

INSPECTION REPORT

BRIGHTSIDE NURSERY AND INFANT SCHOOL

Sheffield

LEA area: Sheffield

Unique reference number: 106987

Headteacher: Mrs. Molly Drabble

Reporting inspector: Mrs. Kath Wallace

1151

Dates of inspection: 7 – 10 February 2000

Inspection number: 192687

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Jenkin Road Brightside Sheffield
Postcode:	S9 1AS
Telephone number:	0114 244 1826
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. Karen French
Date of previous inspection:	24 February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs Kath Wallace	Registered inspector	Under-fives	Characteristics
		English as an additional language	Effectiveness
		Science	Improvement
		Information Technology	Results and achievements
		Art	Teaching
			Learning and progress
			Leadership and management
			Role of governors
			Monitoring and evaluation
			Strategic use of resources
			Value for money
			Staffing
Mrs. Linda Buller	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development
			Welfare and safety
			Links with parents
			Impact of links with parents
			Accommodation
			Learning resources
Mr. Dave Hardman	Team inspector	Special Educational Needs	Quality and range of opportunities
		English	Curriculum
		Religious Education	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
		Music	
Mr. John Hicks	Team inspector	Equal Opportunities	Assessment and monitoring progress
		Mathematics	Monitoring personal development and attendance.
		Design and Technology	
		Geography	
		History	

		Physical Education	
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Inspection Quality Division

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

1. Brightside Nursery and Infant School is an above average size infant school with a large nursery class situated in Brightside on the eastern edge of Sheffield. There are 200 pupils on the roll of the school and the Nursery caters for 80 children on a part-time basis and 25 older children attend for the full day. The school population is predominantly white although about ten per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority groups, primarily Afro Caribbean or Pakistani. Sixteen pupils are from homes where English is not the first language. Fifty-three pupils are entitled to free school meals; this is above the national average. The school has identified 44 pupils in the school and 15 in the nursery with special educational needs. Three children have a statement of special educational needs and a further 5 require the support of outside agencies. Attainment on entry to the nursery class is well below average in language skills, below average in mathematical skills and other areas of learning.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

2. Brightside Nursery and Infant School is an effective school that has managed to maintain and improve standards in numeracy and literacy despite a significant number of imposed changes that have been implemented by the school. The quality of teaching is good, the leadership and management of the school are good and good use is made of the funds. Pupils enjoy their lessons and make good progress. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils make good progress in acquiring the basic skills of literacy and numeracy.
- Relationships between all staff, pupils and parents are very good.
- Almost all teachers are implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies well.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to work are good.
- The leadership and management of the school are good.
- The provision made for pupils' personal and social development is good and cultural development is very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress.
- Finances are managed very well to ensure best value for money.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment in writing are below the national average
- Information Technology resources are inadequate to teach the subject.
- Procedures for assessing and recording progress are weak and therefore the targets set for future learning are not clear to teachers, pupils or their parents.
- Inconsistencies in the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies.
- Levels of attendance are well below the national average.
- Persistent lateness of some pupils disturbs the beginning of the school day and this has negative impact on standards.
- The role of the governors in the overall management of the school.
- The time it takes to address concerns raised about health and safety issues.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

3. The school was last inspected in February 1997. Standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science have all improved year-on-year since 1996. In mathematics this rise in standards brings standards of attainment up to broadly in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2). During the inspection reading levels were also judged to be broadly in line with national expectations but writing is still below that level. The quality of teaching is good overall. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. There is still a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching in the provision for children under five and in Key Stage I. Standards in information technology have dropped since the previous inspection. Equipment is being changed but at present it is not good enough to give pupils the experiences they need. The school has developed a good range of opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills but knows that it needs to continue to develop this further. Behaviour is now judged to be good rather than satisfactory. The senior management team and subject leaders have developed a programme for monitoring and evaluating new initiatives. Governors are beginning to take some responsibility for monitoring the quality of education provided but this is a very recent innovation. Attendance and punctuality continue to be a concern for the school and little progress has been made to improve them. The local area has recently been declared an Education Action Zone and the school is involved in projects to improve attendance across the local area. It is too early to measure any improvement.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

4. Standards of attainment have risen each year in reading and mathematics. In mathematics in 1999 standards were broadly in line with the national average and were well above average when compared with similar schools. Standards in writing have not improved. Although the school's standards were below the national average in reading and writing they are comparable to similar schools. The findings of the inspection are that in mathematics and reading pupils are attaining levels expected for their age but in writing standards are still below the levels expected. This indicates that the improvement in reading has been sustained but that writing continues to be an area for further development. The school is aware of this and has set itself appropriate targets for improvement. Teacher assessments in science show that standards in science are improving year-on-year. They were well below the national average but comparable with similar schools. The inspection findings are that standards are higher than this but still below the national average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are interested in lessons and keen to learn. A few pupils are regularly late and this does disturb the beginning of lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are generally caring of one another. There are isolated incidences of poor behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils respect staff and one another and take care of school property. The relationships between staff and pupils are very good.
Attendance	Attendance levels are well below the national average for primary schools and unauthorised absences are well above average.

5. Pupils and staff have very good relationships which create a good atmosphere for learning. Attendance and punctuality continues to be a concern for the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

6. The quality of teaching is good overall. In 95 per cent of lessons it is satisfactory or better. Of the lessons seen during the inspection 25 per cent were judged to be very good and 45 per cent were judged to be good. Teaching in the nursery is satisfactory overall. There is some good and very good teaching and also teaching that is unsatisfactory. When teaching is very good, the teacher establishes good relationships with the children and develops their interest in books by very skilful story telling. Unsatisfactory lessons are caused, in part, because the nursery staff have not planned carefully enough for the introduction of full-time places in the nursery. As a result children become tired and lose interest in the activities planned for them. Teaching in reception and Key Stage 1 is generally good in English and mathematics where the majority of teachers are implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies effectively. When teaching is poor in Year 1, the teacher's knowledge of the Literacy Strategy is weak, strategies for dealing with misbehaviour are ineffective and therefore pupils' learning is disrupted. Science and religious education are generally taught well but information technology is not taught often enough for pupils to learn the skills they need. In the remainder of the curriculum seen teaching was generally good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	With the exception of information technology the curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and planned effectively.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers know their pupils well and therefore quickly identify those children that need additional support. Targets set for future learning and pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Teachers are very sensitive to the needs of pupils who are learning English and give them strategies to learn new vocabulary. These pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good and very good in relation to cultural development. Pupils are taught to care for one another and property, respect the views and values held by others and take pride in their own cultural traditions. They are encouraged to reflect on joys, sorrows and take pleasure in their achievements.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Overall, the school takes good care of its pupils. However, there are a number of health and safety issues that have been identified but not dealt with quickly enough.

7. The curriculum provided for children under five is satisfactory overall. In the reception classes the lack of an outdoor play area and poor access to water in one classroom restricts an otherwise good curriculum. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in reception and Key Stage 1. The information technology curriculum is unsatisfactory as the school is replacing outdated and inadequate equipment and teachers learn to use new equipment. In science and the remaining subjects of the National Curriculum, what is provided is satisfactory. The school cares for pupils well on a day-to-day basis and has good procedures for dealing with incidences of mis-behaviour or bullying. Delays in dealing with health and safety issues are concerns shared by the staff, parents and governors.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The head teacher and senior staff provide a strong educational direction for all the work of the school. The aims and values of the school are evident in all aspects of school life. There is a shared commitment to improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are just beginning to undertake a more active role in shaping the direction of the school but are over dependant upon the head teacher to do so.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has good procedures for monitoring and evaluating the success of new initiatives.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Very good housekeeping supports educational priorities. Staff are deployed well and learning resources are sufficient, accessible and well cared for.

8. There are sufficient teachers with a good range of experience and qualifications to teach the number of pupils in the school. Learning resources, with the exception of information technology, are sufficient to teach the curriculum. The school building is spacious but there are on-going concerns about health and safety issues, no facilities for secure outside play in the reception classes and one reception class has poor access to water as the sinks are too high for the children to reach. The nursery area is in need of renovation to provide better toilet facilities and areas where quiet learning can take place. The school already has plans to proceed with this when funds become available. Good leadership and management have enabled the school to improve standards of attainment during a period of intense change. Financial controls are good, educational priorities are clear and the school is meticulous about ensuring best value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The standards attained by pupils. • The good progress made by their children. • The school is very approachable and deals with any concerns raised well. • Behaviour is good. • Children like attending school. • Nursery parents are given guidance on what to help children with at home. • The school spends money wisely. • Pupils are taken on a range of visits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funds that prevent the school from doing necessary improvements. • Not enough guidance is given on what homework should be expected in each year group. • Progress reports provided for parents do not give a realistic analysis of what their children do or need to learn. • More information about what is being taught in each term.

9. The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed by parents. The school is making good progress in raising standards of attainment and has good relationships with parents. The school has recently changed the style of its reports to parents and they do not provide parents with the detail that they need to know in order to support their children's learning at home. Not enough information is provided on the content of each term's work or homework requirements. The inspection team raised a number of long-standing health and safety issues with governors and shares the concern raised by parents and governors about the delays in completing necessary building repairs and improvements.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

10. At the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2) the standards attained in National Curriculum Tests in 1999 in reading and writing were below the national average but were comparable with the average for similar schools. In mathematics the standards attained were broadly in line with the national average and well above average when compared with similar schools. Assessments made by teachers in science show that pupils attain below the national average but are broadly in line with similar schools. In reading and mathematics national tests the trend over time is of improved standards. This is not apparent in writing.

11. The findings of the inspection generally confirm this view of standards except in reading. The introduction of the Literacy Hour, improved resources and the active involvement of parents have raised standards in reading and standards are now broadly in line with the national expectation.

12. When children are admitted into the nursery standards of attainment are within the normal range but well below the expected levels for their age in language and literacy skills and slightly higher in mathematics. Progress in all stages of the school is good and very good in the development of reading. Although standards are still often below the national average pupils achieve well in relation to their prior levels of attainment. The school is aware of the need to ensure that more pupils reach the higher levels in writing and to teach science more systematically. A revised science curriculum has just been introduced and looking at ways to provide more opportunities for extended writing to enable more pupils to attain higher levels is rightly the main thrust of the development plan. The focus on reading is already reflected in higher standards.

13. In information technology standards of achievement are low in all classes and they remain so at the end of the key stage. This is due to inadequate resources for the subject and this is also a major feature in the school development plan for this year. In the remaining subjects of the curriculum pupils attain the standards expected for them and achieve higher standards in physical education and observational drawing in art.

14. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls although boys used to achieve lower standards in reading. The school successfully targeted boys in the drive for higher standards. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language all achieve well in relation to their previous attainment. Lower attaining and average pupils also make good progress. Higher attaining pupils make satisfactory progress overall but it is these groups of pupils that will raise the overall standards by achieving at a higher level in writing and science. Poor attendance and punctuality do have an impact on the standards achieved by those pupils concerned. Persistent lateness also has a negative impact on standards as it disturbs the beginning of the school day.

15. The school has made good progress in raising standards since the previous inspection and has the capacity to improve further.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils' attitudes to school are good. Parents attending the parents' meeting and 99 per cent of parents who returned the parent questionnaire consider that their children like school. This contributes to positive attitudes to learning and to the progress made. Attitudes of children under-five are good overall and always at least satisfactory. They persevere with practical tasks and maintain concentration for increasingly longer periods of time, for example during story time.

17. In Key Stage 1 pupils' attitudes to work are good overall. In the main they listen attentively to their teachers and are keen to contribute to group discussion. They respond well when teaching is good and tasks are well matched to their attainment. Pupils respond particularly well when teachers share with them what it is they are required to learn. Pupils' attitudes were judged to be poor in only one

lesson. The tasks set were not sufficiently challenging or interesting, the pace of the lesson was slow and discipline in the class was weak. As a result little progress was made.

18. Overall pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good. In almost all lessons pupils behave well, are polite to each other and adults and take great care of resources provided. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson when investigating the forces needed to produce movement in a variety of toys, pupils were careful not to damage them. On the one occasion in Year 1 when behaviour was poor the teacher did not effectively establish order, pupils were easily distracted and did not work well together. Pupils are in the main sociable and friendly at playtimes and lunchtime, playing happily in mixed age, race and gender groups. There was no evidence during the inspection of bullying, racism or oppressive behaviour. There have been no exclusions from school.

19. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. This creates an ethos of caring and mutual respect where pupils feel happy and valued and strive to meet the standards expected by their teachers. This has a positive impact on the progress made. Relationships between pupils are in the main satisfactory, they share resources when required to do so and understand the need to listen to one another's points of view. For example, in a Year 1 physical education lesson pupils evaluated the performance of others stating, "*I like that jump because it was high*". This enabled the teacher to use the high performance of others to demonstrate the standard required.

20. Pupils' personal development is good. Through a programme of well-planned personal and social education lessons pupils are beginning to understand the effect of their actions on others. For example, in Year 1 they consider what it is that makes people happy or sad and how their actions can influence this. Through assembly themes and religious education lessons pupils learn to understand and respect the different values and beliefs of people from a variety of faiths and cultural backgrounds. All pupils take appropriate responsibility for getting out materials they need in lessons and contribute to the smooth running of the school.

21. Attendance levels are well below the national average and no improvements have been made since the time of the previous inspection. The school attributes these absences to a number of pupils who take extensive periods of holiday in term time to visit extended families abroad and young children who suffer from the normal childhood illnesses. Inspection evidence supports this view. Unauthorised absence is above the national average. Although procedures are in place to follow up unreported absence, these are not always followed systematically. The present system for recording attendance meets statutory requirements, however it does not give the school a clear view of the percentage attendance in each class each week or an overview of attendance across the school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

22. The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved since the previous inspection. Most teachers are very competent when teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills. They carefully follow the strategies adopted for teaching them either in designated lessons or in other areas of the curriculum. In one class in Year 1 the teacher has not fully understood the principles underpinning these initiatives. In all of the other subjects seen during the inspection, except information technology, teaching was judged to be good and therefore pupils achieve high standards. Information technology is not taught well as either the equipment in the classroom is old and out-dated or it is so new that teachers are not yet sufficiently knowledgeable to use it effectively. Pupils do not have sufficient access to reliable equipment to build up skills appropriately.

23. In the nursery the quality of teaching is satisfactory but ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. When teaching is very good even these very young children are able to sit and listen to a story with rapt attention because the teacher has their full attention. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, when planning the teacher does not take account of the need to provide a different range of activities for children as they tire. The introduction of full-time places contributes to this situation as there have been no changes in the organisation to accommodate them. In the reception classes much of the teaching is directed at developing the early skills of reading, writing and number through all of the areas of learning. Teaching is consistently good and at times very good. Parents of these children work well with the school to develop reading competency and as a result pupils are keen to learn and make very good progress with

their reading to achieve high standards. This is also the case for pupils with special educational needs or those who speak English as an additional language. Good teaching of writing and mathematics leads to good progress being made. Parents are not so involved in helping with these skills.

24. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is also good, ranging from a number of lessons where teaching is very good, to a small proportion where it is unsatisfactory. Teachers generally have a good understanding of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies that have been adopted by the school. Where this is not the case in one class in Year 1, teaching is less strong and becomes poor when the teacher does not deal firmly enough with disruptive behaviour during the Literacy Hour. This impeded the progress made during these lessons. In all other classes the quality of teaching in both English and mathematics is sufficiently good for pupils to make good progress. It is stronger in Year 2 than Year 1. Science is also taught well in both year groups but teaching in this subject is also stronger in Year 2 where teaching and learning is always at least good and sometimes very good. Teachers in this year group manage to combine the investigative element of science whilst imparting the necessary knowledge in a way that is exciting and challenging for pupils. Inevitably, the progress made by pupils is good in this instance. Music, physical education and religious education were all observed during the inspection, all were taught well and in the case of physical education and religious education they were taught very well in one Year 1 class. Apart from information technology there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the remaining subjects of the National Curriculum are taught at least satisfactorily and often well.

25. Teachers generally plan work effectively and thoroughly so that pupils make good progress in lessons. However, in most instances teachers do not plan with clear assessment criteria in mind and therefore they cannot use the information generated by their assessments to plan the next stage of learning. This also leads to poor quality information when they prepare the end of year progress reports for parents. Teachers generally have good discipline within classes and as a result classrooms are orderly places where pupils learn effectively. Pupils know the routines of each classroom and are sufficiently independent to access tools and materials as they need them. Teachers use an effective range of teaching strategies to keep pupils interest and build up their concentration levels. Not enough use is made of computers in support of other lessons but in the one class in Year 2 where the floor robot was used in a mathematics lesson the impact on pupils' understanding of angles and measurements was good. All teachers effectively support pupils with special educational needs or those who use English as an additional language and adapt lessons accordingly. As a result they make good progress in their learning. Homework is a regular feature of each class but this is not consistently used to reinforce the knowledge and skills being taught. Most pupils take books home regularly and this contributes to the good progress in reading made by most pupils.

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

26. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the curriculum by producing schemes for all subjects. Teachers use school policies and schemes of work to plan work effectively. It is appropriately modified to meet needs of pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language. The curriculum is enriched by the use of the wildlife garden, the study of different cultures and religions, visits both locally and further a field, including a residential visit that widen pupils' horizons. These activities make a very positive contribution to pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' personal development is promoted well by a caring staff who know their pupils very well. The school has maintained the good provision made for pupils' personal development. This is reflected in pupils that are considerate, confident and caring of one another and polite to adults.

27. The curriculum for children under-five is satisfactory. It covers all the required areas of learning and provides opportunities for language and mathematical development effectively through a range of practical and relevant activities. In Key Stage 1 the planned curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant and meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, including those for religious education. Information technology is the one subject that is not taught well enough. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are effectively developed in all subjects but information technology skills are not. As a result, pupils' standards in English and mathematics are improving, particularly in reading and number but are

not developed in information technology. The school has successfully implemented the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and they impact positively on pupils' learning and progress. The curriculum reflects the school's aims and values and makes a significant contribution to pupils' intellectual, physical and social development. It is well matched to pupils' abilities and places appropriate emphasis upon their personal and academic needs.

28. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities and has approved policies relating to bullying, managing behaviour, sex education and awareness of the dangers of misuse of drugs. These policies are clear, effective documents used well by staff. For example, in personal and social circle time where pupils discuss the impact of actions and how what they do affects other people.

29. Pupils undertake a wide range of activities which develop interests and promote good learning. They are given opportunities to work independently and are also required to assist in classrooms and around the school with designated roles and responsibilities. For example, clearing equipment away after lessons, looking after the library and take registers to the office. There are few regular extra-curricular activities but the curriculum is enhanced by visits, visitors and a residential visit that helps to promote pupils' social and academic skills. For example, in a religious education lesson, a parent talked about the Muslim way of life and some of the customs that are very special to them. Pupils gained a valuable insight into other people's beliefs and how that made them behave as they do. All pupils are fully prepared for the next stage of their education. Links with the local Junior school are good.

30. The school uses a combination of topic work and subject specific teaching to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. Good cross-curricular links are made between subjects. For example, a good link was made between history and English in Year 2 where pupils described the difference between washing clothes now, using a washing machine, and in the past *possing* the clothes. However, the school is aware that there is a need to extend pupils' independent writing and encourage them to write for different purposes, for example, encouraging pupils to write their own detailed descriptions of what happens in a science experiment.

31. The school promotes equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The policy for special educational needs covers the principles and practices of the Code of Practice and there are thorough arrangements for identifying and assessing pupils with special educational needs. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good. A good combination of withdrawal for individual and group work and in-class work helps pupils make good progress. Individual education plans are clear and set specific learning targets with appropriate attention to literacy and numeracy. These plans are closely monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator and support assistant. The excellent relationships between pupils and the support assistant lead to good teaching sessions where pupils try hard, enjoy their work and make good progress in their learning. Links with support services are good, reviews are held regularly and parents are kept informed of progress.

32. The attention paid to pupils' personal development is reflected in their ability to work in groups, often with minimal supervision and in a sensible way. For example, pupils in a Year 2 English lesson took turns to read *The Billy Goats Gruff* and followed the story in their books when others were reading. Visits are used well to promote the personal and social development of pupils. The residential visit gives pupils the opportunity to enjoy many different activities. Pupils are expected to help and support others and this has a clear impact on social development. The visit is also used to develop the concept of 'self' in pupils and to appreciate the natural wonder of the outdoors environment. Pupils are taught to consider the needs of others. They raise money for national charities and take part in the City *Children's Festival*. They have respect for other people's opinions, values and beliefs. For example, in an assembly the theme of the Chinese New Year was used very effectively to highlight the customs of a pupil, who explained when it started and how long it lasted.

33. The provision made for the spiritual, moral and social development of pupils is good and in line with the aims and values of the school. It is very good for pupils' cultural development. Pupils are taught to be sensitive and considerate and play a part in the smooth running of the school. Very good

relationships between staff and pupils provide a happy and supportive atmosphere that has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

34. Pupils' spiritual development is good and well promoted through carefully planned daily assemblies, religious education lessons and other curriculum areas such as art, science and music. In assemblies, pupils are encouraged to consider how and why attitudes are developed and how they share with others as well as receive. They are made aware of the plight of people from other communities and those who suffer disability. For example, pupils raised money for the *National Institute for the Blind*. Throughout the school, there is a strong sense of belonging to a community. For example, new and younger pupils are always cared for and made to feel welcome on arrival. Pupils are provided with opportunities to examine faiths and beliefs as they learn about Christianity and other world religions such as Judaism and Islam. Poems, prayers and art on display reflect the positive responses of pupils. The local vicar is a regular visitor to school and the school welcomes members of other religions as visitors. Pupils are taught to appreciate the environment. For example, the school garden promotes appreciation of natural beauty.

35. The behaviour policy encourages respect, consideration and tolerance and is supported by the very good relationships between adults and pupils. The staff are very good role models for pupils and place a strong emphasis on personal responsibility. Through this they make pupils aware of the differences between right and wrong. Good behaviour is promoted through the effective use of rewards and sanctions. Classroom rules are drawn up with pupils who follow them and therefore good standards of behaviour, honesty and courtesy are seen. In lessons pupils learn the importance of listening to others, abiding by rules, playing fairly and taking responsible decisions.

36. The provision made for pupils' social development is good. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and co-operatively. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility. In classrooms and on the residential visit, they are given opportunities to work in different social groups.

37. The provision made for pupils' cultural development is very good. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of different cultures is developed through music, art, geography and history. These subjects provide opportunities for pupils to learn about the heritage and cultures of the local region, this country and others. In religious education, pupils learn about other faiths and a practising Muslim has visited and explained their religious beliefs. The school has many prominent displays of work, which challenge the pupils to think about other major world religions. Every effort is made to celebrate the diversity of cultures within the school.

38. The provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development remains a strength of the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The procedures for promoting pupils' health, safety and welfare and child protection are unsatisfactory overall because of the delays in dealing with concerns over essential repairs and maintenance that are identified through effective monitoring. The school has a strong caring ethos and the day-to-day care of pupils is good. Child protection arrangements comply with the local education authority guidelines and all staff have received the necessary training.

40. Arrangements for fire safety and first aid are satisfactory. There are regular checks of the premises and safety checks on equipment are carried out. Governors meet their responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare of staff and pupils and discuss any concerns at their termly meetings. Health and safety issues are correctly identified through risk assessments and regular checks. Although procedures are followed, delays in dealing with essential repairs and maintenance make it difficult for staff to ensure the well-being of pupils. Parents, governors and inspectors share this concern. These were discussed with the head teacher and governors during the inspection.

41. The school's arrangements for assessing attainment, progress and personal development are unsatisfactory overall. They do not provide reliable enough information to set clear targets for learning of groups or individuals or to ensure consistency from one teacher to another.

42. The assessment procedures for children under five are satisfactory overall. In the nursery they have the potential to be good. Children are allocated to a key worker who is responsible for charting their progress in the six areas of learning. However, these are not updated often enough to give good levels of information for planning work for groups or individual children. Baseline assessments are made as required after a few weeks in the reception class and these assessments form the basis of future work. Teachers keep careful records charting progress in all of the areas of learning to plan and work effectively. The quality of assessment early reading skills is good and therefore books are matched closely to their levels of attainment. When they take books home parents can see the progress they make.

43. In Key Stage 1 the procedures for assessing academic progress and personal development are unsatisfactory. Although teachers make assessments to plan teaching and learning this is usually informal. The work of specific groups or individuals is not monitored on a regular basis. Teachers know individual pupils well and have a good understanding of what pupils need to learn. However, there is not an agreed marking policy and the way teachers mark work is inconsistent. In the best practice, comments by teachers helpfully illustrate what pupils need to do to improve their knowledge and skills. At times work is not marked at all and corrections are not re-worked by pupils. In the main, marking simply indicates what is right or wrong but there are examples of careless marking where incorrect answers are not identified.

44. There is a school system for the assessment and recording of attainment and progress in English and mathematics. The school is reviewing the assessment policy for mathematics in line with the National Numeracy Strategy. The current assessment system is not used or regularly up-dated in every class to guide planning or establish a consensus about different levels of attainment in National Curriculum subjects. No records are kept of pupils' behaviour and personal development to help staff build up a complete picture of pupils' strengths and weaknesses.

45. The school has taken a number of steps to monitor, promote and improve good attendance but these have not yet proved to be effective. Parents have been sent informative bi-lingual brochures and are clear about school routines to report absence. The school brochure emphasises the fact that attendance affects children's attitudes and achievement. Pupils enjoy coming to school and do not readily stay away. Teachers actively promote good attendance and punctuality during registration periods. However, there is a fairly liberal and inconsistent attitude to authorising absences which is not helpful to the policy. The majority of pupils continue to have some absence during the year and there is a particular problem with pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds who return to their country of origin for long periods.

46. The school has a behaviour policy based on emphasising good behaviour and reducing bullying and this has recently been comprehensively reviewed to good effect. The behaviour policy is supported by a system of appropriate rewards, privileges and sanctions together with occasional assemblies on the subject. Although the policy is not always used consistently by teachers it is generally effective in promoting good behaviour. Parents are happy with the standards of behaviour. They appreciate the way teachers encourage pupils to behave well in classrooms and when moving around the school.

47. The results of tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 are carefully analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum and the performance of different groups such as boys and girls or pupils from ethnic minority groups. The school is very aware of areas that need to be improved. A good example of this is the identification of boys as a target group for improvement in reading. This focus has significantly improved the levels attained in reading.

48. Pupils with special educational needs are quickly identified and the individual education plans drawn up for pupils set out clear targets to be attained and these are shared with parents. As a result these pupils make good progress. The needs of the few pupils who speak English as an additional

language are assessed well by a bi-lingual language assistant. These pupils are integrated well into class lessons and they make good progress.

49. There has been little progress in dealing with some on-going health and safety issues despite the efforts of staff and governors. The assessment procedures of the school have not kept up with the pace of change in the curriculum and therefore need further attention.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. The partnership that the school has with its parents is satisfactory. The relationships that the school has with its parents are good. The majority of parents have a very positive view of the school. Parents at the meeting prior to the inspection and 95 per cent of those parents who returned the parent questionnaire felt that their children are making good progress.

51. The school is committed to working in partnership with parents to raise standards. Despite this some parents do not feel that school enables them to support their own children's learning. They do not feel that they get enough information on how their children are progressing. This is also the view of inspectors. Information on what is currently being taught in each class is displayed on classroom walls and the school relies on parents reading it when leaving or collecting their children. Many never see it.

52. Parents are kept well informed about school events through regular newsletters. The school prospectus gives information about school routines and expectations but only limited information about what is taught. Annual reports to parents are unsatisfactory. They provide information on progress made by pupils in English, mathematics and science but the rest of the report describes what has been covered rather than what has been learned. No targets are set for future learning. The governors' annual report to parents does not include all of the statutory information required. For example, no report is made regarding progress made since the time of the previous inspection.

53. Meetings held with parents prior to children's entry into nursery and reception provides them with good quality information. This enables children to settle quickly and happily into school routines and provides guidance for parents to enable them to support early reading and writing. Meetings held with parents to inform them of major changes to the school curriculum are informative and appreciated. For example, the meetings held about the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy are valued.

54. Parents are made welcome in school. Few provide support in classrooms. When parents give their time to share their skills or beliefs it often has very positive impact on the standards attained. For example, a Muslim parent talking about the symbols of her faith to pupils in Year 2. The school is beginning, through the Education Action Zone to introduce a range of initiatives to enable parents to support their children's learning both in school and at home. Parents are encouraged to support their children's work at home particularly in reading. The lack of good quality information on how to help is an obstacle to progress in areas such as writing. Effective relationships established with parents of pupils with special educational needs keeps them fully involved in their children's learning and they make good progress.

55. Parents feel that the school spends its money wisely and always seeks best value for the funds it has. They are not routinely involved in consultations of this nature.

56. The relationship with parents continues to be as good as it was at the time of the previous inspection. The quality of information is not so good. The school has some work to do to make sure the good relationships are used to raise standards further.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. The leadership and management provided by the head teacher and staff are good. Responsibilities for each subject aspect of the curriculum are appropriately delegated and teachers fulfil them well. The head teacher and deputy head teacher work well together to create a good atmosphere

where changes can be assimilated without detriment to the smooth running of the school or the standards attained by pupils. There is a clear educational direction for all the work of the school and the aims and values of the school are evident in the way staff and pupils behave towards one another and the shared commitment to improvement.

58. The school is constantly evaluating its own performance and setting targets for further improvement as can be seen in the way the curriculum is being developed to give a sharper focus to the teaching of basic skills. Through good development planning the school accurately identifies priorities and funds are very well managed towards meeting them and ensuring best value for money. This can be seen in the way the school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. A good range of books and resources are available to staff and they have all been well trained in the way lessons should be taught. There is still some work to be done in Year 1 but otherwise, the success can be seen in the quality of teaching and learning and the good progress made by pupils.

59. Governors, generally, fulfil their statutory responsibilities with regard to the overall management of the school but are over dependent on the head teacher to ensure that the business of the governing body runs smoothly. The governors' annual report to parents does not contain all of the legally required information. Until very recently there has been little active participation in shaping the future direction of the school and this was an issue for governors at the previous inspection. Strengths and weaknesses are identified by the staff rather than governors and they have not been pro-active, for example, about focusing parents' attention on many of the issues surrounding poor attendance. They are aware of the delays in dealing with health and safety issues and on-going improvements to the school building and have tried constantly to get some action.

60. The head teacher and staff have drawn up and implemented a good programme for monitoring and evaluation focused upon the introduction of new initiatives. This does not rigorously monitor and evaluate the impact of teaching on learning. The head teacher has recently been appraised through the local education authority but the appraisal of teachers is not presently in place. Governors have not had any part to play in the appraisal of the head teacher in relation to their own priorities.

61. The school has good procedures for the induction of new teachers or those working on a supply basis. As a result they fit into the routines of the school well and the continuity of learning is maintained. There is evidence of this in the Year 1 class where a teacher is covering a maternity absence. Procedures for attracting supply support staff are less effective and the school often has difficulty in covering these absences. The school has made a conscious decision not to take trainee teachers when there has been so much change. Once this is settled they certainly have the capacity to do so.

62. The school makes appropriate use of the funds allocated to it for specific purposes such as that for special educational needs or English as an additional language. It is actively involved in the local Education Action Zone (EAZ) and that funding is appropriately spent. The priorities of the EAZ are those identified by the school but are not as sharply focused on the specific issues as they could be, for example, dealing with the specific reasons for absence in this school.

63. The school is at the beginning of the phased introduction of new computer equipment in the office and throughout the school. This is not yet having the full benefit to the running of the school. The development plan, however, is appropriate and realistic.

64. There are sufficient teachers who are well trained and experienced to teach the primary curriculum. In the nursery there are sufficient support staff, the staff providing support for special educational needs or English as an additional language are sufficient for the number of pupils identified. However there is only one classroom assistant based in the reception classes and at the present there is no designated support provided in the class with the youngest children. Fortunately this class is small.

65. With the exception of information technology, the curriculum of the school is good but until this is rectified the curriculum is unsatisfactory.

66. The school accommodation is adequate in size to allow the curriculum to be taught effectively. However the age and maintenance of the school building does at times detract from pupils learning and well-being. The small number of toilet facilities in the main school building interrupts the smooth running of the school day. Toilet facilities and teaching areas in the nursery are in poor condition. Poor maintenance of roofs means that in wet weather there is a need to place buckets in many areas of the school in an attempt to prevent wet and consequently dangerous floor surfaces. The school is aware of these problems and have a rolling programme of building improvements that are implemented as and when funds become available. Outdoor areas of the school are, in the main, adequate to support play and physical education activities. However there is a lack of secure outdoor play facilities for those children under five in the reception classes. The wildlife garden area provides good support to learning in several curriculum areas particularly science and geography.

67. With the exception of information technology, resources are at least satisfactory to support learning and in subjects such as English, mathematics and religious education the quality and range of resources are good. The school library is large and uses display well to promote literacy and independent study. The lack of computers and the mis-match of hardware to software is detrimental to the teaching of information technology. The ratio of computers to pupils is low and many of those that are available are old, outdated and prone to breakdown.

68. The leadership and management of the school have remained good since the previous inspection report. This is commendable given the number of changes that the school has implemented. There has been little progress in the strategic role of governors but there are early signs that this is now improving.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69. In order to raise standards of attainment and improve the quality of education provided for pupils, governors and the staff should:

1. Give pupils more opportunities for extended writing in all areas of the curriculum. The school has already identified this as an area for improvement
Paragraphs 14, 16, 34, 100, 134, 141, 157.

2. Improve the procedures for assessing and recording progress. These should include:

- setting clear targets for future teaching and learning,
- sharing learning goals with pupils,
- a marking policy that is used consistently throughout the school,
- improving the quality of progress reports and set targets for them to support learning at home.

Paragraphs 29, 45, 47, 48, 53, 55, 56, 93, 102, 110, 118, 119, 125, 147, 158.

3. Implement the action plan they have already drawn up to improve the information technology resources and provide staff with training.
Paragraphs 17, 31, 137.

4. Provide the necessary support and monitoring to ensure that the school's literacy and numeracy strategies are implemented well in all classes.
Paragraphs 26, 28, 111.

5. Improve the attendance and punctuality of pupils by:

- making parents aware of the importance of regular attendance and the impact of poor attendance on the standards attained by their children. This is already part of the Education Action Zone brief for the school.
- Monitoring the impact of the initiatives on improving attendance. The school has already started to do this but it is too early to judge the impact.

Paragraphs 25, 49.

6. Develop the role of governors in;
- shaping the direction of the school,
 - improving the situation with regard to the health and safety concerns of the school and parents,
 - preparing the annual report to parents to ensure that it includes all the necessary statutory information.

Paragraphs 33, 53, 56, 63, 70, 94.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

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Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	25	45	25	2.5	2.5	0

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

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Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y R– Y 2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	65	200
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		53

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y R– Y 2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15	44

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	16

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

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Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.4
National comparative data	5.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.3
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	1999	40	34	74

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	30	35
	Girls	26	25	27
	Total	59	55	62
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (69)	74 (77)	84 (83)
	National	82 (87)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	33	32
	Girls	27	24	27
	Total	59	57	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (69)	77 (82)	80 (80)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	7
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	13
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	1
White	109
Any other minority ethnic group	13

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: Y R – Y 2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Average class size	22

Education support staff: Y R – Y 2

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	97

Number of pupils per FTE adult	11
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	483089
Total expenditure	481528
Expenditure per pupil	1784
Balance brought forward from previous year	3189
Balance carried forward to next year	4696

77. **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	236
Number of questionnaires returned	127

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	27	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	49	3	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	46	4	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	33	15	9	22
The teaching is good.	61	35	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	36	14	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	29	0	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	25	6	1	7
The school works closely with parents.	43	43	10	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	65	32	2	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	37	3	3	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	22	20	10	24

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents are generally very supportive of the school and value the work done with their children.

Other issues raised by parents

None

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

78. Children are admitted into the nursery class from the age of three on a part-time basis and the majority of them move on into reception either at the beginning of September, January or Easter, in the term they become five. For this term only, summer born children are attending the nursery on a full-time basis in an attempt to address the disadvantage of late summer term entry into school. Changes in the local authority's admission policy from September 2000 will mean that children will start school either in September or January of the year they become five.

79. Attainment on entry to the nursery school is within the normal range but overall it is well below expected levels in language and literacy skills. Several children have delayed speech. Children have a better mathematical understanding but this is still below the level expected overall. They are generally quite independent but many have still to learn how to play co-operatively with others.

80. Children make good progress in the nursery so that by the time they are assessed at the beginning of the reception class, although they are still below the levels expected, this is not so pronounced. Levels of attainment in mathematics remain higher but are still below average. Children are not on target to reach the expected levels at the age of five. Children, including those with special educational needs or those who are learning to speak English as an additional language, continue to make good progress in the reception classes. Progress in reading is particularly strong due to good teaching, books that are closely matched to the capability of each child and the good support provided by parents.

Personal and social skills

81. Children in the nursery are confident and happy. They relate well to the adults that work with them and are able to use equipment and look after themselves. Few need help with toilets or washing hands. Most children are still playing alongside others rather than with them. They concentrate and persevere in their learning with the help of adults. They are learning to take turns and share resources. Children behave well on the whole although, when they get tired by the end of the session, they become restless and disinterested in activities. By the time they are in the reception classes children are more confident about themselves and build up good working relationships with other children and with adults. They work as part of a group and independently when set work in the literacy or numeracy lessons. They ask for help when they need it and learn from one another. Children are sensitive to the needs and feelings of others, learn to listen and take turns and respect the beliefs and views of others. For example, when looking at the abstract art of Kandinsky, children suggested: *'It's a fish', 'It's a key', 'I think it's the Sun in the galaxy'*. They are developing an understanding of what is right, what is wrong and follow the rules of the school. They respond well to the messages and experiences shared in assemblies.

Language and literacy

82. In the nursery children enjoy listening to stories and when the teacher asks them to describe how things feel they use words like, *wet, cold* or *slippery* to describe snow. They use the pictures in a book to continue with the story and predict what is going to happen to the characters. They know a range of songs, nursery rhymes and poems and enjoy joining in with them. A few children, usually girls, use toys to develop stories of their own, for example, when playing with the doll's house. More often they need an adult to support imaginative play. They are learning to control pencils, make letter shapes and recognise their own names. They recognise some letters and see the connection between print and words. Children in reception listen attentively to their teachers in literacy lessons that are very well taught. Their range of vocabulary is developing but they still need stories with a lot of repetition to reinforce familiar words. For example, children learned to form the letter *a*, make the sound and identify it in the story *'Dan the Flying Man'* the word *over* was also stressed and learned. With help from the teachers, they make up their own stories to make class books that they can then re-read using the pictures as a support. They know that words and pictures tell stories, rightly identify the front cover and understand that the print is read from left to right and from top to bottom. They recognise their own

names and words that they come across regularly in lessons. They build sentences and short questions such as 'What do you do?'. They build up simple words by sounding out letters and recognise the shape and initial sound of words such as *hippopotamus*. When they write their own names they form the letters correctly and use both upper and lower case letters.

Mathematics

83. Children in the nursery use mathematical language to describe simple shapes and the position of objects. They count objects to five and know the sequence of numbers to ten with the support of an adult. They can take one away from a number and add one on when counting with objects, for example when using a simple number line. By the time they are in the reception classes the youngest children are confident when working with numbers up to five and use zero as a starting point when counting. They compare, sort, match, order, sequence and count using a range of items. They use the numbers up to ten and beyond. Older children are very confident about counting up or back and see the relationship between addition and subtraction. They are beginning to recognise the combination of numbers that can be added together to make ten.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

84. In the nursery children are encouraged to talk about things that are familiar to them and share those experiences with others. This is usually focused on their immediate families but with help from adults they describe the colour, texture, feel of vegetables as they make soup or remember what snow looks like. They explore materials and tools, such as scissors, cut and join card and paper and use building kits and sand to construct roads and buildings. In the reception classes children know about the local area and find their way around school confidently. For example, after a visit to the local library each class produced a map that showed local landmarks. Younger children still need adults to encourage them to talk. They have a sense of time in their own lives and recall events when they were younger and an appreciation that adults have memories of their own childhood. They build upon their skills of construction and controlling tools but make little use of computers. Information technology equipment is very new and staff are just learning how to use it

Physical development

85. Children in both the nursery and reception classes are confident in their use of space and are agile when climbing, jumping or using space. Nursery children manoeuvre wheeled equipment well. In the reception classes children are learning to control their bodies and use space well. In all classes they learn how to handle pencils, paint brushes and make models, but these skills are not as well developed as those seen in physical activity.

Creative development

86. Children in the nursery respond to music, learning to sing and dance. They experiment with colour and through their drawings, experiment with shape. They learn to make models and prepare simple food. As they move into the reception classes they widen those experiences to play an active part in assemblies, class projects and by using pictures and words to express their thoughts and feelings.

87. The quality of teaching is generally good for children under five. It is satisfactory in the nursery although occasionally it is very good and occasionally it is unsatisfactory. In the reception classes teaching is usually good or very good and always at least satisfactory. Teachers have a good understanding of the areas of learning to be followed by children and know the children well. Activities are planned well to build upon the previous knowledge and understanding of the children. Support staff in the nursery and reception classes are used well and enable pupils to make good progress particularly in language and literacy skills. When teaching is very good in the nursery, the teacher holds the attention of the children through very good story telling whilst checking out their understanding of the vocabulary. Children are quite clear about the high expectations set for them and therefore behave very well. Unsatisfactory teaching is due to planning that does not take account of different needs of children when they are in the nursery for the full day. As a result children become restless and disinterested in the activities provided and move aimlessly from one activity to another. In the reception classes teaching is often very good during the Literacy Hour and sometimes also in numeracy lessons. In one literacy lesson for example, the teacher had been reading a story about a polar bear with the children and her enthusiasm for the book encouraged the children to read it to the end and enjoyed thinking

about the meaning of words like *snarling* and *trumpeting*. In a mathematics lesson this same level of enthusiasm was seen as the children practised counting on and back and good support was given to those children that needed it.

88. The curriculum for children under five is satisfactory overall. Work is planned to meet all of the areas of learning prescribed for young children. Progression from nursery to reception is well organised and teachers take account of the early stages of the National Curriculum, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Pupils with special educational needs are quickly identified and supported and where children are learning English as an additional language, appropriate support is given. The curriculum in the nursery has been disturbed this term due to the decision to provide full-time places for summer born nursery children who were not admitted into the reception class in January. Staff have not considered the differences to the curriculum that this would make as children stay for lunch and stay for both sessions. In the reception classes the curriculum provided is generally good but there is no provision for secure outdoor play. There is no additional support in the smaller reception classes and access to water is difficult in this same class.

89. The assessment procedures for children under five are satisfactory overall. In the nursery they have the potential to be good. Children are allocated to a key worker who is responsible for charting their progress in the six areas of learning. However, these are not updated often enough to give good levels of information for planning work. Records of what children have actually done during the course of each day or week are not regularly maintained. The assessment of progress in the reception classes is good. Baseline assessments are completed in the first few weeks after entry into the class and teachers regularly assess and record the progress made in reading and writing.

90. The nursery accommodation is spacious but there are no areas where children can work quietly. The outdoor play area is adequate but the toilet facilities and the room used by parents as a waiting area are in urgent need of attention. The school has the plans drawn up for the necessary improvements when funds become available. Neither of the reception classes has regular access to outdoor play and in one classroom the sink is too high for children to reach it. In other respects the accommodation is satisfactory. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall. The nursery has one of the newer computers and staff are learning to use it. There is only one computer shared between the two reception classes and it is old and out-dated.

91. The provision made for children under five has improved in that teaching is judged to be good overall. The assessment procedures in the reception classes are now good but there has been no improvement in the use of assessment in the nursery to chart progress systematically or monitor which activities pupils are involved in each day.

ENGLISH

92. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in English is below what is expected of pupils aged seven. In the national assessments for seven year olds in 1999, the pupils' results in reading and writing were below the national average. When compared to similar schools, pupils' results in 1999 in reading and writing were broadly in line with the average. The proportion of seven year olds reaching the higher levels in reading and writing was below the national average. In the teacher assessments of speaking and listening in 1999, pupils' attainment was below the national average. The trend of pupils' attainment reflects the improving national trend. At the beginning of the nursery class standards of attainment in language are well below what is expected nationally. The majority of children make good progress in the nursery and the school and their attainment, although below the national average, is improving, especially in reading. Standards of literacy are improving because the school is implementing the National Literacy Strategy well and teachers promote speaking, listening and writing skills in other subjects, such as science, history and religious education. The school is aware of the need to improve pupils' extended writing skills in all subjects. The inspection findings are that, although there are pupils in each year group who attain high standards in English in relation to their age, overall standards are below the national expectation in writing and speaking and listening. Pupils' attainment in reading matches the national expectation showing improvement since the national tests in 1999. Standards in English have improved since the previous inspection.

93. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in English in relation to the individual education plans drawn up for them. They make good progress when they are given additional support in classrooms or when working in small groups on structured learning programmes. Pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress.

94. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is below the level expected. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and some express themselves confidently with expression, but many are reluctant to contribute to discussions unless encouraged by their teachers. However, most listen carefully to their teachers, and to each other, and contribute appropriately to group and class discussions. In the Literacy Hour, pupils listen intently to stories and information texts and higher attaining pupils are very willing to ask and answer questions. A number of pupils have immature speech and their vocabulary is too limited for them to speak confidently with adults except in small groups. Good opportunities are provided for skills to be developed; for example, in a Year 1 lesson pupils selecting the order of words on cards to make up sentences explained that a word did not fit at the beginning because it did not have a capital letter. Most speak quite audibly and enjoy trying to use new words. They listen and join in with familiar stories, songs, nursery rhymes and poems. In assemblies they join in with the songs they know and respond to the theme of the assembly. For example, all pupils sat entranced as the teacher used a variety of objects to show what was special to her. In discussion afterwards pupils showed their appreciation for their 'special friends'. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils are confident enough to talk about their work and their own experiences when the topic is of interest. They generally listen attentively to their teacher or one another but some pupils are impatient and find it difficult when they are expected to wait for their turn to speak. Pupils' range of vocabulary is growing and they like to learn new words. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson pupils explained clearly that the net material with holes in it let the water run through the quickest. There is good use of drama to support speaking and listening skills and to promote pupils' personal, social and moral development. For example, in a Year 2 lesson based on the story of the *Billy Goats Gruff*, pupils acted the part of the troll and showed imaginative in making ugly shapes and the kind of sounds they thought a troll would make.

95. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading is broadly in line with the national expectation. Most pupils make good progress in reading and there are a few higher attaining readers who demonstrate a good degree of fluency, expression and understanding. The school has good procedures for identifying and assessing pupils with reading difficulties. There is a good system to monitor learning and they make good progress. Teachers keep detailed records of pupils' progress and pupils are actively encouraged to take books home. Most parents provide good support and encouragement so pupils' reading abilities improve rapidly. Homework is not so well used for the development of writing. In Year 1 pupils enjoy fairy stories and describe their favourite parts, for example, when the *blackbird nearly fell off the branch*. In Year 2, pupils know that authors write books and poets write poems. They join in when reading stories and poems, use appropriate expression and take note of punctuation. For example, pupils used an expressive voice when reading the story of *Red Riding Hood*, pretending to be the wolf dressed up as granny. The shared and guided reading during the Literacy Hour, is carefully selected to be interesting and challenging so pupils want to read more. This helps them to achieve higher standards. When reading independently, higher attaining pupils read confidently and use both picture and phonic clues to correct errors. Pupils talk about the main characters in their books and predict what might happen next in the story. Lower attaining pupils are less confident when reading, but talk about their favourite parts of a story and enjoy reading. Pupils spend time in the school library choosing books from the lending library to take home. Many pupils read for pleasure, keep a record of the books they read and are keen to select their own reading books from the boxes provided by teachers.

96. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in writing is below the nationally expected level although it is comparable with similar schools. Given the low levels of attainment on entry to the nursery this still represents good progress. In reception, pupils 'draw' the letter 'a' in the air and begin to copy write under the teachers' example. At the beginning of Key Stage 1, most pupils associate the initial sound of words with the letter symbol. Pupils make good progress in the development of their writing skills and they see that words that rhyme often have the same letter pattern. In written work in the reception classes some pupils form letters correctly and use simple words and phrases to write about their own experiences. Most pupils form letters correctly when copying the words written by the teacher

and write their own names using a combination of capital and lower case letters. However, a number of pupils still need support to control pencils to make shapes that resemble letters. Teachers give careful attention to handwriting, punctuation and spelling. Pupils are encouraged to print from an early age and, by the end of Key Stage 1, some of their printing is clear and neat. However, a number of pupils, even in Year 2, find it difficult to keep their writing on the line and letters are not of a consistent size. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to write imaginative accounts; for example, in Year 2, pupils write a description of the life of a Victorian child and appreciate the differences between their own lifestyle and that of the Victorians. Year 2 pupils use capital letters and full-stops and construct simple sentences and questions. The limited opportunities for extended pieces of writing lowers the standards achieved. This issue is identified in the school development plan. Standards in spelling are improving and older pupils use dictionaries confidently.

97. The quality of teaching is good and often very good and this motivates pupils and raises achievement levels for all groups of pupils. There was only one lesson of English that was judged to be poor. This was because the teacher's understanding of the requirements of the Literacy Hour were weak and poor behaviour was not dealt with effectively. Teachers generally know what has to be taught and provide a broad and balanced English curriculum. The Literacy Hour is generally taught well. Relationships between pupils, teachers and adult support staff are good so that pupils are confident to make suggestions and offer explanations. Teachers ask challenging questions that extend the knowledge and understanding of pupils. For example, in a Year 2 lesson on sentence construction and the use of speech marks the teacher skilfully questioned pupils to make sure that they understood which words were actually spoken. Basic English skills are taught well through regular practice. This was seen in a Year 1 lesson where pupils made sentences from words on cards. They then had to check that the sentence began with a capital letter and ended with a full stop.

98. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and behave well and they do. This is a major factor in the good progress made. Tasks are set to challenge pupils whatever their level of attainment and methods of learning are well matched to pupils and the skills to be learned. This leads to interesting lessons where pupils do their best. For example, in a Year 1 lesson on understanding the nature of stories, the teacher discussed new words with pupils and made sure they knew what they meant. Virtually all pupils completed the work in the time allowed. Teachers plan lessons well. For example, in reception the teacher used rhyme and repetition to teach new words. Good organisation and effective use of time meant that each group received enough support to complete their task successfully. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils effectively to ask focused questions that are just at the right level for each pupil. This means that pupils with special educational needs or those learning English as an additional language are also challenged and, as a result, they make good progress. Teachers generally explain what the aims of each lesson are but do not consistently identify assessments of pupils' attainment and progress in their planning. As a result, there is little evidence that assessments are used to guide teachers' planning and to set new targets for learning.

99. English is well led and managed by two temporary curriculum co-ordinators who are well informed and have a clear view of future improvement. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is good. The school procedures for assessment and recording progress in reading are good and promote good progress. Resources are good, particularly the range and number of reading books. However, information technology is not used regularly as part of English lessons.

100. Improvements in English are evident in the improvement in reading standards in the school. Writing is still an area for improvement and so is the use of assessment.

MATHEMATICS

101. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 national tests showed that standards in mathematics were broadly in line with national standards and were well above average when compared with similar schools. This continues a trend of steady improvement in standards in mathematics since the previous inspection. These improvements have been maintained against national averages and also when compared with similar schools. The findings of the inspection are that this is an accurate picture of attainment within the school.

102. At the beginning of the key stage pupils identify regular shapes accurately and describe the features of, for example a triangle or a square. Higher attaining pupils can record information on a simple bar chart while others sort shapes into sets. They can count in tens and begin to see the pattern emerging, for example 70 is 7 tens. They count on and back, adding and subtracting with the help of objects that they count. By the end of the key stage pupils are quite confident with numbers to 10 and they understand place value to 100. They represent mathematical problems using symbols and diagrams and perform the appropriate mathematical operation to find the correct answer. They can identify halves or quarters and recognise sequences of numbers such as odd or even. Pupils are beginning to develop proficiency in mathematical language that enables them to understand different aspects of their work such as angles and shapes. Pupils enjoy mathematical challenges such as measuring linear distances along corridors using a trundle wheel and strips of paper to measure the circumference of a cylinder. Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the concept of an angle as a measurement of turning.

103. Pupils are less successful at telling the time accurately because there is a lack of emphasis on this aspect in the teaching programme. They have only a limited ability to recognise and describe the geometrical features of three-dimensional shapes because this is also not covered or emphasised sufficiently within lessons. Money problems and teasing out the mathematics to solve written problems also needs more attention.

104. Since the last inspection the school has successfully implemented the national numeracy strategy. Lessons have clear learning objectives and provide suitable challenge to different groups. This has meant changing teaching styles quite substantially to focus on a single subject for a period of time each day. Regular sessions of mental and oral arithmetic give pupils an appropriate facility with numbers.

105. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers work hard to ensure that a good supply of relevant materials and resources are readily available to pupils so that their work is not delayed by having to share. Work is generally challenging and well matched to pupils' levels of attainment so that they are confident, concentrate hard and persevere with their work. Good relationships are fostered in classrooms and therefore pupils work together well and successfully strive to improve their knowledge and understanding. Teachers know their pupils well and are able to provide good on-going support to all pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language. In the best lessons, teachers construct their lessons effectively and pupils get opportunities to use their knowledge and skills to solve mathematical problems. For example, a Year 2 class used their knowledge and skills to programme a robot to follow a set course between obstacles successfully.

106. Although teaching is good, assessment is rarely planned and teachers do not have a systematic approach to evaluating the work of individuals or groups. As a result lessons do not always build systematically on what has gone before. There is no agreed school policy on marking and there is inconsistency between different classes. In the best practice, work is marked carefully and helpful guidance is provided for future work but sometimes work is not marked at all and there are examples where it is incorrectly marked. Pupils do not generally organise their own work and are not encouraged to check their results for accuracy. As a result they do not automatically apply their knowledge and skills in mathematics to other subjects without help.

107. Leadership and management of the subject are good so teaching is effectively raising standards. Teachers and support staff have been prepared well to teach according to the National Numeracy Strategy and in most instances this is translated into effective teaching. Where it is not so successful, the teacher is not linking all the component parts of the lessons together to apply new knowledge effectively.

108. There is a satisfactory range of good quality resources that are well distributed around the school so that teachers and pupils have good access to them. The staff recognise the importance of mathematics and this is illustrated by the careful way pupils' work is displayed in classrooms and shared areas.

109. The standards attained in mathematics have improved since the previous inspection. There is still some work to be done in relation to the school's numeracy strategy in Year 1.

SCIENCE

110. When science was assessed by teachers in 1999 standards in science were well below the national average but were comparable with similar schools. The school analysed their science results and staff have focused their teaching on experimental science which is where the major weakness was identified. During the inspection, although the standards attained by pupils are below the level expected because few pupils attain higher levels, there has been an improvement in the standards achieved in experimental science. The school has also recently reviewed its science scheme of work in line with recent national guidance and science is more carefully planned even when it is taught as part of a wider topic. The positive impact of these changes is already improving standards of achievement.

111. At the beginning of the key stage pupils describe what they observe and record their findings using drawings or simple charts. For example in both Year 1 classes they were charting their observations of the effect of water on materials. They have the basic understanding of the need to test fairly. This was seen in the measuring out of the water to find the most waterproof material. They know that plants grow from seeds and describe some of the features of plants such as flowers or leaves. They describe materials in terms of texture, for example, *'It's stuck together more'* or *'It's got more holes'*. They identify the main sources of light and begin to explore objects that will let light pass through. They know that some objects will float while others sink and a few pupils describe the way water is displaced when an object is submerged. They know that a wheel moves around an axle and observe the way in which a pulley works. Higher attaining pupils describe how a wire is moved around the wheel. They know that objects are moved by pushes or pulls and that wind can push an object.

112. The majority of pupils make good progress and achieve high standards in relation to their previous levels of attainment in all aspects of science. Pupils with special educational needs are involved in investigations and manage to record their work appropriately. The practical nature of the subject is a good means of developing vocabulary and encouraging speech for those pupils that are learning English as an additional language. Higher attaining pupils make satisfactory progress but are not provided with extension activities that could take them beyond the levels expected for their age.

113. By the end of the key stage pupils conduct investigations to find out how things work and what generalisations can be made. For example, many of them can draw a diagram of a simple electrical circuit and label the essential features of the circuit. There are a significant number of pupils in each class however, that are still at the stage of drawing only what they see. Most use a simple table to record their findings. They conduct tests that take account of the need to be fair but this is more consistent when the teacher challenges their thinking by asking the questions such as, *'What stays the same?'* Pupils understand the life cycle of animals and plants and know that living things need food and water and reproduce themselves. They know that they find different plants and animals in different habitats as seen in the work they do when they visit Whirlow Hall Farm. Pupils identify a range of common materials and know about some of their properties. They sort materials in to groups according to their common features and understand that some materials can be re-cycled and/or changed by heat. In their work on forces they have clearly understood that a force is either a push or a pull and see that cogs on wheels can be used to turn a bicycle wheel from the push on the pedal. Most understand that a car will run faster down a steeper slope but lower attaining pupils need to physically push a toy to appreciate the push. Higher attaining pupils explain the push that takes one end of a seesaw off the ground and after a lot of thought appreciate that when the end of the seesaw goes down it was *'gravity that made it come down.'*

114. The quality of teaching and learning in science is good overall; it is particularly strong in Year 2 where all of the teachers are providing pupils with real investigations to reinforce their understanding. Some very good teaching was seen in this year group. Teaching is satisfactory in Year 1. In all classes teachers understand what has to be learned and plan activities that are both focused and interesting. They do not always plan the assessment and recording of progress into the lesson so planning of future learning does not always take account of what has been learned previously. All teachers are careful to see that children develop the notion of a fair test and in the best lessons this is combined with real investigations. For example, in one Year 2 class the teacher had taught the concept of a push and a pull, sowed the seed that friction and gravity had some impact on the speed and let the children find out

that corrugated card on a slope slowed the model cars down. This very good teaching enabled pupils to achieve high standards during this lesson. Also in this lesson the quality of assessment and marking was good and both teacher and pupils were clear about what had been learned. Discipline in all lessons is good and teachers use technical language well. For example, in one Year 1 class the teacher stressed, *measure, investigation, describe* and *fair test* and kept checking that the pupils were using the terms correctly.

115. The science curriculum is well led and managed. The school has recently changed the way in which the subject is taught to take account of recent national guidance on science. It is still incorporated into the wider topics that include other subjects but teachers now make sure that essential elements of science are taught. A scheme of work is emerging that is helpful to staff. It does not yet identify assessment procedures either to support future planning, ensure consistency between teacher's assessments, chart individual progress or enable teachers to provide parents with good quality information about what their children know and understand. The garden area is used effectively to give pupils opportunities to study wildlife and the staff make good use of visits to a local Ecology Park and a visiting science theatre. There are sufficient resources to teach the curriculum. They are organised well and are easily accessible to staff.

116. The science curriculum is in the process of change and therefore it is difficult to judge improvement since the previous inspection. However, the school is improving year-on-year and uses the data generated by national assessments to target those areas that need to be improved. In this respect the rate of improvement has been satisfactory and the capacity for further improvement is good.

ART

117. No art lessons were observed during the inspection although art was often being taught as part of a wider topic. Displays and portfolios of pupils' work were scrutinised.

118. The standards achieved by pupils are what would be expected for their age but in observational drawing they attain high standards. Even the youngest pupils represent what they see well as can be seen in the picture maps on display in reception. By the time they are in Year 2 most pupils use pencils, charcoals or pastels very effectively when drawing bicycles, chairs, toys or flowers. In relation to their previous attainment pupils achieve high standards and make good progress.

119. Pupils obviously enjoy art and produce a wide range of work in two- and three-dimensions. They experiment with colour and in all classes illustrate the books they have shared within the literacy hour. Pupils in reception make masks to re-tell the story of the *Polar Bear*, make a patchwork of *Elmer* and create their own fantasy island using different card, paper and lolly sticks. They look at hand prints and patterns related to the festival of Eid and in Year 1 this is extended to creating their own Mendi patterns. Pupils in Year 2 produce some good line drawings of homes in Victorian times; create a very attractive collage of Whirlow Hall Farm and Year 1 pupils use twigs and flowers to depict the seasons of the year. In all classes pupils use the computer to draw onto the screen and then print the finished work. They also look at the style of different artists such as Van Gogh, Kandinsky, Miro and Pollock. Some of the work produced is of a high standard and pupils clearly understand that the artist is often using shape or colour to create a mood or suggest features of the natural world. For example in reception the children talk about the shapes used by Kandinsky and what it means to them, by Year 2 they try to create an abstract picture from their own ideas. Some of the portraits of Queen Victoria capture the essence of the personality. Painting on fabrics follows the style of Pollock but also give pupils the chance to use the patterns of Islamic art. Some of these older pupils produce some beautiful observational paintings of flowers and some very skilful representations of sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh.

120. Art is taught well. Teachers plan lessons carefully and teach skills that enable pupils to create work that they are proud of. The children are obviously enthusiastic about the subject as can be seen by the pieces of work done at home and brought in for the teacher to see. The art curriculum is planned to ensure that the full range of skills and techniques are taught and built upon from one year to another. This is a fairly new organisation. Pupils are encouraged to explore art of different style and cultures and the school makes good use of visits and visitors to extend the curriculum. For example, pupils worked

with a local sculptor at Washford Bridge and tried their hands at carving wooden seats. At the opening of the Five Weirs Walk they had the opportunity to draw on wood and show their expertise as sculptors.

121. The subject is well led and managed. The curriculum co-ordinator is a good support to colleagues and makes sure that the necessary resources are readily available. Formal procedures for assessing and recording progress are not in place but the subject co-ordinator is beginning to build up a portfolio of pupils' work. The information provided for parents through the annual report to parents does not give a clear picture of what each child knows and can do.

122. The art curriculum continues to be a strong feature of the school as it was at the time of the previous inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. No lessons in design and technology were observed during this inspection. Evidence was obtained from the examination of pupils' work in their books, displays of their work in classrooms and general areas, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers. Standards and progress have been maintained and are similar to those observed during the previous inspection.

124. Standards of attainment are appropriate to the age of pupils. In Year 1 pupils make accurate and well-constructed models to show how the proposed school garden might look. They make a wide range of hats with some novel and exciting features using a variety of materials. Pupils design and make greetings cards with moving parts such as giraffes which move their heads when a slider is pulled. They design and make useful musical percussion instruments that are beautifully decorated. In these samples of their work they demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of simple design and mechanical construction. Pupils in Year 2 use construction kits to make large and complex models, many of which have a geometrical theme linked well to work in mathematics. In food technology they plan, prepare, cook and eat a healthy meal consisting of pizza, beans and salad. They are clearly aware of health and safety requirements and use protective clothing and cooking instruments appropriately. There is less food technology being taught at this time because of problems with the location of cooking apparatus and this needs to be improved. Pupils investigate axles and study the effect of different *road* materials on their well-constructed wheeled models. They investigate how a driving cog turns connected cog-wheels and record their movements pictorially.

125. It is clear that teachers plan and deliver the full range of skills and knowledge required by the National Curriculum for design and technology. Work is obviously pitched at a suitable level to provide stimulation and challenge to pupils. From the photographs and discussions it is evident that pupils continue to enjoy their design and technology lessons and work hard on their tasks. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and there are many examples of good progress. Work is not formally assessed or recorded to indicate what individual pupils have learned and can do.

126. The subject is managed satisfactorily by a co-ordinator who ensures that relevant parts of the design and technology curriculum are planned and taught systematically throughout the key stage. Resources are also satisfactory although those for food technology need to be re-considered so that classes have better access to them. Planning and curriculum guidance documents have been reviewed since the previous inspection and provide the necessary support for planning lessons.

127. This is a similar position as at the time of the previous inspection.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

128. No lessons of either subject were observed during this inspection. Evidence was obtained from a comprehensive survey of displayed work, teachers' plans, pupils' recent and current work and from discussions with teachers and pupils. From this evidence it is clear that pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in geography and history. Pupils attain the levels expected for their age and there are many examples of good work in each year group. This is a similar picture to that described for

these subjects in the previous report. The school has therefore maintained its standards in history and geography.

129. Pupils in the reception classes use a very good three-dimensional model of *Rosie's Walk* to follow directions in the book of that name. They understand the need to refer to important features of the landscape when giving directions. They use this knowledge to produce a useful map of the route from the school to the library. Year 1 pupils make a good study of the local environment and produce simple but imaginative maps showing the main features in the area. They develop a knowledge and understanding of the different kinds of weather. Pupils record their findings using pictures and words creatively to illustrate features such as frost, wind and fog. They can accurately place Sheffield on a map of Great Britain. In history, pupils produce a simple time line and learn the value of direct observation of artefacts when studying light at the local museum. Year 2 pupils continue these themes and produce detailed maps showing the main features noted during their visit to Whirlow Hall Farm. They link their study of the weather with its effects on plant life during the different seasons. In history, the pupils clearly enjoy their visit to the Victorian classroom and produce lively, detailed and thoughtful writing. For example, they write very imaginatively about life as a Victorian school pupil, clearly demonstrating the value of the visit. Accounts show accurate observation, detailed analysis and good understanding of change over time. For example one pupil writes, "*We did some sums with a slate pencil and we gave the teacher a penny to come to school*". Pupils learn, and use Victorian vocabulary such as *gruel*, *drill* and *slate* to give a sense of history in their writing.

130. It is evident from the examples studied that teachers plan their work in history and geography in some detail. They are clear about their learning objectives and the work is pitched at the right level for pupils. Pupils make steady progress within individual topics and over the key stage as a whole. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in the curriculum and make good progress. For example, one such pupil writes, "*At the farm I saw a pig, a dog, a cat and a hen*" and illustrates his sentence with a delightful picture. Teachers use lessons in geography and history to give pupils learning English as an additional language, practical activities that builds up their vocabulary. Assessment is a weak feature of teaching and there is no formal record of what pupils have understood or can do. Marking is usually limited to recognition that work has been completed. There are few developmental comments to indicate how pupils can make further progress. The sample of pupils' work indicates that they are given very similar tasks with very little attempt to provide suitable challenge for groups of pupils with different levels of ability. Pupils' work in history and geography is valued and is carefully displayed in classrooms and around the school.

131. One teacher acts as curriculum co-ordinator for history and geography. She manages the subjects well and has a clear overview of the curriculum for both subjects. There are sufficient easily accessed resources for both subjects to taught effectively. The policies and guidelines for both subjects provide teachers with the necessary guidance and support. These are to be reviewed when the new National Curriculum is introduced.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

132. No lessons of information technology were observed during the inspection. Inspectors observed the use of computers in other lessons, spent time talking with pupils about their work and examined work on display and in pupils' portfolios. Computers are not used regularly during the course of each day.

133. Standards of attainment in information technology are below the level expected at the end of Year 2 and in other year groups. Pupils' standards of achievement are limited and below where they should be.

134. Pupils are aware of computers in their everyday lives and respond to on screen instructions to work through programs. Most of them use the mouse to control the cursor, drag icons into place and know they can use the computer as a word processor. They lack fluency in all of these respects. Most pupils are able to draw onto the screen and know how to change the colour or the size of the *paint brush*. Even the most competent pupils are not sure how to turn computers on or off and need help to

find the program they want to work with. They know that computers can be used to access information but most are not familiar enough with the means to do so unaided. Where pupils in Year 2 are still using some of the older machines they use the direction keys to move and turn the cursor accurately and understand that the same sort of instructions will move a floor robot through a range of manoeuvres.

135. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory because teachers are unable at present to develop a coherent strategy for teaching the subject. The school is in the process of upgrading computers so has a combination of inadequate equipment or new computers that teachers are not yet familiar with. Software that is compatible with the newer machines is still being built up but this process is not complete.

136. The school is well aware of the deficiencies in information technology and has a good action plan to address them. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the information technology curriculum requirements and is over-seeing the introduction of new resources and the training that staff will need. An on-going concern for her is the lack of technical support that is needed to keep computers in working order.

137. Guidance on the content of the curriculum has been agreed but is not yet used. Procedures for assessing and charting pupils' progress are not in place because the school has not yet established what skills should be taught in each year group. Reports to parents do not give parents specific information about the progress made by their children.

138. The situation with information technology has deteriorated since the previous inspection because the school has not managed to keep computers up-to-date. Given the realistic action plan for the subject, they are in a good position to reverse this trend.

MUSIC

139. During the inspection, few opportunities were available to observe music lessons. In the lessons seen, singing and music making were the main features. However, music was observed in assemblies and other lessons and standards in both key stages match those expected for pupils' of this age. The school has maintained the standards of music since the previous inspection.

140. Music is used in both key stages to enhance pupils' learning; for example, in physical education, pupils move imaginatively and rhythmically to music and respond to mood. Pupils control and use their voices expressively and perform enthusiastically with others. For example, in whole school assemblies they sing tunefully, know the words of many songs and hymns and appreciate the meaning of phrases such as *Peace in the world*. Pupils listen carefully and respond appropriately to recorded music. For example, the Chinese theme of an assembly was enhanced by music from that culture. Pupils in Year 2 clap and copy patterns accurately when singing favourite songs. Pupils appreciate music and listen to works by famous composers and produce pictures to represent the different instruments played in a piece of music. For example, in Year 1, pupils drew pictures of a bird, duck and cat to represent the flute, oboe and clarinet from the music of *Peter and the Wolf*. Percussion instruments are used effectively to build up a sense of rhythm and mood.

141. Music is used well to promote pupils' spiritual and cultural understanding. In assemblies and acts of collective worship, music is played and pupils listen quietly and respectfully. This good atmosphere for listening is a useful indicator of pupils' sensitivity to music. Music is also used well to promote pupils' personal and social development. Pupils perform in front of others who spontaneously applaud their success. Pupils make good progress, their response to music is good and they behave well. They sing well and with obvious pleasure. They sing with an awareness of the musical elements, recognising high and low, loud and quiet and fast and slow sounds.

142. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are taught by class teachers who use the guidelines provided to ensure that pupils cover the programmes of study and make progress from one lesson to the next. In lessons observed, the teachers' understanding and knowledge of the music curriculum were good. Teachers give clear guidance to pupils to improve the quality of their singing. Challenges are given to help pupils develop their skills in listening to and appraising music. Due to the good

organisation of activities, and effective discipline, behaviour is good. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported by their teachers. This ensures that all pupils are making good progress in their music. Pupils enjoy their lessons in an atmosphere of purposeful activity and concentration. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and this has a positive impact on the progress made by all pupils.

143. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, well informed and has adopted the local authority guidelines for music. There is good, informal support for colleagues. Teachers plan in year groups to ensure that all pupils receive the same curriculum. Resources are sufficient to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum's programme of study and are easily accessible for teachers and pupils. Teachers' written reports to parents are unsatisfactory, they provide information of the music studied but do not give pupils' attainment and progress in the subject. The capacity for the school to improve further is good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

144. Pupils attain high standards in physical education in relation to their age. Even the very youngest pupils have good levels of control when they are jumping and landing and they make good use of space. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection when overall standards were reported as satisfactory. Progress is now good in all lessons seen whereas the previous report noted that progress was unsatisfactory in a significant minority of lessons.

145. Pupils are active in lessons and are aware of the effect of exercise on their bodies. They use their bodies with imagination, control their movements and have a well developed sense of balance. Pupils make good use of space and are aware of the need to find space before lessons begin and between individual parts of the lessons. This reduces the time taken in organising them and therefore aids progress within the lesson. Pupils plan their movements well and show skill in performing and linking movements.

146. Pupils levels of achievement are also good. They enjoy physical education lessons and this contributes greatly to their good progress. They are generally quiet and focused during lessons and concentrate well on the different tasks provided. Because of the good relationships fostered by their teachers they strive hard to achieve their best results and work together on co-operative projects very well. Where teachers use examples of good performance as a demonstration, pupils respond by attempting to emulate them and improve on their own previous work. On the one occasion where examples were not well used the pupils were not asked to stop and watch so the positive impact was lost.

147. Teaching overall is good and there were no unsatisfactory lessons seen. Teachers' planning is simple but effective with due sensitivity to the age of pupils. For example, plans for a very young class took account that routines such as changing their clothes for physical education could be difficult and worrying for some pupils. Class control and management of pupils are very good and firmly based on creating and maintaining good relationships so that pupils want to improve and please their teachers. One teacher showed good understanding of young pupils and good management skills when she played *Simon Says* with pupils who were changed so that they did not become bored and disruptive but remained alert and enthusiastic.

148. The co-ordinator for physical education has managed the subject well and lifted standards since the previous report. She has done a full audit of physical education to establish the range and extent of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The results of this audit have been well used to devise a plan and programme to address the main issues. Staff confidence in their ability to teach physical education was low and this has been improved by in-service training on gymnasium and dance teaching. The co-ordinator has taught demonstration lessons to make important teaching points and to support teachers who lacked the necessary knowledge and skills in this subject. As a result staff confidence has risen considerably. Resources are appropriate for the curriculum and the inappropriate apparatus mentioned in the previous report has been replaced by suitable equipment. There is no scheme of work but the school effectively uses units of work provided by the local education authority in conjunction with the its own physical education policy.

149. Physical education has improved since the previous inspection. It is taught well and there is good progression from one year to the next.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

150. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in religious education matches that which is expected for pupils' age. Lessons, scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils show that pupils have an effective working knowledge of the themes in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. They have skills that enable them to relate what they learn in religious education to their own life and experience. This fully meets the requirement for pupils to learn about and from religion. It is not possible to compare pupils' attainment with the previous report because there was insufficient evidence at that time for a judgement to be made.

151. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress in developing an understanding of Christianity, Islam and Judaism. They improve their understanding of right and wrong, learn moral values such as friendship, honesty and respect for others. As a result, relationships in the school are good. For example, in discussions, pupils knew that a feature of the life of Jesus was helping others and they related the idea well to friendly, caring attitudes to others. The development of pupils' spiritual, moral and social values are a good feature of religious education teaching in the school. They learn to appreciate that the festivals and celebrations of Christianity can be compared with those of other religions. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils learned about the customs of Islam and how the festival of Eid-UI-Fitr celebrates the end of Ramadan. A very positive feature of the religious education curriculum is the way it is brought alive by using artefacts and parents to explain the customs and beliefs of others. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, a parent explained the practices of a Muslim and how important events are celebrated. Pupils learned about the use of the prayer mat, the direction Muslims must face when praying and that the holy book is the *Word of God*. Good use is made of pupils' language skills when they write millennium poems that show their feelings. For example, pupils show they are aware of the need to be concerned about others in comments such as *'I want people to be friendly and kind to each other'*. Pupils visit the local church and explain in their own words the meaning of a christening ceremony by writing the following comment, *'He welcomed the baby into God's world'*. Whole school assemblies make a significant contribution to pupils' awareness of the importance of ceremony and custom to religious belief. For example, in a school assembly about the Chinese New Year, pupils were made aware of the customs of others and how they celebrate and show good will towards others.

152. All pupils make good progress in religious education. They cover a wide range of work and build up their knowledge and understanding from one year to the next. Open-ended questions challenge the thinking of all pupils. However, teachers also ask direct questions, adapting them to challenge the pupil's ability to answer. This successfully involves all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and English as an additional language. Pupils enjoy listening to stories and discuss what they know following the story. They talk about how the story makes them feel, or how it relates to their own life. They work willingly and concentrate well, listening to and reflecting on what others contribute.

153. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers' planning is good with clear learning objectives for all pupils that ensure they are given work appropriate for their abilities. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and use the recently introduced scheme of work, prepared by the co-ordinator, effectively to ensure that the Locally Agreed Syllabus is followed. Lessons are planned effectively, behaviour management is good and tasks are provided to challenge pupils' thinking at the different levels of attainment. However, there is not always challenge for pupils in extended writing in the subject. Teachers' planning shows that they have high expectations of their pupils and place importance upon creating worthwhile experiences for them where they are given opportunities to develop their self confidence and explore their feelings. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, religious artefacts were used very well to focus a discussion on the importance of the Koran, a prayer mat and special clothes to Muslims. All teachers use resources well and ensure that the blend of question and answer, co-operative and individual work improves pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers use the planned themes for whole school assemblies to make a good contribution to the subject and they encourage

pupils to think about festivals celebrated by Christians and followers of other faiths. A strength of teaching in all classes is the time and patience of teachers when they encourage pupils to talk about what they think or how they feel. Visits to places of worship and visitors to school enrich the teaching of religious education.

154. The curriculum is broad and balanced and the Locally Agreed Syllabus and scheme of work provide a helpful structure for teachers' planning of lessons. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and has a clear understanding and overview of the subject and there are detailed long and medium term plans. Resources are good although the co-ordinator has identified the need to improve them further to include more artefacts and further enhance the curriculum provision for religious education. The co-ordinator monitors planning and pupils' work and shares expertise with all the staff in meetings. The reports to parents are unsatisfactory because they do not contain information on pupils' attainment and skills; they concentrate on the curriculum coverage of the subject. The school benefits from visitors from the local church. The subject makes a positive contribution to art, music and to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of pupils' education.