goals in mathematical development, physical development, and personal and social skills. This is due to the very good quality teaching and the very good support provided by classroom assistants and the nursery nurse. Planning is very good, record keeping is excellent, expectations are very high, management of children is very good, and the interaction between children and adults is very effective. When a child's learning slows or causes concern, staff carry out detailed observations to identify the areas that are causing difficulties.

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

- 72 The children, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in their personal and social development, and most will exceed expectations by the time they are five years old. This very good progress is the result of the skilful teaching and intervention that develops children's confidence. Children are very enthusiastic about their learning and are keen to join in activities. All the adults provide very good role models and treat each other with courtesy and respect. The well-established routines and nurturing environment enables all the children to feel secure and confident. Children learn to be part of a smaller or larger group, and understand the need to take turns, say 'please' and 'thank-you' and give help when asked. They settle quickly to their tasks and move between activities purposefully, spending long periods of time working on their own or with a friend. Children behave very well and gain a good understanding of right and wrong. The management of the children appears effortless in both the nursery and reception classes.

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

- 73 On entry to the nursery many children have well below average language and literacy skills. They make rapid gains, learning to start and sustain conversations with each other and adults, and by the end of the Foundation Stage most children achieve the Early Learning Goals. They very quickly become good listeners, and enjoy stories and sharing books with adults. Nursery children are particularly enthusiastic to retell stories in their own words using puppets and felt board characters. It is a measure of the success of the literacy teaching that a child with a speech problem used language well with clear diction when retelling the story of "Goldilocks and the three bears." There are many helpful activities for supporting early reading skills. The children are introduced well to initial sounds, and are beginning to understand that letters also have names. Older children use their phonic knowledge well to decode unfamiliar words. Story sessions encourage children to become familiar with books. The lending library has a positive

impact on the children's learning, and many parents select books to share with their children at home.

- 74 The children's attempts at writing are valued and displayed along with their drawings in the nursery and reception. They use their knowledge of letter sounds to begin writing independently, and can spell common simple words correctly. Teachers develop children's word processing skills well. They introduce the idea of upper and lower case letters, and children learn about the layout of the computer's "QWERTY" keyboard.
- 75 The nursery and reception teachers successfully introduce parts of the National Literacy Strategy through well-designed practical activities and games. For example, children in the role-play area make notes about houses for sale when visiting the 'estate agents'. They read descriptions of houses and interact with people who wish to buy or sell their property. These opportunities develop descriptive language and vocabulary very well, as well as writing skills.

### **Mathematics**

- 76 Mathematics is taught very well and by the end of the reception year children exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. The children are provided with a wide range of counting experiences through songs, rhymes, stories and role-play. In the nursery, children learn about size and shape when retelling the story of "Goldilocks and the three bears". They sort socks on a washing line into pairs, and peg them out from the largest to the smallest. Reception teachers use parts of the National Numeracy Strategy well to develop mathematical ideas. For example, the children work at carefully planned activities that teach them number recognition, and are able to write numerals correctly to ten and beyond. In both nursery and reception classes many children understand "more than" and "less than" and are able to work out simple sums. Many children are ready to write simple calculations using symbols by the end of the Foundation Stage.
- 77 Teaching is very good. All children are continually assessed, and this knowledge is very well used to plan the next lesson or activity. This ensures that all children are working at an appropriate level for their ability, and they make very good progress. Teachers plan practical mathematical activities with clear learning objectives that link to all the areas of learning. This enables the children to use their knowledge and understanding in a range of contexts, and builds their confidence at using and working with numbers.

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

- 78 The children make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They talk with interest about experiences and events which have taken place in and out of school. They learn about the changes that have taken place in their own lives since they were babies, and study the changes that occur in the life of tadpoles. This gives them a good understanding of time passing. They learn that plants need sun and water to grow, and enthusiastically tend the reception garden.
- 79 The children use computers with confidence in both the nursery and reception classes. They use the mouse and the keyboard, understanding that clicking and moving the mouse will move a screen cursor. Their skills in using technical equipment are developing well, and they successfully use earphones and tape recorders to listen to stories.
- 80 Good use is made of the local environment and the school grounds, including the Millennium garden, the school pond and the playgrounds. The children learn about the needs of plants, and make their own seed catalogues, individually pricing each item for sale. Reception classes begin to learn about making plans of their classroom, using their good knowledge of shapes. They work well together and go on to use large and small construction kits to build imaginary towns and roadways. Most children achieve the Early Learning Goals for this area of learning.
- 81 Teaching is very good. Teachers provide a wide range of activities that broaden the children's view of the world. As a result the children make very good progress in understanding a wide

range of topics. They are given very good opportunities to benefit from first hand experience, to talk about what they see, to use new vocabulary in context, to ask questions and link ideas.

### **Physical development**

- 82 Physical development has a high priority in the school curriculum, particularly for the children in the Foundation Stage. As a result, the children make very good progress and achieve above the expected levels. The quality of teaching is very good, and the short 20 minute sessions planned for the reception classes are very well used. The children have full access to the hall for dance and drama and to use large apparatus for gymnastics. The nursery and reception children also have regular outdoor sessions where they can play with tricycles, use climbing equipment and play with sand and water.
- 83 Younger children show good confidence when using wheeled vehicles and steering them around circuits. They use their feet or the brakes to stop and start at will. When playing with balls, they show increasing control and a growing ability to coordinate their bodies when moving around the playing area. Older children have good awareness of the space around them, and can move around quickly without bumping into each other. Fine motor skills are well developed as the children use tools such as scissors, crayons and construction kits in their work.

### **Creative development**

- 84 The children make good progress in their creative development as a result of good teaching, and achieve the Early Learning Goals by the age of five. There is a very good balance between guided activities and opportunities for the children to freely explore. The children have below average attainment when they arrive in nursery but the planned range of experiences means they make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. The children enjoy role-play and their ideas are extended by the careful support and questioning of the adults. They play cooperatively and demonstrate their good social skills in this area. They play happily in a wide range of activities that often have a clear literacy or numeracy focus. Painting materials are always available and the children are taught to mix colours using red, yellow and blue. They have a good colour sense and use the water pots very sensibly, changing the water regularly and leaving the equipment ready for others to use. In music lessons, they quickly learn the words of new songs. They experiment with different musical instruments to make patterns with sounds, and are encouraged to join in with rhythmical body movements. A child playing in the water tray made up her own mermaid song about the water and sand in the "baking hot." Children make pictures and designs on the computer screen, and print them out for display on the wall. The nursery and reception classrooms have attractive displays that show the wide range of work that children do.
- 85 Speaking and listening are strong features in all creative activities. Children are given very many opportunities to be expressive and creative in many different and challenging activities. Staff are very clear about the value of this work, and are very knowledgeable about the needs of young children.

### **ENGLISH**

- 86 In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds, the pupils' standards in reading and writing were below the national average. Standards were below average in comparison with schools with pupils of similar backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who gained the higher levels in reading was in line with that found nationally and in similar schools, but because there was a significant proportion who only gained Level 1, this brought down the average National Curriculum points. In writing, the proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels was the same as that found nationally, but because there were too few who gained the highest level, Level 3, the standard overall was just below average. The school targeted reading and writing as priorities for development. As a result, this year's National Curriculum test results, as yet unconfirmed, indicate that pupils have reached standards in reading and writing that are in line with the national average, with a higher proportion of pupils gaining higher levels. This represents good progress and achievement since they entered school. In the tests last year, the boys achieved

comparatively more highly than the girls, which is against the national trend. However, in work seen during the inspection, there was no significant difference.

- 87 The standards of speaking and listening are above average. Pupils of all levels of attainment listen very well to the teacher and to each other. When the teacher is reading to them, they listen carefully and recall details from the text. Most pupils are articulate, speak clearly and in good English, whether it is recounting an experience or giving explanations. For instance, in Year 1, a pupil gave a clear explanation of the differences between the traditional story of 'Cinderella' and the one they had been reading. A pupil in Year 2 gave an interesting account of seeing the progress of a snail in his garden. In another lesson, they showed an increasingly wide vocabulary as they described bubbles as 'shimmering', 'hovering' and 'drifting'. Because a significant number of children enter the school with speech, language and communication difficulties, teachers have built into all of their lessons opportunities for developing language. Hence, in music, for instance, pupils are encouraged to listen carefully to a piece, then discuss the meaning of words which might describe it, such as 'menacing'. In a lesson on healthy eating, pupils are asked to describe a kiwi fruit. In drama and in physical education, pupils evaluate and make suggestions to improve each other's performances.
- 88 Standards of reading are average. Pupils are generally enthusiastic about reading, and they enjoy reading together during the literacy lesson as well as individually. Higher attaining pupils read independently. They read accurately and fluently and quite often with good expression. Average attaining pupils, while they understand well what they read, are more hesitant in their reading. However, when they make mistakes, they often correct themselves, and they use a combination of word recognition and sounding out when reading unfamiliar words. There are still a significant number of pupils experiencing some degree of difficulty who require much help, as they have not yet developed effective strategies for tackling new words. Generally, pupils of all levels of attainment have good book skills, in as much as they know the difference between fiction and non-fiction, and they know how to use the index and to skim pages for information. Their research skills are developing as they learn to formulate questions to find answers either on the Internet or in books. These skills are developed well in other subjects, too, such as history, where pupils find information about the Fire of London and other topics.
- 89 Standards in writing are broadly average. Higher attaining pupils write at length with an increasing degree of confidence and accuracy. They use a range of punctuation such as speech marks and apostrophes, and their sentence structure is quite complex. For instance, a pupil writing an amusing account of getting changed after swimming wrote: "I can never get my socks on properly, my hair drips all over me and I always drop something on the wet floor." Average attaining pupils' work is less accurate, since spelling and punctuation are not yet secure, although simple sentences are usually correctly punctuated. They write interesting stories, developing their descriptive writing; for example, one pupil wrote about a 'deep, dark, damp forest'. Lower attaining pupils write in simple sentences and are aware of the need for full stops and capital letters. The handwriting of most pupils is below what would be expected. Pupils do not always form their letters correctly, although they are correctly orientated. Many do not hold their pencils properly, and writing is rarely joined up. Literacy skills are developed well in other subjects, such as geography, where pupils, after carrying out a traffic survey, wrote various letters to the council and other bodies, including the local newspaper. In religious education, pupils are expected to write their responses independently. In information and communication technology attention is paid to spelling and punctuation when pupils use word processing.
- 90 The quality of teaching is good with some teaching of the highest order. Because pupils respond well to the effective teaching, learning is also good. Teachers plan their lessons well, with clear objectives, which they share with pupils at the beginning of the lesson. This gives the lessons focus, and pupils are able to see at the end of the lesson whether they have met the objectives, and consolidate what they have learned. A strength of the teaching is the skilful questioning which targets different pupils, thus ensuring that all pupils are involved and suitably challenged. For instance, when spelling words on the board, the teacher will ask pupils whom she knows have been learning that particular phoneme, or have learned how to use a certain punctuation mark. Teachers use every opportunity to extend pupils' language skills: they examine and discuss new words, they make links with other subjects, and they constantly remind pupils of what they have learned previously. Consequently, pupils not only acquire new

skills and knowledge, but they also practise and develop further what they have already learned. Teachers continually offer support and encouragement to pupils whilst they are working. As a result, pupils gain in confidence and self-esteem. Teachers understand very well how pupils learn, and they are skilled in motivating pupils and engaging their interest. For instance, when learning how to find information in a non-fiction book on snails, the pupils were delighted to be able to observe live snails, rather than just pictures, and talked animatedly about their own experiences of seeing snails in the garden. In another lesson, pupils were excited as the teacher blew bubbles for them, resulting in some good descriptive work.

- 91 Pupils behave well in lessons. They are interested in what they are doing and show very positive attitudes to their work, which makes an important contribution to their achievement. They are learning to work independently during the group work section of the lesson, and the relationships between pupils and their teachers are also good. The result is an ethos in lessons where pupils expect to work hard and teachers are able to encourage them to do their best.
- 92 After the last inspection, there was a decline in standards, but over the past three years, the school has made good progress in raising standards. The coordinator provides very good leadership to the staff, and the curriculum is well planned. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. The teachers understand their needs very well; consequently, they make good progress towards their targets.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 93 Pupils in Year 2 achieved below average standards for their ages in all aspects of mathematics in the year 2000. However, pupils achieving higher levels were in line with those nationally. The scores for 2001 are unconfirmed, but there has been a significant improvement in standards for all pupils in Year 2, showing the trend from 1999 as sharply upwards. Forty-seven per cent of pupils appear to have achieved the higher level. This is the result of the focus on lesson planning, assessment of pupils' needs and the system of setting targets for children from the nursery through to Year 2. All of this is combined with the highly committed team of staff who work very hard to do the best for their children. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support from classroom assistants and special support assistants, and also make very good progress over time. There are no marked differences between the performance of boys and girls.
- 94 As a result of good teaching and their good attitudes to learning, within a well-planned curriculum, pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 1. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 classes have a very good understanding of numbers. By the time they are seven years old they understand the value of the tens and units digits of numbers up to 100, can double numbers up to 30 and halve numbers such as 100, 90, and 70. Pupils are allowed to set their own mathematical challenges, and choose numbers such as 1010 and practice halving and doubling them. Most pupils understand that multiplication tables are a quick way of carrying out multiple additions. Skills in using money are developed in a similarly systematic way. Younger pupils learn to count and shop with coins, and by the time they are in Year 2 they have a good understanding of the value of coins and are able to correctly make amounts using a variety of different coins. Pupils are introduced to negative numbers, and understand that temperatures below freezing point are negative. Teachers are skilful at building on previous knowledge, and lead pupils to a good understanding of mathematical ideas. By the age of seven years, pupils are very good at recognising number patterns and applying these skills to solving problems. Two higher ability pupils used simple algebra well to solve problems. For example, they knew if you multiplied Paul's age by 2 and then added 5, the answer was thirty-five. They used this information to accurately calculate Paul's age. Simple data handling skills are well developed, enabling pupils to produce careful bar graphs about their favourite crisps. They enter information into data handling software and successfully produce bar charts and graphs.
- 95 The quality of teaching is good overall, with one lesson out of seven being excellent and one being judged very good. Two lessons were satisfactory. Teachers' planning is very thorough, providing well structured lessons. Pupils have sufficient time to practice new learning but quickly move on in their thinking because of teachers' skilful questioning and assessment. Teachers confidently change lesson plans according to pupils' needs and pupils make good

progress in lessons and very good progress over time. When teaching is excellent, no time is lost, and activities are carefully matched to individual needs. Also, there are excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their ideas independently. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 class investigating multiplication, pupils set their own challenges by choosing the numbers they wanted to work with. They made rapid progress, and by the end of the session were working at a higher level than might have been set by the teacher.

- 96 Assessment procedures are excellent and are used to target pupils very effectively. Pupils understand their own achievements and what they need to do next, and therefore all staff and pupils are working towards the same goals. Higher attaining pupils are well supported by the careful groupings in the classes, enabling them to work at their own level. Some Year 1 pupils work at the same level as Year 2 pupils in most classes. The monitoring of progress is also excellent. Individual progress is continually assessed, and this data is used to ensure that pupils are placed in correct groups, and within those groups work is fully matched to their individual needs. Three times a year, pupils and parents take part in a review of their work with their class teacher, looking at their previous targets, evaluating progress, and seeking ways to work together to achieve further improvements.
- 97 The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully adapted to meet the needs of young pupils in mixed age classes. Mental strategies may be taught separately from the main teaching activities to provide best use of time and support staff. Teachers emphasise the purpose of the mental warm up session, one teacher likening it to physical education for the brain. Pupils concentrate hard and are eager to answer quickly. Teachers use the full range of mathematical vocabulary and encourage pupils to use it in their answers. However, mathematics across the curriculum has not been clearly identified. Science, design technology and aspects of art and design have not been used to their full extent to support the pupils in using and applying mathematics in a range of situations.
- 98 The coordinator provides very good leadership and is fully supported in her work by a committed team of people. Changes to planning and assessments have been very effective in raising standards. The computer suite is an important resource in lesson plans. It is also used successfully to support pupils with special needs and a mathematics club at lunchtime. Improvement in mathematics since the previous inspection has been very good.

## **SCIENCE**

- 99 The results of the teacher assessment of pupils aged seven in 2000 showed that the number of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 was below the national average and below the attainment of pupils in similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level was close to the national average and to that of similar schools. The results of this year's teacher assessments, which have not yet been confirmed, are that the number of pupils attaining the expected level is in line with the average for last year. The number of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 is above that of last year's national average. This supports the inspection findings that attainment is in line with the national average. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.
- 100 Pupils in Year 1 make good progress as a result of good quality teaching. Although the curriculum is differentiated to meet their needs they are encouraged by seeing the achievements of the older pupils, and by being exposed to the more demanding curriculum. Pupils in Year 2 also make good progress. They attain the level expected for their age in being able to name the external parts of their bodies and know what they need to stay healthy. Pupils' understanding of materials is good. Most pupils can name a range of materials such as plastic and wood, and understand the link between the properties of these materials and their different uses. One pupil explained that 'a bicycle is made of metal because metal is strong'; while another lower attaining pupil believed that a wall is made of bricks because 'bricks are wrinkly and bumpy'. Most pupils know that the shape of materials can be changed by pushing, pulling or twisting them. In the aspect of physical sciences pupils are generally less secure, although higher attaining pupils still achieve above the expected level for their age. Most pupils can name ways in which sounds can be made, and higher attainers know that sound gets fainter as they move away from its source. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by



classroom assistants, who ensure that they are able to access the full curriculum. They also make good progress.

- 101 In the area of scientific enquiry, pupils make satisfactory progress and attain the expected standard for their age. Pupils experience a range of scientific investigations, and teachers clearly demonstrate how to set up a fair test and how to ensure that it is fair. Pupils test a range of materials to see if they are waterproof, design experiments to see which conditions make a nail rust, and what makes an ice cube melt fastest. Although teachers provide a good range of practical experiments, opportunities for pupils to work independently and handle resources for themselves are satisfactory.
- 102 The science coordinator has recently introduced a new scheme of work. She is planning to monitor its implementation to ensure consistency in challenge and pace across all classes.
- 103 Pupils' attitudes to science are generally good, and they particularly enjoy being involved in practical work. This was seen when they watched the teacher leading an investigation into how cars moved down a ramp. Despite windy weather conditions outside the classroom, pupils retained a high level of concentration and remained fully involved in the activity.
- 104 Teaching is good, with three out of four lessons being good. In the good lessons, the teachers plan activities that allow pupils opportunities to meet the learning objectives. Time is well used and pupils are not left too long pursuing an activity that has achieved its aims. In these lessons teachers clearly teach pupils how to conduct an investigation fairly and are very clear about their expectations of pupils. For example, pupils in Year 2 were comparing how far toy cars could travel down a slope. The teacher ensured the experiments were fair, and that conclusions were based on a careful scrutiny of the experimental evidence. In a single lesson that was judged to be satisfactory, there were missed opportunities to develop the learning that had taken place in the introductory session. Assessment is used well to monitor pupils' progress and to identify areas of concern. Teachers use this information to plan the next stages of learning, and to develop the curriculum.
- 105 The resources for the subject are good and are used well. Information and communication technology is used to word process experimental results, to find out about space and the planets, and to create simple databases about pupils' height as part of a science project about themselves. Opportunities to develop both literacy and numeracy are used well in science. For example, pupils' mathematical skills of measuring help them record distances accurately, and recording tasks enable pupils to practise their writing skills.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

- 106 The attainment of seven year olds is in line with national expectations. They have worked three-dimensionally on sculptures, and used a range of materials to make collages. Pupils achieve well in observational drawing, adding detail to their work. They draw small working parts of spinning wheels and veins on leaves. They have a strong colour sense and know just how much blue to add to yellow when making green, and how to lighten or darken the paint. These two aspects are emphasised in the Foundation Stage, and pupils build steadily on these skills until they reach seven years of age. They make satisfactory progress, including those pupils with special needs.
- 107 The scheme of work provides good support for teachers' planning which is effective in providing each class with similar activities. The quality of teaching of the two lessons seen during the inspection was satisfactory. Teachers generally have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the subject and are able to develop the pupils' understanding of texture, and colour in their work. Teachers plan effectively and have good expectations of their pupils. The quality of the displays echoes these expectations, as work is carefully mounted and displayed.
- 108 Pupils are enthusiastic about art and talk confidently about their study of Van Gogh's paintings and drawings. They identify colours and shapes that he used and are knowledgeable about his life. Literacy skills are also developed well. For example, pupils write sensitively about Van

Gogh's painting of 'Restaurants in a Street', and vividly describe the smells of "wine, food and rice".

109 Leadership of the subject is good. By collecting together work for displays, the coordinator is able to monitor the pupils' work throughout the school and the content of the curriculum. Interesting pictures and objects enhance the pupils' work in colourful displays. These also add further value to the very pleasant environment created around the school.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

110 By the time pupils reach the age of seven, standards in design and technology are below those expected nationally. This represents a decline in standards reported at the time of the previous inspection. No teaching was observed during the inspection, so it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, an examination of planning, and discussions with teachers and pupils.

111 Design and technology has occupied a less prominent position in the curriculum during the last two years, as teachers have worked successfully to reverse the decline in standards in English and mathematics. Evidence from the inspection shows that in common with most schools, the curriculum was 'slimmed down', but a reasonable balance between the different elements of the subjects was retained. However, pupils did not develop their skills in planning, making, evaluating and learning about the properties of different materials to sufficient depth at Key Stage 1. The school has addressed these concerns by adopting a satisfactory new scheme of work, but this has yet to be consistently implemented across the school. Consequently, it has yet to make a significant impact on the standards that pupils are achieving by the age of seven years.

112 At Key Stage 1, scrutiny indicates that there is some confusion in teachers' minds between skills in art and design and those of design and technology. Also, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop designing and making skills, including the process of improving designs by modification when limitations are identified in the original plans. During the inspection pupils were observed making good quality Mexican masks to support their work in geography and history. However, these activities were developing pupils' artistic skills well, rather than technology skills to do with planning and modification. There were few examples of pupils evaluating their own design and technology models or those of others.

113 Resources for design and technology are good. A new coordinator has very recently been appointed who has a very good understanding of the strengths and weakness within the subject. She now needs time to monitor standards and to use the information gathered to share good practice and provide support where needed.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

114 The standards in geography are in line with what would be expected of children of this age. Teachers make good use of the locality to develop and extend pupils' skills in geography. By the age of seven, pupils acquire a good knowledge of Louth and the surrounding area. They compare life in Louth with a village in Mexico, identifying those features that are similar and those that are different. Their skills of collecting and processing information are developing well. For instance, they carried out a traffic survey in a street in Louth, used a tally sheet to note the different types of vehicle, and then displayed their findings on a bar chart. Not only did they identify the problems in the street, such as "The houses have no driveways, so they have to park in the street", but they also suggested improvements, such as using 'sleeping policemen'. These results were put to various public bodies, with some positive results. Pupils make a satisfactory start to developing an understanding of plans and maps. They start in Year 1 by making plans of the classroom and the school, and progress through various stages, including identifying Louth on a map of England and using a globe to find Mexico.

115 Pupils enjoy learning about other places, and they have very positive attitudes to their work. They enjoy the practical activities related to mapping and using the Internet to find information about Mexico. They show a great interest in photographs of Louth and excitement as they

recognise various buildings. Pupils with special educational needs play a full part in lessons, and are keen to show what they know. They make good progress.

116 The teaching of geography is good. Lessons are well planned and build on previous work so that pupils are always reminded of what has gone before. Teachers explain ideas clearly and use questions skilfully to involve the whole class in learning. Fieldwork plays an important part in the development of pupils' geographical understanding and teachers make carefully structured use of the locality, which makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Good use is made of information and communication technology to find information to compare and contrast a non-European country like Mexico with their own. For example, pupils in Year 1 and 2 used an Internet search engine to find out facts about Mexico and Aztec masks. They were able to successfully navigate around the web sites using by selecting appropriate icons, and print out the information.

117 The coordinator is providing clear direction for improving the subject. This includes assessing pupils' achievements after each unit and collecting work in a portfolio for teachers to analyse. Since the last inspection, the coordinator has revised the scheme of work in line with national recommendations, and it now provides teachers with valuable guidance. As yet, though, she has been unable to monitor the quality of teaching in the subject.

## **HISTORY**

118 There was no history taught during the inspection week. Evidence was gained from discussions with staff and pupils, and a scrutiny of pupils' past work and teachers' planning. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching.

119 Standards are in line with those expected of seven year olds. Pupils are able to show that they have acquired a good knowledge of the past and are well aware of the differences between past and present. In Year 1, they are beginning to understand about the passage of time and can compare old and new, for instance when looking at old and new toys. They understand about past events in their own and their families' lives, and can use terms such as 'last week', 'last year' and 'a long time ago'.

120 The pupils in Year 2 understand that Remembrance Day has its origins in the past, and people's lives are still touched by it today. They formulate appropriate questions to seek answers to, using a variety of sources to gather information, as, for example, when they look at old pictures of Louth to determine how it has changed.

121 The school has a good scheme of work, which ensures that pupils' learning is systematically built upon previous work. Historical events are linked to local present day incidents where possible, for instance, the Fire of London is compared with the fire of Trinity Church in 1991. Assessment is built into the units so that it is clear what the pupils have achieved. Resources are good, and give pupils the opportunity to handle real artefacts in the developing museum that the school is housing.

122 The coordinator provides good leadership. She has revised the scheme of work in line with national recommendations, and it now provides teachers with valuable guidance.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

123 Information and communication technology is developing well in the school. Pupils make good progress, and attainment is in line with national expectations by the age of seven. This is an improvement on the standards reported at the time of the previous inspection.

124 Improvement has been made as a result of:

- Better allocation of time to the subject;
- A well constructed scheme of work supporting learning in many areas of the curriculum;
- Well-planned lessons;
- Building a computer suite with sufficient computers and software of good quality;

- The contributions of a well-informed and hard-working coordinator.
- 125 Information and communication technology is being effectively integrated into other curriculum areas. Pupils have lessons in basic information technology skills, after which they learn to use these skills to support work in other subjects. The success of this strategy owes much to the leadership and management of information and communication technology, which is good. At the time of the last inspection the range of work was described as 'limited', pupils had a 'limited knowledge' of how to use a computer, and progress was unsatisfactory. The range of work is now good, pupils are confidently using computers to support their schoolwork, and they are making good progress. Cabling for direct access to the Internet has very recently been completed, and pupils are using this effectively to search for information.
- 126 Pupils control the mouse pointer with ease, know how to retrieve and save work successfully, and use information and communication technology for a range of purposes. In English, pupils achieve good standards in communicating and handling information through effective application of word processing skills. For example, as part of a shared writing activity, pupils in a Year 1/2 class use word processing packages to retell the story of Cinderella after a trip to the cinema. They are familiar with the keyboard layout and have learned how to use the backspace, arrow and shift keys correctly. The oldest Year 2 pupils continue to develop their word processing skills and know how to change the size of fonts, how to alter the quality of text by selecting bold, and how to drag text to new positions on the screen. Higher attaining pupils redraft their written work on screen, using the capital keys and full stops, and print the work without help from the teacher.
- 127 In mathematics, pupils use a wide range of software to support most areas of their mathematical work, including shape, counting, data handling, matching and recognising numerals. For example, older pupils create databases to display information about themselves as part of a science project. They print out bar charts and use them to compare their heights in decimetres. Pupils realise that graphs and tables are a quick and effective way to display information. The youngest pupils successfully enter data to control a floor robot, and by Year 2, are able to program a device to follow instructions. They make the robot move set distances and back again, and enter their instructions using agreed notation.
- 128 The school is also providing pupils with many challenging opportunities to use computers creatively and imaginatively. For example, the school is about to develop its own website where pupils will be able to display examples of their own work alongside information about the school.
- 129 Pupils' response to using information and communication technology is very good. They work cooperatively in pairs and can be trusted to use computers and printers sensibly. They are enthusiastic and work well together, settle quickly to their tasks, and are interested in their assignments. They are spontaneous in their support of each other, and competent users help those less confident to improve their skills.
- 130 Pupils with special educational needs work alongside other pupils, are very well supported and make good progress in relation to their previous attainment.
- 131 The quality of teaching is good, with four out of five lessons being good or better. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This is a significant improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when teaching of information and communication technology was identified as a weakness. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of information technology and how it enhances their subject, and their planning is good. Learning is successfully extended in the majority of other National Curriculum subjects. For example, in geography, pupils use an Internet search engine to find out facts about Mexico and Aztec masks. They are able to explore a range of websites, navigate using icons, and print out information and pictures. In art and design, pupils experiment with a graphics and a painting program to make abstract designs. They carefully use the 'paintbrush' and 'drawing' tools to make their designs, and use the 'fill' tool to flood areas with colours selected from a palette. Older pupils use clip art images effectively to produce fantasy pictures. Teachers use technical language appropriately, which supports the development of pupils' understanding. Pupils are very well managed, and their own enthusiasm is an important factor contributing to the good progress they make.

- 132 Since the previous inspection, the coordination of information and communication technology has been strengthened, with the result that development has been coherent and effective. The new coordinator is very enthusiastic about the subject, and is working hard at developing the new computer suite, and providing help and advice to teachers. She has introduced the Qualification and Curriculum Authority guidelines, and is acutely aware of the need for appropriate software and training to support developments within the subject. The recent addition of a new computer suite is also having a positive effect on the quality of learning, and the rate at which pupils make progress.
- 133 Assessment is satisfactory overall. Teachers use continuous assessment to support pupils' learning and plan subsequent work for them. A whole school system for tracking progress is being introduced. Resources are generally of good quality, and are sufficient in range and number to meet the needs of the curriculum.

## **MUSIC**

- 134 Standards in music are in line with those expected for pupils aged seven, and are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. Standards of singing are good. Pupils of all ages enjoy singing, and they do so confidently both in assemblies and in the classroom. They sing in tune, rhythmically, and quickly learn new songs. A group of Year 1 pupils were particularly impressive when singing in the round, which they sustained very well. The recorder group also play very well for pupils of this age.
- 135 Performing and composing skills are developing satisfactorily. Pupils use a range of tuned and untuned instruments to compose music. They know, for instance, the names of the different instruments and the sounds they make. They use this knowledge well to choose the appropriate instrument to match the words in a story, for example when building a 'musical house' or a 'monster in the woods'. They show a good degree of control in using instruments, making the sounds louder than softer whilst keeping up a steady rhythm. They understand how these sounds can be represented on a simple graphic score. Their knowledge of musical terms is good, and they understand 'dynamics', 'tempo' and 'pitch' and can demonstrate each using a musical instrument.
- 136 The teaching of music is good. Three out of four lessons were good or better. Teachers' subject knowledge and expertise is good, and those who are not specialist music teachers are supported by a helpful scheme of work. Teachers often start the lessons with a singing game, such as "Pass the Beater", which pupils enjoy. This engages the interest of pupils and, at the same time, revises and practises what they have already learned. Teachers encourage pupils to listen carefully to each other's contributions and give many opportunities for them to discuss and evaluate their compositions. This not only develops their appreciation of music, but also their speaking and listening skills.
- 137 Pupils respond very well to music. They enjoy singing and playing instruments, and they make good progress as they practise and refine their skills in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs play a full part in lessons and they, too, make good progress. Pupils show appropriate respect for instruments, and they concentrate and listen well to the teacher and to each other. Behaviour is always good. Their interest in music is encouraged through lunchtime clubs and participation in several concerts throughout the year. The coordinator provides good leadership, and is providing clear direction for improving the subject further.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 138 Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations, and are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. The school's decision that each class exercises every day ensures that pupils remain fit and able to sustain activity for good periods of time. They have many opportunities to experiment on apparatus and are developing their balancing and control skills well.

- 139 The quality of teaching is good in two out of three lessons. Teachers' planning is very good. Pupils' good behaviour, together with their very good skills in listening, enables lessons to progress at a good pace and ensures the daily 20 minute sessions are well used. In gymnastics, pupils aged seven show a good awareness of safety when performing, and learn how to stack away equipment quickly and carefully. The majority of pupils show a satisfactory ability to make controlled balances and movements on and off apparatus. When they hold a balance either on the equipment or on dismounting, they pay particular attention to features such as style and poise. For example, teachers place good emphasis on the correct way to use gymnastics apparatus, and make clear their expectations of the way in which older pupils are to control their movements. Pupils respond by concentrating hard as they practise moving, jumping, and maintaining their balance. In games, pupils learn to throw and catch with increasing accuracy, and good use is made of the large indoor space to develop their ball skills.
- 140 Physical education consultants have been used effectively to develop the curriculum, and the school has appropriate plans to develop the dance element. The curriculum includes dance, games and gymnastics, and the Year 2 pupils have the opportunity to go swimming once a week. Standards in swimming are good. By the end of Year 2, the majority can swim five metres and some can successfully manage ten metres. Pupils with special needs are encouraged to take full part in all lessons, and receive good additional support from classroom assistants when it is appropriate.
- 141 The coordinator provides good leadership. Apparatus is of good quality and is well organised. The accommodation is very good since it provides sufficient space to support a full range of both indoor and outdoor physical activities. Teachers observe pupils' progress regularly and use them as good examples in lessons to encourage other pupils. They keep their own detailed notes of pupils' progress and attainment.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

- 142 By the time they reach the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards in religious education that are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is similar to the findings at the time of the previous inspection.
- 143 Pupils make good progress in learning about a range of different religions, including Christianity. Teachers plan their lessons well, and pupils have good opportunities to think about the nature of God and the significance of religious festivals and artefacts. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 had recently visited the local Methodist Church and display a good understanding of the significance of the cross, lectern and the font. In other lessons, pupils considered what God was like, recalled stories from both testaments of the Bible and remembered facts about the Nativity and Joseph. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 learn about Jewish festivals and customs and know, for example, that Jews worship in a Synagogue. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by classroom assistants and also make good progress.
- 144 Pupils enjoy religious education lessons. They cooperate well and make confident contributions to discussions.
- 145 A new coordinator has been appointed since the previous inspection. She has maintained the good quality curriculum provision, and has successfully supported the introduction of the new locally agreed syllabus.
- 146 The teaching of religious education is good. Two out of three lessons were good or better. Teachers prepare well for lessons, and use resources effectively to support learning activities. In one very good lesson, the teacher began by asking the pupils about the nature of God. She brought in artists' impressions of God, pieces of music composed to represent God, and poems that gave the poet's view of God. These resources successfully stimulated the pupils into thinking about their own ideas, impressions, and interpretations. Teachers are careful not to impose their own beliefs, but sensitively develop pupils' own viewpoints, which are shared with the class. Teachers encourage pupils' use of language by insisting upon correct terminology for religious artefacts at all times. Literacy is developed further when pupils are asked to write

about their visit to the Church or to describe the artefacts they have seen. Assessment is carried out at the end of each module of work. Teachers use this information to develop the curriculum and to give parents a clear idea of how well their children are performing.

- 147 Teachers plan carefully to give pupils opportunities to explore their own feelings, and pupils gain a good understanding of the significance of religion in other people's lives. For example, they study a good range of festivals from other religions, such as Diwali in Hinduism, and explore Judaism in more depth. The school uses local resources very well. Pupils visit the Methodist Church and the Parish Church, and have taken part in the Christingle service. Unfortunately, there are few religious buildings linked with other faiths within a reasonable travelling distance of the school. However, the school provides a good range of pictures, photographs and artefacts to enable pupils to understand the importance of these special places in other people's lives.