

INSPECTION REPORT

SHEPHERDSWELL COUNTY FIRST SCHOOL

Milton Keynes

LEA area: Milton Keynes

Unique reference number: 110378

Headteacher: Mrs F Webb

Reporting inspector: Jean Morley
25470

Dates of inspection: 21 – 24 May 2001

Inspection number: 192830

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 8
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Billingswell Place Springfield Milton Keynes
Postcode:	MK6 3NP
Telephone number:	01908 665418
Fax number:	01908 698473
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Rosemary Hill
Date of previous inspection:	10/03/1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2547 0	Jean Morley	Registered inspector	English Design & technology	<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>How high are standards?</p> <p>a) The schools results and achievements</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p> <p>How well is the school led and managed?</p> <p>What could the school do to improve further?</p>
9388	Tony Mundy	Lay inspector		<p>How high are standards?</p> <p>b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</p> <p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
3586	Betty Camplin	Team inspector	<p>Mathematics</p> <p>Science</p> <p>Geography</p> <p>History</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Special educational needs</p> <p>English as an additional language</p>	<p>How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?</p>

2629 2	Helen Mundy	Team inspector	Information technology Art Music Physical education Religious education Provision in the foundation stage	
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Cambridge Education Associates Limited
Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Shepherdswell First School caters for pupils aged four to eight, of whom there are currently 204 on roll. It serves the Springfield area of Milton Keynes together with Great and Little Woolstone. Some pupils travel from outside the catchment area. The school shares a 10-place designated unit for pupils with physical disabilities with the nearby middle school. Currently, five of Shepherdswell's pupils are attached to this unit although they are fully integrated into school. Nineteen per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs: this is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with statements of special need is above average. At ten per cent, the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low, but independent, documented evidence suggests that the actual figure is closer to 20 or 25 per cent. Twenty-seven pupils come from ethnic minority groups and there are nine for whom English is an additional language. Pupil turnover is high: in the last school year 14 pupils joined and 27 pupils left, other than at the normal time of doing so. Initial assessments show that attainment on entry to the school is below average. Socio-economic circumstances of pupils are average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with a very strong ethos and highly successful strategies for the inclusion of *all* its pupils in *all* aspects of school life. Despite below average attainment when they enter the school, pupils leave with above average standards in English, mathematics, science and religious education. The quality of teaching is good, overall, and often very good. The headteacher leads and manages the school very well. She has a clear vision for the development of the school and a refreshing, open approach to change. The school functions remarkably well on limited funds and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average in English, mathematics, science and religious education.
- The school is a richer community for the care it takes to include all its pupils in all it does.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and very good in the Foundation Stage.
- The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, her deputy and key staff.
- The school uses the full curriculum well to develop literacy and numeracy skills.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes to work are very good and so are relationships.

What could be improved

- Standards in physical education.
- The way in which pupils' behaviour is managed in a minority of lessons.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1997. Since that time it has taken action on the key issues from the report. Test results have improved steadily: in the 1997 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, pupils attained standards that were

well below the national averages in reading and mathematics, and below average in writing. In 2000, test results showed average standards in reading and in mathematics and well above average standards in writing. The 2001 test results are not yet published but they do confirm the judgements of the inspection team that standards are now above average in all three areas. The high standards of provision for personal development, and the good behaviour and relationships reported at the time of the last inspection have all been maintained.

STANDARDS

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

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

This table shows that, in 2000, seven year olds achieved results in reading and in mathematics that were in line with national standards. Results in writing were well above national standards. Overall, standards are now good. This is pleasing and shows a steady but consistent overall improvement. Standards achieved in information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory, while those in science and religious education are good. Except in physical education where they fall below those expected, the standards achieved in all other subjects of the National Curriculum are satisfactory. When pupils transfer to middle school at the end of Year 3, standards in English, mathematics and science are good. Given both that attainment on entry to the school is below average and that (owing to local education authority admission arrangements) a significant proportion of pupils spend only a short time in the Foundation Stage, these results reflect progress that is at least good and sometimes very good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good or better in the vast majority of lessons. It is weaker in the few lessons where strategies for managing behaviour are less successfully deployed. It is predominantly good in other areas of the school.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships among pupils - and between pupils and their teachers - are very good. Pupils' personal development is very good overall.
Attendance	Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

A significant minority of pupils in each class presents the teacher with challenging behaviour. Most teachers in the school deal with this with skill and are to be commended for the good learning environment that they establish in their

classrooms. The challenging behaviour presented by pupils in Year 3 is sometimes less skilfully managed with the result that the potential of the many other good features of teaching in these classes is not always fully realised.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:		aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall		Very good	Good	Satisfactory

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.

Of the teaching observed, five per cent was of the highest quality, 29 per cent was very good, 33 per cent was good, 29 per cent was sound and the remaining five per cent (two lessons) was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is good overall. In the Foundation Stage it is predominantly very good while in Key Stage 1 it is good with a significant proportion of very good and excellent teaching. The quality of teaching in Year 3 is satisfactory overall because the strategies adopted for managing pupils' behaviour are less effective here than in the rest of the school (where they are always good or better). The key strengths in the quality of teaching throughout the school are the day-to-day assessment of pupils' work, the expertise with which the basic skills are taught and the way in which teachers help pupils to understand how well they are doing. Throughout the school, English and mathematics are taught very well. The curriculum is used well to promote pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils learn well and often very well in both the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Their learning is satisfactory in Year 3. Teachers work patiently and skilfully with pupils who have special educational needs, (including those with a physical disability), and with those for whom English is an additional language. The progress of all of these groups is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum offers a broad range of well-planned learning opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good. All pupils - including those with a physical disability - are very well catered for. The level of inclusion is exemplary.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is very good. Class teachers cater very well for the needs of pupils who are learning to speak English, showing patience and understanding.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for personal development - including spiritual, moral and social development - is very good. For cultural development, it is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teachers know pupils well and provide a good level of care.

The school works hard to forge links with parents. In turn, however, their response to the efforts of the school is not always enthusiastic and a significant minority of parents are not as involved in their children's learning as they should be, particularly in helping them to learn to read. The school tries hard to balance this weakness by providing additional support in school. With the exception of some minor weakness in physical education, all other curricular opportunities are good. The school assesses pupils' progress particularly well and this has a positive impact on the standards they achieve.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a skilled leader and manager. She has a clear vision for the work of the school and has the support and respect of her staff. She is very ably supported by her deputy and key staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors work hard and effectively for the good of the school. They are perceptive and supportive.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher has a realistic view of the strengths of the school. She knows where and how improvements should be made.
The strategic use of resources	Money is spent prudently and account taken of the outcome of spending decisions. The school secures good value for money.

The headteacher is well liked and respected by all who work in the school. She very successfully operates an open and co-operative style. She is keen to build further on the school's already good level of provision. The school successfully seeks best value in all it does. Staffing, accommodation and resources are all satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>More than 90 per cent of parents who responded felt that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their child likes school and makes good progress there; • pupils behave well and are expected to work hard; • pupils are helped to become mature and responsible; • the quality of teaching and of leadership and management are good; • the headteacher and teachers are approachable; • information between school and 	<p>A few parents felt that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the amount of homework was not right; • the school does not offer an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team fully endorses all the positive views of parents. In relation to their two concerns, inspectors think that the homework offered to pupils is well judged. Teachers take the trouble to provide imaginative homework that will not place undue pressure on child or parent. Despite this, a significant minority of parents do not support the school in the way they should when helping their children. Far too few, for example, hear their children read on a daily or very regular basis. On the occasions when the school holds meetings for parents - to explain new initiatives or to show them how they could help their child to learn, for example - too few parents attend. The range of activities outside lessons, while not extensive, is satisfactory and wholly appropriate for pupils aged from four to eight.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In 1997 when the school was last inspected, the end of Key Stage 1 test results showed that standards in reading and in mathematics were well below the national average. In writing they were below the national average. Since that time there has been a significant improvement in the standards pupils achieve: last year they were close to national averages in reading and in mathematics and well above the national average in writing. Results were the same when Shepherdswell was compared with similar schools. The 2001 test results have not yet been published but, unofficially, they show that standards are continuing to improve steadily in reading and mathematics and that they remain above average in writing. There provisional results support inspection judgements that standards in all these areas are now above average.
2. At the time of the last inspection, standards by the end of Year 3 were judged to be above expectations in English, mathematics and science. These above average results have been sustained and represent good progress from below average attainment on entry to the school.
3. Foundation Stage children have a variable experience in the 'Early Years' class and in the Reception year because the time they spend there differs according to their age. For the youngest children in each cohort, it is as little as two terms in the 'Early Years' class (both on a part-time basis) followed by one term, part-time in the Reception class. On the other hand, for the oldest pupils, it is two terms part-time in the Early Years class, one term part-time in the Reception class, followed by two full-time terms where there is some integration (for literacy and numeracy) into the class with Year 1 children. This does not represent equality of opportunity although it is completely outside the remit of the school to make the changes that would improve it. Understandably then, the standards achieved at the end of the Foundation Stage are variable. Broadly speaking, they reflect the time that the child has spent in school. It is, however, greatly to the credit of the staff of the Foundation Stage that children make the progress they do. Broadly speaking, children achieve standards at the end of the Reception year that meet expectations in all elements of the Foundation Stage curriculum - personal development, language and communication, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. Given the below average attainment of the children when they join the school, this represents good progress. For a significant proportion of pupils it is very good.
4. Standards in listening are variable but are good overall. Not all pupils find it easy to listen to their teachers for sustained periods of time and the good standards achieved are the result of the staff's expertise and consistent effort. Speaking skills are satisfactory although vocabulary is often limited and is a weaker element. Reading skills are good, despite the fact that too many parents do too little to support the school in its efforts to help pupils acquire these basic skills. Writing skills are strong and are a strength of the school's work. It is the use of the full curriculum to develop writing skills that, in

particular, contributes to the good standards pupils achieve. In addition, the setting arrangements in place for all pupils in Years 1 – 3 play a positive part.

5. The progress that pupils make in mathematics is good across all elements of the subject, including investigative work. As with English, pupils are taught in ability groups. This arrangement makes a positive contribution to the standards pupils achieve. So too does the planned inclusion of mathematical work in other subjects. Year 1 pupils, for example, use graphs and tally charts in science and geography, and Year 3 pupils count and record how many jumps they can complete in a minute as part of their work on the benefits of exercise.
6. By the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 3, pupils achieve standards in information and communication technology that are at the level expected. The same is true of art, design and technology, geography, history and music. Standards in religious education are above those expected. Not all elements of physical education are well taught and, as a result, standards overall are below those expected. The school recognises this weakness and has begun to deal with it.
7. Pupils make good progress through the Foundation Stage and through Key Stage 1. In Year 3, the setting system in English and in mathematics supports pupils well and they continue to make good progress. In all other subjects, the progress pupils make is satisfactory. For pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, progress is as good as it is for all other pupils in the school. They are welcomed and well integrated into every classroom and their teachers take the time to support them well on a day-to-day basis.
8. The school sets challenging targets for pupils at every level. It is successful in achieving them and the strong culture of assessment (and of using what it shows) to help pupils make progress is an important contributory factor.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. The response of pupils during the inspection was at least satisfactory in all lessons, and was often very good or excellent. Ninety-six per cent of the parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire confirmed that their children like school. The inspection evidence, including many conversations with pupils, endorses the parents' view. The very good attitudes noted during the previous inspection have been maintained.
10. Children in the Foundation Stage classes learn positive attitudes by observing the good relationships between parents, teachers and support staff. They enjoy meeting other children and are confident and secure when following classroom and school routines. Children relate well to adults and adapt confidently to the behaviour of children new to the school. When working alone or in a group, they are encouraged to complete activities. The development of personal and social skills underpins the work of the Early Years and Reception classes.
11. Pupils come to school enthusiastically. They enjoy lessons in all subjects, and frequently work independently without needing close supervision. They listen attentively to their teachers and to each other, and are keen to answer

questions and participate in discussions. Excellent attitudes were seen in two Year 2 religious education lessons where, in response to excellent teaching, pupils spontaneously acted Biblical parables. Children in the Foundation Stage were very attentive during 60-minute literacy sessions, shared with Year 1 pupils.

12. Pupils work well in a group, readily exchanging ideas, sharing materials and often making remarkably good use of time. For example, in Years 2 and 3, pupils disperse quickly to their sets for literacy and numeracy, and collaborate closely with pupils from other classes and year groups. Pupils at different levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, all have very good attitudes. In discussion with visitors, they are friendly and polite, and proud of their achievements. During formal lessons, they rarely drift away from their table places or leave work unfinished.
13. Behaviour in classrooms is good, overall. Pupils' concentration upon learning contributes to good progress in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Behaviour is often very good when pupils are grouped on small, carpeted areas to receive instructions at the beginning of literacy and numeracy lessons. Most lessons progress at a good pace, without frequent pauses or distractions. In lessons where the pace is slow, or the content not stimulating, behaviour is less consistent but always satisfactory. Behaviour is usually very good in the open areas of the school building, and in the playground. Brief 'golden rules' for behaviour are displayed in classrooms. Pupils cheerfully conform to the rules and, in all year groups, respond very well to teachers' skills in class management. No serious incidents of misbehaviour were seen during the inspection. Discussions with parents and pupils during the inspection confirm that incidents of aggression between pupils are rare, and are dealt with effectively when they do occur. There have been no exclusions during the past year.
14. Pupils' personal development is very good overall. Pupils are thoughtful, respectful, and they willingly carry out everyday duties in classrooms and throughout the school. Some pupils in Year 3 help to maintain the 'golden rules' at lunchtimes. A 'buddy' system provides informal support for pupils in Key Stage 1 and Year 3. Monitors are to be appointed to assist staff in the new library.
15. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils respond politely and confidently to each other and to adults. They are not afraid to be seen to make mistakes, and they are mutually supportive. Each member of the school community has equal status and receives sensitive and effective support at work and play.
16. Attendance is satisfactory in all year groups and, overall, is slightly above the national average for primary schools. Regular attendance has a positive effect upon pupils' attainment and progress. Most pupils arrive punctually at school and settle quickly to work. Registration periods are efficient, and lessons begin promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good. It was also judged to be good in the last inspection. Of the teaching observed, five per cent was excellent, 29 per cent

very good, 33 per cent good, 29 per cent sound and five per cent was unsatisfactory.

18. Evidence gathered from outside lessons - such as from the work in pupils' books and the quality both of teachers' marking and of their day-to-day assessment - throws an additionally favourable light on the overall quality of teaching. It fully reinforces the judgement made on the basis of the lessons observed, that the quality of teaching in the school is good.
19. Pupils with special educational needs of every kind (including those attached to the unit for physical disability and the pupils for whom English is an additional language) are special to this school. Their teachers take the time to provide as well for them as they do for all other pupils in the class. They are fully integrated into all learning experiences and school is a happy place for them.
20. There is some inconsistency in the quality of teaching across the school. It is very good in the Foundation Stage. Here, teachers have particularly good knowledge of the development of young children, and of the Early Learning Goals. In the communication, language and literacy element of the curriculum, the teaching of speaking, listening, writing and phonics is good. The teaching of individual reading is as good as it can be given pupil numbers. Teachers are still working on ways to do more. Mathematics teaching is good, although in numeracy sessions shared with Year 1 classes, lessons occasionally advance beyond children's understanding. Teachers' planning is good. They plan well together to ensure progressive coverage of the Foundation Stage curriculum. In Years 1 and 2 teaching is good, overall, although with a significant element of very good and exemplary teaching. In Key Stage 2, it is satisfactory overall but with some unsatisfactory teaching. The management of pupils' behaviour and the slower pace to lessons were the weak features - in some lessons and in both of the Year 3 classes. It is these features that slow the very good and good progress made by the younger pupils in the school to satisfactory progress in this final key stage.
21. Literacy skills are taught well in English lessons and the way in which they are developed in other subjects of the curriculum is a real strength of the school. Writing tasks offered to pupils are imaginative and provide an abundance of opportunity for pupils to practise and consolidate the skills they are taught. Teachers' expectations of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar remain constant, regardless of the subject area, and this is a key factor in the good standards achieved.
22. Numeracy skills are also taught well and there are good opportunities to develop these in lessons other than mathematics. Reception children, for example, make a graph of the food eaten by the hungry caterpillar and the oldest pupils in school use their measuring skills when they make the net of a box for the head of 'The Iron Man'.
23. Given the high quality of much of the teaching, clearly there are strong features in teachers' work.
 - A key strength is the use they make of day-to-day assessment. In English and mathematics in particular – although the practice is not exclusive to these two subjects – teachers mark pupils' work directly in relation to the

key learning target for the lesson. They use what they learn from this process to move pupils on and it is a system that works very well and contributes significantly to the good progress that pupils make. The WALT (**W**e **A**re **L**earning **T**o) and WILF (**W**hat **I** am **L**ooking **F**or) characters are used by everyone in the school to make the system fun.

- A second (linked) strength is the understanding teachers impart to pupils with regard to their own learning. Pupils are regularly encouraged to use the traffic light system at the end of a lesson. Green indicates *I understand this well*; amber for *I think I've got it* and red means *I need more practice on this*. Pupils also link this back to WALT and sometimes need a traffic light that has two colours – half green and half amber, for example. This means that pupils are always aware of how they are doing. Furthermore, some teachers employ more challenging strategies. An outstanding example was in a Year 1 mathematics lesson. The teacher taught the numeracy lesson to the point where pupils were ready to do some work independently. She then asked the pupils what they thought Walt had to say (the lesson objective). They were able to say – correctly – ‘to be able to add three numbers’. They were also able to work out Wilf - the teacher’s additional requirements – that when writing their sums they should always place the numbers in descending order of size and that they should complete a minimum of 10. Pupils’ responses showed clearly that they were used to this activity.
 - The adults who support teachers in the classroom make a very positive contribution to pupils’ progress. Their work is invaluable and much appreciated. They use their time well – sitting with pupils during whole-class teaching sessions and helping them to understand the new work. They are well briefed by teachers.
24. There is one feature that, more than any other, is responsible for the *range* in the quality of teaching. In most classrooms it is a real strength, while in a minority, it is a weaker element. This is the management of pupils and the knock-on effect it has on the pace of the lesson. A minority of pupils in the school present their teachers with challenging behaviour. Most teachers take this in their stride and employ highly skilled strategies to channel pupils’ exuberance into productive work. Furthermore, their intervention is slick, discrete and effective: neither damaging to the ego of the pupil nor disruptive to the flow of the lesson. Other teachers confront pupils’ restlessness or lack of attention with a direct comment. This is not always necessary and is not so effective. It not only brings to a halt the flow of the lesson, but also generates a need to await an appropriate response from the perpetrator before continuing.
25. Teachers plan well and, in almost all lessons they are very clear about what they want pupils to learn. In relation to subject knowledge – it is good in literacy and numeracy and at least satisfactory in most other areas. There is some weakness in physical education and this contributes to lower than expected standards. Training to raise teachers’ skills in information and communication technology is ongoing. In the interim, however, expertise is still adequate to teach pupils the skills they need in order to reach satisfactory standards.
26. Homework is set in an appropriate manner but the support the school receives from parents in this regard is variable. Conversations with pupils and scrutiny of their home-school reading diaries confirm, for example, that too many parents do not read with their children as often as they should. It is to the credit

of the teachers, then, that reading standards are as good as they are and that pupils make the progress they do.

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

27. The school provides a broad curriculum of good quality that meets statutory requirements. It is relevant to the needs of all pupils, including the above national average percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need and with English as an additional language. Provision is well focused on topics and themes that make the best of natural links between subjects. The thought invested in providing a variety of opportunities to practise literacy and numeracy skills is consistently good throughout the school. This contributes to the good progress pupils make in many subjects, in addition to English and mathematics. Since the last inspection, the overall quality of provision in almost all subjects of the National Curriculum and in religious education has been sustained. The range of ICT experiences offered has improved. The emphasis on technical skills adds a wider dimension to the way pupils communicate ideas and information effectively. The balance of the time given to the different areas of the physical education curriculum needs adjustment but staff are now aware of this and are beginning to deal with it.
28. The introduction of the Foundation Stage of learning has been successful. Most areas of learning are covered meticulously. One weakness is in access to high quality outdoor play facilities and equipment. However, the Foundation Stage team is as creative in its curricular organisation as it can be in these circumstances.
29. The school is a partner in the special provision for pupils with physical development impairment. It is responsible for five pupils with statements. The way in which these pupils are integrated into the school's classes and year groups is a feature of very good quality. As such, the school is often promoted by the local education authority as a centre of excellence. The inspection team saw at first hand the close co-operation and shared commitment to regular review and evaluation of provision for special educational needs that exist between the school and the middle school to which children go on leaving. This collaboration makes a strong contribution to ensuring steady, continuous learning throughout the primary education years.
30. Social inclusion is taken seriously and teachers show this in their planning. The school does what it can to use the expertise within the local education authority to plan appropriately for pupils whose language of the home is not English. The way in which their needs are met in language and literacy and mathematical development owes much to the system of setting pupils on the basis of prior learning and progress. These groups function very well and pupils clearly respond positively. The match of curricular tasks to need is usually good, and sometimes very good as, for example, work in geography proves to be in helping a youngster talk competently about an earthquake as a geographical feature. There is a shortcoming in that there is a lack of stimulating resources tailored to the acquisition of English as a second language. However, the school does all it can within a limited budget.

31. There is a marked emphasis on finding creative and stimulating ways of catering effectively for pupils' personal, social, and health education. Care of the body and the need to exercise it were, for example, key elements of themes of work last term. The flexible organisation of teaching groups and frequent learning in pairs and threes aid social and personal development considerably.
32. Links with the community are good, as are the efforts made to work in partnership with other educational providers, not just the local middle school. A representative of the RSPCA, for example, made a strong and positive impression on pupils of all ages at an assembly as he talked about how to protect animals from abuse. His input linked very well to the current 'caring' assembly theme. A shared training day with a group of local primary schools was appreciated by staff and has benefited pupils enormously. This was because all the schools involved learned a lot from a highly respected provider of training in how to help pupils solve problems by sharing and discussing feelings and ideas.
33. The enrichment provided through extra-curricular opportunities is sound. The most successful and a very worthwhile feature is the overnight residential visit that Year 3 pupils undertake either at Hunstanton in Norfolk or Wantage in Oxon. This educational journey is highly valued as an exciting opportunity by the children, particularly the trip to Norfolk as many children have no previous experience of the coast of Britain. There are many visits and special events over the year that fit into optional extra-curricular time. There are, however, no after-school clubs. The school has aspirations to introduce one or two from next term but is conscious of the constraints on teachers' time. This is a need that can be realistically met only if and when offers of help come from volunteer adults from the parent body or local area.
34. At the time of the last inspection provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was one of the strongest aspects of provision. It still is. The quality of some of the displays of work is high and speaks volumes about the promotion of these essential elements of learning.
35. Provision for spiritual development is very good. The thought given to helping children to care for the environment and to think about lucky and disadvantaged people and places is quickly obvious to visitors. The staff, when they take assembly, or read stories, often leave space for quiet thought and reflection and this aids personal development, as does the appreciation of the environment and nature. There is a spiritual element to the quality of social inclusion in this school.
36. Provision for moral development is very good. Most pupils respond as they do, in a responsible and cheerful manner, because teachers, support and other staff are such good role models. They show how to respect and work in close harmony with each other, and children follow their lead. The 'golden rules' and 'golden time' procedures are carefully implemented to help pupils, young as they are, recognise right from wrong.
37. Provision for social development is very good. The residential opportunities on offer to older pupils are valuable social experiences. The welcome that all adults in the school give to pupils for whom English is an additional language, to those who are physically disabled and to those who have learning

difficulties, sends an important message to pupils about the need to include everyone in their social circle. Pupils' behaviour on a daily basis shows how natural this has become for them. In addition, there are regular and varied opportunities for pupils to work together.

38. Provision for cultural development is good. The school appreciates the contribution that pupils from its ethnic minority groups can make to the cultural development of the pupils in the school and uses this well. Pupils recall celebrations of the Chinese New Year and of Eid. As well as establishing a feeling of spirituality in assemblies, music from different cultures adds to the school's cultural provision. Pupils are encouraged to be active listeners.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The safe and caring environment in this school, maintained since the previous inspection, raises the standards pupils achieve. Good procedures are established for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. The teacher nominated as the responsible officer for child protection is conscientious and well informed, but has not received recent training. All staff understand child protection issues, and they discreetly implement the school's procedures. Learning support assistants and midday assistants have received some specific training.
40. The school has implemented the local authority's health and safety policy, including procedures for ensuring the safety of pupils on site and during out-of-school visits. Good health and safety practice is supplemented by termly site risk assessments, but risk assessment procedure is not a regular duty of the caretaker. Several members of staff are qualified in first aid, and all staff are sensitive to the needs of pupils.
41. Good supervision ensures pupils' safety in the extensive grounds at break times and lunchtimes. However, the extremities of the grassed areas are not visible to staff in the playground. Although pupils are warned to stay in sight, occasionally their running games take them to obscured, unsupervised areas.
42. Teachers and other adults know the pupils well, and are skilled in assessing their needs. Pupils receive very good individual care and support from class teachers, and from the headteacher, who has particularly good knowledge of individuals and families. The school's learning support assistants are skilled in curriculum and social support, and they develop very good relationships with pupils. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are good, although largely informal, and are based on teachers' observations, knowledge and understanding of individuals. Pupils' personal achievement folders contain good selections of school work, merit awards, and certificates gained in out-of-school activities.
43. A special introductory pack is part of the warm welcome offered to parents when their children join the Foundation Stage. Pupils joining other year groups settle quickly and happily into the school's routines. Good procedures in Year 3 prepare pupils for transfer to middle school. At a special leavers' assembly, each pupil receives a gift of a book, purchased by the parents and friends' association.

44. A good quality policy promotes good behaviour in the school building and in the grounds. 'Golden rules' are displayed in classrooms, and pupils conform to teachers' high expectations of behaviour. The school's system of merit awards acknowledges good behaviour, good work and effort. In each classroom, specific award systems are displayed and closely monitored by pupils. All adults in the school can authorise stickers to be awarded by the headteacher. Weekly assemblies for the whole school highlight pupils' special achievements. The school functions well as a happy and orderly community. Occasionally, some teachers do not manage pupils in the most effective way. For example, some pupils interrupt when their teachers are speaking, or they disregard instructions not to call out answers. This slows the pace of the lesson. The anti-bullying policy is not displayed, but the provisions of the policy are implemented consistently and thoroughly. Pupils have few concerns about bullying. They trust a process of discussion and reconciliation to resolve any incident reported to the staff or the headteacher. Staff and governors have not yet agreed a policy on the use of force by staff, or procedures for noting incidents of restraint of pupils.
45. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are good: well defined and thorough. They work particularly well in English and mathematics. At the beginning of the academic year teachers carefully analyse pupils' performance in a range of standardized or statutory tasks and tests from the Reception year to Year 2. They identify the things pupils can do well and those that they find difficult. They use the assessment information to organize their various teaching groups, to determine special learning targets, and to build on pupils' prior acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills. For example, after looking at the year 2000 test results, teachers noted that pupils performed better in reading and writing than they did in mathematics. They found that a significant number of pupils misunderstood some mathematical vocabulary. Some were reluctant to show their working out or check answers to number work. Teachers felt they were capable of higher standards and subsequently planned more specifically to rectify weaknesses. In the ensuing twelve months, pupils have gained confidence in the use of mathematical language and in checking the accuracy of their own work.
46. Good assessment practice is helping to ensure that what is taught provides sufficient challenge for every pupil to learn at a good pace. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are as well served by this practice as their peers. Classroom assistants work closely with teachers and are very well briefed about the learning intentions. They ensure that these children have constant support and encouragement.
47. Assessment is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage. Informal assessment is very good, and children's strengths and weaknesses are quickly identified. As factors in each class limit the class teacher's time for formal assessment, learning support assistants write brief notes on the development of each child. Teachers and learning support assistants are aware of the deficiencies of this system.
48. Systems for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory. Although the school does not have a written policy for attendance, newsletters include occasional reminders to parents about the importance of punctuality and

regular attendance. Pupils' unexplained absences from school are adequately investigated. The support provided by the educational welfare service is inconsistent.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. Parents' views of the school are generally favourable. All parents' positive views of the school, as expressed in the pre-inspection questionnaire, are endorsed by the inspectors. Twenty-five per cent of parents however, indicated that the school does not provide an adequate range of activities outside lessons. The inspectors found that the range of activities is limited, but is satisfactory for a first school. Some parents also felt that the amount of homework was not right. Inspectors found that the school goes to great lengths to provide pupils with stimulating homework activities. While, overall, parents make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning, many do not use all the available opportunities. For example, the school's presentation for the numeracy strategy was not well attended, and too few parents regularly hear their children read or write comments in their children's reading record books.
50. The school has effective links with parents, who are welcome to visit at all times. The inspection confirms their view of good two-way communication, and good relationships with class teachers and other members of staff. A few parents and friends provide regular, valuable help in lessons to groups of pupils and to individuals. Whenever possible, the school broadens the curriculum by encouraging parents to demonstrate specialist skills and interests.
51. The parents and friends association [FOSS] organises regular social and fund-raising events, and contributes each year to the school's budget. Recent purchases have included musical instruments, lunchbox trolleys and numerous books and small items for classrooms. Good co-operation is established between FOSS and the governing body, and some families are active on both committees.
52. The quality of information for parents is good. Regular and occasional newsletters are informative about curriculum topics, year-group and school events, and important dates. In 1999, many parents completed a questionnaire inviting their comments on various aspects of the school's provision. No area of serious concern was identified, and a similar questionnaire is planned for the current year. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies were explained to parents at evening meetings. All parents receive booklets to help them develop their children's reading and mathematics at home. The school prospectus and the 2000 governors' annual report to parents conform generally with legal requirements, and include additional information and advice for parents.
53. At three consultation evenings each year, parents are clearly informed of their children's progress. Additionally, open evenings and weekly 'sharing time' in classrooms provide parents with numerous opportunities to see the work of their own children, and other children. Annual written reports to parents are of good quality, showing in some detail what children know and can do, and how attainment may be improved.

54. Parents are well informed of the school's routines and expectations when their children enter the Foundation Stage, or join other year groups. In the Early Years class, parents have the opportunity to work with their children at the start of each day. Parents of pupils in Year 3 are well informed about transfer to middle school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed of progress, and they understand the school's procedures for support and discipline. Good records are maintained by the special needs co-ordinator, and she is always available to discuss pupils' progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school, an understanding of its strengths and an awareness of its shortcomings. She has instigated systems to underpin and support the work of the staff. In particular, the assessment systems are strong. Her vision and support systems promote high standards and enable pupils to progress from below average standards when they enter the school to above average standards at the end of Year 2. She is ably supported by a deputy headteacher who leads by example and whose own classroom practice is a key strength.
56. Within the limit of the school's authority, all pupils have equal opportunity. This is a key feature of the school's provision. In particular, the school should be commended for the quality and extent of integration for the physically disabled pupils in its special unit. These pupils – and those for whom English is an additional language - are fully included in all day-to-day activities.
57. A co-operative spirit is evident in the school and there is a strong and supportive induction structure for all staff – new to the school, new to the profession – or both. Teaching is monitored by the headteacher and by subject managers. Strengths are identified, as are areas for improvement. This is a good system and one on which the school can build as it develops its newly introduced systems for performance management.
58. There is a strong governing body that contributes significantly to the work of the school. Individual members have invaluable specific expertise and, corporately, their support is most valuable. E-mail communication between members increases the efficiency of the team in terms of its service to school.
59. The school has appropriately qualified staff to teach all areas of the curriculum, and the help afforded by all classroom support staff is of good quality. While some classes are small, the Reception class has 37 pupils who, were it not for the considerable expertise of the teacher there, would not receive the good – and often very good – education they do. The school makes the best possible arrangements for these children by innovative timetabling. The Foundation Stage learning support assistants are adequately trained, and are skilled in supporting all children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator is a part-time teacher, who also has management responsibilities for religious education throughout the school. In the limited time available, she fulfils all the requirements for a subject co-ordinator. She is fully up to date with recent developments in the Foundation Stage curriculum, and she shares her

knowledge and expertise with the staff. She is a very good classroom teacher, and has a strong and productive working relationship with the Reception class teacher and the learning support assistants.

60. Accommodation is satisfactory. The single-storey school building provides a pleasant and secure environment for pupils and staff. Classrooms and communal areas feature many attractive and informative displays of pupils' work. Most classrooms are adequate in size for the numbers of pupils. However, the Reception classroom is seriously overcrowded during summer term: currently, 37 children attend morning sessions. Foundation Stage classrooms do not have adjacent toilets for the children. Classroom furniture is generally in good condition and is suitable for all pupils in the first school age range. The library is a very pleasant room, well stocked with fiction and reference books. Externally, the Early Years playground is too small for the number of children in the class. The school play area and extensive grassed areas are in good condition. The external play area for the Early Years class is unsatisfactory. The Reception class does not have a designated play area and this limits the potential for the children's physical development.
61. The school site and building are often subjected to external vandalism but, during the inspection, were free of graffiti and litter, and were commendably clean and well maintained. Generally, the site and buildings present no risk to health and safety.
62. The school's learning resources are satisfactory overall and the school does all it can within a limited budget. Resources are unsatisfactory for pupils with English as an additional language, and not enough large soft-play equipment is available for pupils with physical disabilities. Most computers are of modern design, or have been updated. The number of computers available to pupils is below the national average for similar schools. Foundation Stage resources are satisfactory overall, although those for imaginative play and physical development are unsatisfactory. These shortfalls in resources limit the potential for pupils to make the best possible progress in the areas they effect.
63. The school makes very good strategic use of its resources, including specific grant and other funding. Through prudent spending the deficit budget from the last financial year has been almost entirely eliminated. Short-term financial planning is good, but plans for longer term development are not costed, and do not comply with the recommendations of the Audit Commission. The headteacher and administrator apply best value principles when negotiating purchases of goods and services.
64. Budgeting is currently the responsibility of the headteacher and the financial administrator. Governors newly appointed to the finance committee are acquiring a satisfactory overview of the process, and becoming familiar with procedures for systematic review of areas of expenditure. Some experienced governors are adequately informed to monitor the budgeting process and the effects of spending decisions.
65. Administrative routines are very good, and the school office functions smoothly. The school's administrator ensures that updated financial information is available to the governors and headteacher. Good systems are established for checking and collating purchases, and paying creditors. An

audit in 1999 by the local education authority required adjustments to financial procedures. These have all been implemented. The audit indicates the proper expenditure of all funds allocated to the school, including those for pupils with special educational needs. The core curriculum is adequately funded. Details of annual expenditure are available to subject managers, but are not held on the computer. The school makes good use of new technology.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. Working together, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- Raise standards in physical education by:
 - ensuring that a balance is maintained between the different areas of the PE curriculum;
 - making training available to those who need it;
 - monitoring of the quality of teaching in the subject, and the standards pupils achieve.

(Paragraphs 131-135)

- Raise the quality of pupil management in those lessons where it is weak by:
 - providing, for those teachers who would benefit, opportunities to observe the best practice;
 - putting in place a programme of supportive monitoring of the quality of their teaching and of the impact on pupils' learning.

(Paragraph 24)

Additionally, the school should:

- continue do all it can to eliminate the disadvantage that results from the staged entry to full time education; **(Paragraph 3)**

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	29	33	29	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Early Years	YR – Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	12	192
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	18

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Early Years	YR– Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	37

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.3%
National comparative data	5.2%

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.7%
National comparative data	0.5%

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	33	23	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	30	32
	Girls	22	22	23
	Total	51	52	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (77)	93 (77)	98 (96)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	32	31
	Girls	22	22	21
	Total	49	54	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (74)	96 (96)	93 (74)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	5
Indian	6
Pakistani	4
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	119
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y3

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27:1
Average class size	21.5

Education support staff: YR – Y3

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	80

Financial information

Financial year	1999 – 2000
	£
Total income	309120
Total expenditure	303320
Expenditure per pupil	1525
Balance brought forward from previous year	- 6306
Balance carried forward to next year	- 506

Results of the survey of parent's and carers' survey

25.5%

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	192
Number of questionnaires returned	49

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	22	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	27	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	44	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	42	15	2	8
The teaching is good.	63	35	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	38	4	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	21	0	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	35	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	43	47	4	6	0
The school is well led and managed.	65	31	0	2	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	41	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	34	14	12	20

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

67. The Early Years class and the Reception class together provide places for 60 children, aged from four years. Most children have pre-school experience at playgroups. Currently, two children in the Foundation Stage have English as an additional language. The very good provision described in the previous inspection report has been maintained.
68. As described in detail in paragraph 3 of this report, Foundation Stage children have a variable experience in the 'Early Years' class and in the Reception year because the time they spend there differs according to their age. Although it is beyond the remit of the school to change these arrangements, they do seriously discriminate against summer born children. They are deprived of much learning, and start school at considerable social and academic disadvantage to older children. For example, they have a much more limited experience of the lunch hour, and of Year 1 literacy and numeracy sessions.
69. Evidence from baseline assessment indicates that children enter the Reception class with below average attainment. Four children are currently identified as having special educational needs. With good quality additional help from trained classroom assistants, they are fully integrated into all classroom and school activities. Their needs are identified and noted, but children are not included on the special needs register until Year 1. By the time children are ready to begin Year 1, very good teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures satisfactory achievement in all areas of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

70. Children entering the Early Years class have personal and social skills below the standard expected for their age. Very good teaching in the Early Years class and the Reception class enables them to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning.
71. All children settle quickly each day at school. Teachers' lessons are exciting, and frequently amusing and entertaining, and children are eager to participate and to learn. A significant number of children cannot speak in full sentences when they join the Early Years class, and they have difficulty in concentrating for extended periods. Very good teaching - in both classes - quickly improves their speech and concentration, and the oldest children participate in literacy and numeracy sessions with Year 1 pupils. In these sessions, and at other times, they do not interrupt their teachers, and they put up their hands when wanting to answer a question. They speak confidently, and communicate well with other children and with adults. All children are encouraged to discuss their feelings. For example, during the inspection, a child in the Reception class was sad because the local estate agent was unable to offer alternative accommodation for 'the ladybird whose house had burned down'. All children are fully integrated into the classrooms. They are happy, and are not afraid to make mistakes. They learn very positive attitudes by observing the excellent relationships between parents, carers, teachers and learning support staff.

72. Behaviour in the two Foundation Stage classes is very good overall, and is often excellent. All relationships are excellent. The good examples set by adults are imitated and children rarely dispute activities or disobey instructions. Children learn to wait patiently for their turns in activities, and they amicably share equipment. They dress and undress independently for physical education sessions, and most can manipulate small buttons on their clothing. Teachers constantly praise the children's efforts and personal kindnesses. Adults are sensitive to the needs of all children, including those with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language.

Communication, language and literacy

73. When children enter the Early Years class, their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are below average for their age. Very good teaching throughout the Foundation Stage ensures that by the time they leave the Reception class, their attainment in all these aspects achieves the Early Learning Goals. This is particularly commendable in relation to reading because the large class numbers reduce the amount of individual attention that it is possible to give.
74. In a very good music lesson seen in the Early Years class, the children listened carefully to a rhythm demonstrated by their teacher. Most repeated the rhythm, without faltering or interrupting. Their vocabulary is good, and is extended by the mature conversations of all adults. For example, children in the Reception class understand the meaning of 'cocoon' and 'habitat'. In reading, very good daily routines soon enable children to recognise their own names printed on card. In the Reception class they recognise the names of their friends. All children understand that pictures tell stories, and that print conveys meaning. Children of average attainment in the Reception class can recognise many key words. In relation to writing, when children enter the Early Years class, many are reluctant to hold a pencil. With daily encouragement from the class teacher and the learning support assistant, they practise their names and pretend to write telephone messages in a book in their home corner. Imaginative teaching in the Reception class develops children's knowledge of phonics and enables them to pretend to write letters, invitations and magic spells.

Mathematical development

75. On entry to the Early Years class, attainment in this area of learning is below average for children of similar age. Very good teaching in both Foundation Stage classes quickly develops children's skills and, by the time they leave the Reception class, they achieve the Early Learning Goals. They quickly learn rhymes illustrating numbers from one to five, and they know that written numbers have distinct meanings. In a Reception class lesson, number rhymes were developed into simple playlets, demonstrating the concept of 'one more'. Children of average attainment in the Early Years class count objects accurately to six, but do not always understand that the same objects rearranged are still the same number. In the Reception class, average children count objects to twenty. Teachers use a good variety of apparatus to help with counting, but the older Reception children who share Year 1 numeracy sessions are sometimes introduced to new concepts before fully understanding their current work. The youngest children are beginning to recognise some

numbers on their floor robot. The oldest recognise and write numbers to ten, but sometimes write them backwards. All children can copy simple patterns. In both classes, they have very good mathematical language. For example, the youngest children in the Reception class demonstrated positional language by locating their teddy bears 'behind,' 'in front of' and 'in between' other bears. Children recognise and name a variety of two-dimensional shapes, including oval, circle, square and diamond. In both classes they understand simple block graphs. In the Early Years class, they have entered the types of minibeasts found each day on a tree. In the Reception class, they have a graph of greater complexity, showing their favourite fruits.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. On entry to the Early Years class, attainment in this area of learning is below average for children of similar age. Good planning and teaching in both Foundation Stage classes indicates that most children will achieve the Early Learning Goals, and a few will exceed them.
77. In the Early Years class, children's senses are developed through observing and touching an inviting display of natural objects, including conkers, pines and tree barks. Children in both classes are enthusiastic about their current topic of minibeasts. In both classes, the children have made good observational drawings of minibeasts, showing patterning and correct numbers of legs. The teachers have developed the minibeast theme to include other areas of the curriculum. For example, younger children play a mathematical game with ladybird spots and older ones have sewn ladybird soft toys. The classrooms are visually stimulating. Good displays encourage children to ask why things happen and how things work.
78. Information and control technology is taught well. Children play computer games to reinforce their knowledge of mathematics. In the Reception class, children's technology skills are well developed. For example, they understand the function of a fax machine. They have good awareness of time. The teachers constantly remind them of completed work and previous experiences. In a regular morning routine, each class discusses the weather, and the prospects for the day. In the Reception class, children take turns in finding pre-written cards to suit the weather. Children learn about their own culture, and a little of the cultures of other people. They welcome children new to the Foundation Stage, and are encouraged by their teachers to express feelings about cultural events. For example, in a display in the main area of the school, a Reception class child has written 'When it is Eid, I get lots of presents'.

Physical development

79. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children are likely to achieve or exceed the Early Learning Goals although, currently, they do not have access to resources for physical activities, such as climbing and swinging. Teaching is good. In the Early Years class, children show good awareness of space in the small outside area. Without impeding each other, they ride bicycles and play catching games with balls. In a very good Reception class physical education lesson, children showed good co-ordination. The teacher introduced mathematics to the lesson by asking the children to count the repetitions as they jumped with beanbags. Later, some children threw the beanbags

accurately into hoops. In both classes, children's fine motor skills are well developed. In the Early Years class, they use large and small paintbrushes, and they have created a wall display as a collage made with confetti-sized paper. They sew with large needles and thread. In the Reception class, they use fine needles and thread, and develop their use of scissors. They learn to roll clay to make coiled shapes for snail shells. Children with special educational needs are fully integrated in all physical development activities. They build purposefully and imaginatively with bricks and construction kits. During the inspection, a Reception child was seen to fold A4 paper accurately into an envelope shape, and secure the sides with adhesive tape. In the Reception class, children are offered a good selection of joining materials, including split pins, glue, and needles and thread.

Creative development

80. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals. Many children cannot draw when they enter the Early Years class. Good teaching in both classes develops their skills. When they leave the Reception class, their drawings are average for their age. They collage with a wide variety of materials, including sequins, straw, hessian and coloured foils. Teachers have made many attractive displays, using children's own work and ideas. All children enjoy singing in music lessons, and throughout the day. They have a good repertoire of songs. Imaginative play and role-play are underdeveloped in both classes.

ENGLISH

81. In 1997 when the school was last inspected, National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 1 indicated that, in comparison both with all schools nationally and with similar schools, standards in reading were well below average and standards in writing were below average. Since that time, test results have improved significantly. Last year, (2000) standards were average in reading and well above average in writing. Inspection findings indicate that standards in English at the end of Key Stage 1 are still above average and that, taking into consideration all aspects of English – speaking, listening, reading and writing – standards are good overall. These results represent good progress through the key stage. When pupils transfer to middle school at the end of Year 3, standards remain good.
82. In all year groups, pupils are taught in ability groups. Year 1 pupils work in two sets and Year 2 and Year 3 pupils work in four sets. This arrangement serves the pupils well. The content of the lessons is closely matched to their needs, and the work their teachers set for them provides a good level of challenge for the full spectrum of ability. Additional support is targeted at pupils with special educational needs, those with a physical disability and those for whom English is an additional language. All pupils make good progress.
83. Speaking and listening skills are satisfactory. Most pupils listen attentively, although teachers have to work hard to sustain this level of attention. A small but significant minority of pupils experience difficulty in sustaining concentration through a lesson. While most teachers handle such pupils with great skill, some are less successful. Most pupils speak with assuredness. This

is because teachers respect the contribution they make and, as a result, they have the confidence to try out their ideas within the safe confines of the classroom.

84. Standards of reading are satisfactory and are close to being good. Teachers are to be commended for the work they do in helping pupils to become young readers, because far too few parents provide the support they should. Pupils make good use of the library, where they have access to a wide range of books.
85. Standards in writing are a key strength of pupils' work and the school is to be commended for enabling pupils to achieve the high standards they do. There are several contributory factors.
- First, pupils have regular writing opportunities in a range of subjects. Their work in design and technology, geography, history, science and religious education enables them to practise and consolidate the writing skills that they learn in their literacy lessons. Furthermore, teachers expect the same high standards of writing skills in these subjects that they do in the literacy lessons themselves.
 - Second, the writing opportunities on offer to pupils are varied and exciting. Writing is not a paragraph or page of continuous text – teachers make it more inviting than that. Pupils write newspaper reports, draw cartoon strips, retell a story through a labelled map and develop ideas from a single theme in a 'spider' that has as many legs as are needed for the multitude of ideas. Parents report that pupils write at home – notes to themselves, for example. This shows that pupils do not view writing as a chore, but as a useful skill and a fun activity.
 - Worksheets are barely used so pupils do not become lazy writers – they write from scratch, starting with a blank sheet of paper.
 - Although variable from pupil to pupil, overall the quality of both spelling and punctuation is good.
 - The most outstanding feature is the quality of teachers' day-to-day assessment. Pupils know what it is that their teachers want them to learn because they – or their teachers – write it in their book. They talk about it. Pupils do their work with this in mind. When their work is marked, their teachers indicate whether or not the pupil has learned what was intended. Their comments point the way forward for further improvement. This is excellent practice.
86. Of the teaching observed, half was very good and the remainder good and sound in equal proportion. In all lessons the planned work was a really good match for all pupils, and the teacher was very clear indeed about what needed to be learned during the lesson. Teachers are also very good at checking on what pupils have learned and on the depth of their understanding. The one feature that separated the better from the weaker teaching was the management of pupils. In the better lessons this was done unobtrusively, while in the weaker ones it was allowed to disrupt the flow of a lesson that, in all other respects, had the potential to be good or better.
87. Currently, there is a 'caretaker' manager for the subject. This has been unavoidable but will soon be remedied. However, the standards pupils attain (from the starting point of attainment on entry to the school that is below average), and the way that English is practised in other subjects, are evidence

of good subject leadership in the past. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and include an attractive, well-stocked library, designed to foster a love of books and a delight in reading.

MATHEMATICS

88. During the summer of 1997, the time of the last inspection, the overall standard achieved in National Curriculum tests was low in comparison with national average results. This was despite a judgement of good standards of achievement in Key Stage 1 in the last report. Assessment data show that, since 1998, attainment has improved year by year at a rate above the national trend. Boys, who have been in a majority in the age group, have performed particularly well compared with boys nationally and are achieving as well as girls. A very high percentage of pupils reached the expected Level 2 in the year 2000, while the percentage gaining Level 3 was close to the national average. For three consecutive years, pupils of different levels of prior attainment have made consistently good progress from below average attainment when admitted to the Reception class. The standards achieved in all attainment targets are good and still rising, with number and algebra in particular now being strong features of pupils' performance. Improvement in numeracy since 1997 has been substantial.
89. The overall standards achieved by the oldest pupils in each of the key stages, (both in the work seen in books and in lessons), were above average. The six highest achievers in Year 2 and approximately one third of Year 3 pupils attain very high standards. The middle ability group is also working within the upper Level 2 and Level 3 ranges, while the lowest achieving group has a sizeable majority of Year 2 pupils within it who will achieve the expected standard. The standard of work produced by pupils during lessons shows that they make good progress.
90. Year 2 and 3 pupils in the most advanced set began the year confident in their knowledge of place value to 100. They could add and subtract 10's between 100 and 1000 and could place random two and three digit numbers in order. By the end of the autumn term they were applying number knowledge to solving problems using money, and recording findings using two decimal points. They were using standardized units of measure in practical measuring, weighing and capacity tasks. As well as being able to read the time accurately pupils were, by the spring, estimating and checking the time taken to perform everyday chores, and were managing work on coordinates and turns of the compass. Since the spring they have achieved accuracy in using the rules of multiplication and division. These pupils have an advanced understanding of number for their age and they are becoming much more adventurous in exploring patterns in numbers and predicting what they might find when three or four consecutive numbers are added together. They realize, for example, that by trebling the middle number of three consecutive numbers they will find the correct answer. Appropriate work on temperature and handling data could be seen in geography tasks about people and places but there was little in books to show the extent of relevant experience of these concepts. Pupils regularly use ICT resources effectively to investigate mathematical problems or communicate findings about patterns in numbers.

91. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language are placed in groups where they have the appropriate amount of stimulus, challenge and support. They are consolidating number bonds to 20 and using non-standard measure in a variety of ways. Some lower achievers or pupils who are learning English are improving at a faster rate in mathematics than in English, as they find the mental aspects of problem solving easier to deal with than written work. At least one in the sample group whose work was scrutinised has moved from the lower to the middle set. This child is now more confident in understanding place value, and the use of mathematical vocabulary. He is using a range of different methods to show the approach adopted to calculate addition and subtraction using numbers up to 100.
92. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Of the six lessons seen, teaching was sound in one, very good in one and good in the remainder. A significant percentage of lessons for Key Stage 1 pupils are of high quality and lead to rapid progress and high standards. All teachers demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and plan lessons well. They make particularly good use of information gathered from regular marking and monitoring pupils' successes and difficulties in order to set objectives for each lesson. Teachers provide an appropriate balance between practice of number operations to improve mental agility and tasks that provide opportunities for new learning. They make learning fun through the judicious use of resources and the cheerful, skilled help of supporting adults, such as classroom assistants. In a lesson where high achieving Year 1 pupils were, for the first time, being asked to record addition of three numbers, the use of a dice, number lines and number squares enabled children to control their own learning. They were challenged to make up at least 10 sums, starting with the biggest number, and to find their own ways of finding the correct answer. Though the main learning objective was the same, the size of numbers used was matched to pupils' levels of ability. Pupils were keen to succeed and most worked very hard. The teacher made sure that a child with behavioural difficulties was sensitively yet firmly supported and encouraged all pupils so that they achieved their targets. At the end of the lesson, the teacher gave pupils appropriate opportunities to explain and demonstrate their techniques. They were able to do this well. They now need further guidance in how to make the best use of centimetre-squared paper when setting out their sums.
93. One lesson provided very good evidence of how well pupils with physical disability and English as an additional language are taught. The teacher was vigilant in asking them to contribute in the oral warm-up to the lesson and went to help one child as he struggled to understand what was expected in using his fingers to show numbers between one and five. Mathematical language was stressed and pupils encouraged to repeat phrases, such as *count on*, and *count back*. Pupils' self-esteem was fostered by invitations to show workings on the whiteboard. She watched carefully as pupils used practical apparatus to make sets that add to five and intervened to provide appropriate help when pupils made errors. The classroom assistant made sure that the disabled pupil concentrated and understood the practical work. He used beads to find the equivalent numbers. Access to adapted laptop resources to allow him to perform the task in the same way as his peers would be advantageous. Such resources would also help improve physical dexterity.

94. The pace of lessons at Year 3 is sometimes slower than it should be. One oral session was characterized by interruptions where the teacher had to deal with some restless behaviour. At least half of the group was rather lethargic when asked questions. Some did not try very hard to think of appropriate answers. This was in direct contrast to pupils in another mathematics' group whose powers of concentration were much better. The use of small whiteboards, and felt pens substantially helped every child to listen carefully. They then jotted an answer ready to be held aloft for their teacher to check. When working in pairs to consolidate understanding of the order of numbers between 100 and 1000, Year 3 pupils' progress was better. The imaginative ladder game caught pupils' interest. They were more stimulated to experiment and achieved a good standard in ordering numbers correctly. Good reference was made to a homework task involving estimating the page of a book into which a finger is placed at random. With more rigorous strategies for managing pupils, this lesson would have been very good instead of satisfactory.
95. Pupils have very positive attitudes to mathematics and use numeracy skills effectively in many other subjects. Year 1 pupils make tally charts and graphs in geography and science, and recall the order and directions of a route they take on a walk around the school grounds. Year 3 pupils sometimes use number and measure in physical education lessons. For example, work in books shows that some have been asked to count the number of jumps they can perform in a given minute when considering the benefits of healthy exercise. As well as reinforcing their awareness of the significance of mathematics in everyday life these experiences make a strong contribution to pupils' social, moral, cultural and personal development.
96. The curriculum is very good and ensures equality of access to all pupils. The quality of leadership and management is high and enhanced by delegation to a teacher with considerable subject expertise. Plans for future improvement are well defined and likely to raise standards further. The headteacher and staff have not yet undertaken a detailed analysis of the performance of specific groups, such as those with different learning needs and those with home languages other than English, though they have on the performance of individual pupils over time. Further work in this area would enable the school to exemplify more precisely the very good value of provision in mathematics.

SCIENCE

97. Standards are above the national expectation in the last year of Key Stage 1. Pupils' achievement is good when compared with their below average levels of attainment on entry to the Reception year. Teacher assessment results from recent years show a growing proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard. The trend in results has been upwards since the time of the last inspection and improvement since then has been good.
98. In the year 2000, over 90 per cent of pupils attained Level 2, of whom almost 30 per cent achieved above average results in all four National Curriculum attainment targets. Pupils' performance was above the national average, and a very positive indicator of the way in which they are challenged to perform to individual capacity. Lower achieving pupils did not perform quite as well as the average for the age group in using their knowledge of living things, materials

and physical phenomena to make simple predictions and answer scientific questions. This is a practical skill that is improving but it still needs monitoring. Results this year will require careful analysis to establish whether an equal balance between knowledge and understanding is demonstrated in pupils' response to practical tasks.

99. A pleasing aspect of children's achievement in Years 1 and 2 is the confidence they show in using relevant vocabulary in their work about materials, the human body, and sources of energy in the home. For example, in a lesson in Year 1, pupils capably provided quite detailed explanations about why electricity can be both dangerous when misused and very beneficial when used safely. They clearly know that water and electricity should not be mixed and that they would receive an electric shock if they put their fingers into unprotected sockets. They use prediction skills well, to anticipate which appliances may be found in different rooms in the home, and why. Work in books indicates good use of literacy and numeracy skills. The story of 'The Iron Man' provided excellent stimulus for the study of materials and their properties. Pupils wrote, for example, about similarities and differences in materials used to construct models of robots. They used web diagrams to identify key words and sorted materials into sets according to different properties, such as flexible and rigid, smooth and rough. They drew, and independently labelled, parts of a body, identifying more advanced vocabulary than expected of the age group. These included 'heart', 'neck', 'brain', 'shoulder' and 'elbow'. Physically disabled pupils join in with all activities. If they cannot control a pencil well enough to write independently, they receive adult support to communicate their findings. This is achieved either by copying over, or under, adults' hand-written captions, or by the guided use of a computer.
100. Good overall standards are being sustained into Year 3, though the rate of progress is sound rather than good. Some work of good quality about the characteristics of freshwater birds was seen in books. The work on 'The Iron Man' led to work on magnetic attraction and the identification of materials that conduct electricity. Pupils developed their understanding of the body's internal parts by studying X-rays and counting bones in the hand and chest. They found out about tooth decay and how to prevent it. However, in Year 3, there is a lack of progress in pupils' ability to plan independently, undertake fair tests and explain their results. Such a difficulty was encountered when pupils tried to explain what happened when they tested force and friction using toy cars. They found it almost impossible to account for the results verbally, and encountered problems when filling in a worksheet. Their reading and writing skills were not sufficiently advanced and their understanding of forces was not good either.
101. The quality of teaching is good overall, but more consistently good in Years 1 and 2 than at Year 3. All teachers work hard at their planning and provide good opportunities for applying reading, writing, and mathematical skills in science. The main distinguishing feature between the very good and satisfactory lessons is the teachers' subject knowledge and confidence. In the best lesson, the way pupils' use of language and knowledge of electrical appliances was impressive. The collection of a range of goods from school and home fascinated the children and stimulated many predictions and forecasts of how they worked and where batteries might be concealed. The teacher's lively account of how she had learned from her father about new safety requirements for plastic strip insulators on the end of a plug's metal pins was graphic. Pupils

really enjoyed passing examples of the old and new style around so that they could look closely and see for themselves. The lesson in Year 3 about 'Forces' was ambitious and well focused on the objective to learn to reach conclusions about investigations. However, the quality of questioning and explanation was not clear enough to resolve misconceptions about the principles of fair testing. Pupils, especially the lower achievers, struggled to understand the reasons for the test outcomes, or what was expected of them in the writing activity. Only the higher performing group who worked on a computer with a helpful parent fully grasped the idea and reported back with realistic conclusions.

102. Teachers make creative use of informal homework activities to develop pupils' understanding. Simple things are encouraged, such as looking to see what different appliances in the home are made of so they can draw a set of machines with metal parts. Pupils really enjoy this kind of homework.
103. The curricular opportunities are generally good. The variety of tasks and working methods promote pupils' personal, spiritual, moral social and cultural development in many ways, such as the care of the environment and their own bodies. Procedures for assessing progress are usually good and there is regular use of assessment activities at the end of every unit of work. However, marking is sometimes too confined to comments about use of punctuation, spelling, and presentation. Teachers need to achieve more consistency in marking for scientific content and understanding.
104. The leadership of the subject has been newly delegated this year. Already, the expertise of the subject manager is having a positive impact upon provision. Ultimately, this should raise standards. An audit of resources and sustained evaluation of teaching methods are planned once the revised scheme of work is completed. More rigorous monitoring of written plans and lessons should help to identify possible gaps or imbalance in topic work. Further training opportunities will also help less confident teachers to advance their understanding and skill.

ART AND DESIGN

105. Standards in art are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and in Year 3. No art lessons were seen during the current inspection, but two satisfactory sessions of group work were led by learning support assistants. Other evidence was obtained from scrutiny of pupils' work, displays in classrooms and open areas, and interviews with pupils. On that basis, the quality of teaching is judged to be satisfactory.
106. In Year 1, pupils use a variety of media, including paint, clay, papier mâché and collage. They have made large models of minibeasts from papier mâché. Topic work on 'houses and homes' links art with English, mathematics and science. Pupils of average attainment have successfully used various materials to represent the features of buildings. For example, narrow strips of black paper represent rainwater pipes. Sponge daubing creates a good impression of bricks. Some work with clay demonstrates satisfactory skills with clay knives.
107. Pupils in Year 2 have made detailed pencil drawings of Grace Darling, and have produced collage portraits of Jesus. In a good display of topic work, they

have painted and cut out human puppet shapes showing physical education activities. In Years 2 and 3, pupils have studied artists' interpretations of water, and have reproduced them using varied media and tools. Currently they are using a loom to weave an attractive fabric representing the sea. They have successfully used a computer paint program to imitate the work of Mondrian.

108. Progress is satisfactory overall. Each pupil has a sketch book, specifically for use out of school. As part of their investigations into historical sources, pupils in Year 2 have sketched the similarities and differences of buildings. The technique is well developed in Year 3, where higher attaining pupils visiting a local town accurately sketched and coloured a horse and carriage and a variety of buildings. Progress in other skills is currently slow. For example, during the inspection, and late in the academic year, few paintings were available to show the development of pupils' skills between Years 1 and 3. Pupils in Year 3 can name a few artists, but other year groups have little knowledge of the history of art.
109. Art is well integrated with several subjects. For example, in a history project on the Romans, pupils in Year 3 have constructed a hut from corrugated cardboard, twigs and straw. They have made Roman helmets from papier mâché.
110. Teachers' planning is good. Year group teachers plan successfully together. The subject manager who has many other subject and whole-school responsibilities is very aware of deficiencies in the subject, and proposes to improve the curricular balance in each year group, and throughout the school. Resources for art are satisfactory. Accommodation is unsatisfactory. Staff make good use of open areas in corridors but these are not large enough for whole-class lessons.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

111. At the time of the last inspection, standards in this subject were judged to be in line with those expected, both at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 3. Standards remain satisfactory although there is now a strong feature to pupils' work: the designing element.
112. Only one lesson was seen during the course of the inspection and this is clearly an insufficient basis on which to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. Teachers' planning, work on display and other evidence provided by the subject manager was scrutinised carefully. Pupils produce well-considered and workable designs that are detailed and carefully labelled. The quality of these is such that, even from the youngest pupils, the finished product is easily recognisable from the original idea. They are testament to the highly successful way in which literacy skills are developed across the curriculum. Based on the evidence available (mainly in the form of photographs), the remaining elements of their work – the making and the evaluation of the artefact - are of a satisfactory standard.
113. Teachers have adapted a published scheme to suit the school's curriculum and work in this subject dovetails neatly with work in other subjects. Despite this, it

is not just a servant to these subjects because teachers are careful that the basic skills of design and technology are taught.

114. Pupils in Year 1 design a farm. They translate their design into an accurate model, using cutting and sticking skills. Pupils in Year 2 use *Meccano* to build vehicles before attempting to use what they have learned about axles and wheels in constructing an aeroplane. When they need identical parts such as the wings of a bi-plane, they use a template to achieve an accurate result. Pupils in Year 3 design and make an Iron Man. They make their own net for the head and use boxes, in correct proportion, for the rest of the model. They make a sandwich with healthy ingredients and give it a 'Christmas touch'.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

115. Standards achieved in both subjects at the end of Key Stage 1 are above national expectations. They are securely within the range expected of the age group in Year 3. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and maintain steady progress in their final year at the school. In a circumstance where curricular time for history and geography has been reduced since the last inspection, the school has done well to maintain standards at the levels reported last time. There remains scope to improve achievement in Year 3.
116. The approach to ensuring that pupils acquire relevant knowledge, understanding and skills is effective. Distinct topics are carefully planned and well organized so that every term specific elements from history and geography are systematically taught across the school. Younger pupils want to find out about the world they live in and how it has changed over time. They are developing good enquiry skills to absorb information, about, for example, the different types of buildings, shops and leisure amenities in their locality. By the age of seven, children use their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills well to develop their knowledge of people and places, and how lifestyles are different now from what they were in the past. They understand the usefulness of maps and plans to work out a route, or find a holiday destination. They have a good understanding of how to care for the natural and man-made environment and of the importance of valuing different cultures, lifestyles and the contribution of famous artists, authors, sporting celebrities, and royalty. Pupils' use of subject vocabulary is good.
117. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in both key stages. Their achievement is clearly identifiable in the current topic work about 'Houses and Homes' and previous work about 'Size'.
118. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress, especially in Key Stage 1. The observation of a Year 2 child, in dialogue with a language support assistant, provided excellent evidence of her good knowledge of her parents' country of origin, and awareness of some of its geographical features. The conversation about special people and places developed naturally to extend her understanding of the meaning of earthquakes and floods in the context of 'devastating disasters' (her own words) she had heard about in the news.
119. In Year 3, pupils develop and use a wider range of skills in a context of places close to home and further afield. Letters written from the perspective of a

Roman soldier based in Britain reflect their growing ability to write in the first person. They use ICT skills effectively to send letters and messages via the Internet to pen pals in America. They can locate countries around the globe and use their knowledge of grids to find towns and cities on scaled maps. They are beginning to interpret evidence. Their progress, however, is sometimes impeded by a disinclination to present their work to a sufficiently high standard. Some also lack experience of scanning and skimming texts, such as travel brochures, to pick out key headings and information that they can use in their own writing.

120. The teaching observed in five lessons was predominantly sound. One history lesson in Key Stage 1 was particularly good. The preparation and planning were thorough. Time was managed very well, liaison with the classroom support assistant was excellent and ensured pupils with special educational needs participated fully. The teacher's evident enthusiasm for the subject was infectious and pupils really enjoyed the lesson. It provided them with the chance to engage in dialogue of high quality about the achievement of Grace Darling. Pupils shared what they remembered about her but also moved on to be very decisive in establishing reasons why she deserved to be famous. Two geography lessons in Key Stage 2 were not as productive. While they had strengths, particularly in the use of ICT and aerial view resources, they also had some shortcomings. One did not fully build on what pupils already knew about the distinguishing features of two contrasting environments. Writing lists of things that were different about two places did not stretch pupils. Their curiosity was insufficiently aroused, so that their pace of working lacked urgency. The other lesson was characterized by a potentially more stimulating task. Pupils were encouraged to work in pairs to make an index card for an overseas seaside resort. They showed interest and enthusiasm for looking at travel brochures and discovered place-names they had not come across before. However, they became over-excited and rather noisy. The teacher did not take adequate preventative action to restore their concentration. Consequently the lesson deteriorated and learning time was wasted.
121. Pupils in both key stages have positive attitudes to both subjects and especially enjoy practical activities in which they explore the local environment and places further afield. They respond well to visitors who talk to them about their childhood, and to helpers who go on educational journeys with them. The way in which topic work is organised noticeably contributes to pupils' personal development. This cannot be better exemplified than by junior pupils' eager anticipation of a forthcoming residential field trip to the Norfolk coast.
122. The school ensures the delivery of a broad and relevant curriculum in geography and history. All pupils' needs are well met; the teachers' knowledge of their capabilities is particularly perceptive. The leadership and management of both subjects are effectively delegated and result in the efficient use of resources, and the maintenance of good standards of achievement. Plans for future development, and improvement in provision, are appropriate. Staff share sufficient expertise and determination to translate plans into successful outcomes.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

123. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, and at the end of Year 3. Progress is satisfactory in all classes, and throughout the school. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.
124. In Year 1, pupils use the keyboard and mouse confidently to control activities on the screen. They use an art program to create attractive pictures with colours and texture infills. They have accurately word-processed their brief accounts of winter walks. During the inspection, a pupil of below average attainment, with English as an additional language, solved a simple puzzle by matching numbers to ten. Pupils of average attainment in Year 2 model plant growth, and have some understanding of databases. In mathematics and geography, they use a specialised program to solve directional problems, and they program a robot to follow a designated route. They word-process with a variety of typefaces, varying the sizes of fonts, and rearranging simple text. In religious education, they have used these skills to write stories about Jesus. In literacy sessions, they have printed lists of words related to the seaside.
125. Pupils of average attainment in Year 3 can locate and open files. They know that databases will provide fields of information and will order alphabetically for easy recall. For example, in geography, pupils have converted a manual database into a computer database. In science, they have listed the properties of various materials. During the inspection, an average pupil demonstrated satisfactory control of the mouse and, with support, used the keyboard to backspace, erase and insert a word. A good display seen in a Year 3 classroom showed that pupils have e-mailed letters of some complexity to pen pals in the USA. In all year groups, and in all activities, pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported.
126. Attitudes are very good. Pupils are enthusiastic about working with computers, and they wait patiently to use the limited number available. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers continue to receive training: a NOF training programme is scheduled for autumn term. Planning is good, and ensures that computers are used fully in each classroom and in the library.
127. The co-ordinator shares good subject knowledge and expertise with staff and pupils and has recently revised the subject policy and scheme of work to include all areas of the curriculum. Assessment is good, and pupils update their individual records of attainment. The number of computers in classrooms is below the national average for primary schools. Some computers are modern, and others have been updated. Most equipment is in good working order. Accommodation is satisfactory.

MUSIC

128. Attainment in music is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 3. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. During this inspection, two music lessons were seen in Year 3, and one personal and social education lesson with a music component seen in Year 2. Additionally, inspectors interviewed pupils in Year 2, heard singing in assemblies, and looked at a display of music work in a Year 3 classroom. However, this was insufficient to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching in the subject. All pupils, including those with special educational

needs and English as an additional language are fully integrated in all activities.

129. In Years 1 and 2, all pupils enjoy singing. They are practising a good repertoire of songs for a local music festival. They understand the importance of warming-up their vocal chords, and they accurately follow the conducting gestures of their teachers. In the very good part-lesson seen in Year 2, pupils echoed vocal sounds and repeated tapped rhythms. They understood the meaning of tempo, and varied their singing to match a recorded accompaniment. In Year 3, pupils know the names of string instruments, and can identify instruments by sound. They have composed musical pieces, using simple repetition patterns. Their vocabulary includes 'volume', 'timbre' and 'ostinato'. In a good lesson seen during the inspection, pupils confidently sang a three-part round. They responded very well when the teacher distributed drums to add more 'layers' of sound. Following a run-through, they analysed why previously satisfactory singing was now inadequate, and suggested how the balance between voices and drums could be changed. All pupils listen attentively in assemblies to music from a variety of cultures. In an assembly during the inspection, pupils in Year 2 recognised the sound of a sitar. Overall, pupils' progress is satisfactory.
130. The subject manager has good knowledge and expertise, although he is not a music specialist. Assessments of pupils' work are satisfactory. The policy for music is good, and schemes of work show progressive units taught during the academic year. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

131. Standards in physical education are below national expectations at the end of Year 2, and at the end of Year 3. The previous report judged standards to be above national expectations. However, the subject manager, who has only recently assumed responsibility for the subject, has already written a new scheme of work and is aware of the need to raise standards further.
132. In Year 1, pupils listen carefully to their teachers. In a good lesson seen during the inspection, pupils warmed-up by moving to the teacher's instructions, supplemented by tambourine beats. Later, at various speeds, they confidently moved along angled benches and jumped off apparatus one metre high. Their jumps were imaginative, but landings were generally untidy. A pupil with severe physical disability was working well with a learning support assistant. At the end of the lesson, he was invited to show the class how he had progressed. In a satisfactory lesson seen in Year 2, pupils warmed-up enthusiastically, but the exercises were unrelated to the subsequent ball-skills session. In this session, pupils in pairs used balls of indiscriminate sizes for simple throwing and catching exercises. A small number of boys demonstrated good control in throwing and basketball-style patting. However, the skills of most pupils were inadequate to fulfil the lesson's objective of sending and receiving a ball 'in different ways'. Too many 'ways' were allowed, and progress overall was limited. In the best, and briefest, period of the lesson, pupils in pairs used balls and small apparatus to devise and play competitive games.

133. In two lessons seen in Year 3, pupils were learning the game of mini-rounders. In an unsatisfactory lesson, warming-up was unrelated to rounders skills, and the pace of the lesson was very slow. Pupils' throwing and catching skills were generally inadequate, and the teacher was unclear about the rules of the game. In this lesson, bats and balls were incompatible, and pupils had great difficulty in striking a ball cleanly. In the satisfactory lesson in Year 3, pupils showed sound skills in throwing, catching and batting.
134. Progress in physical education is unsatisfactory. Too few lessons were seen during the inspection to support an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, in the lessons seen, some teachers had inadequate subject knowledge and low expectations of pupils' achievements. They offered few opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work, and the work of others. Attitudes are satisfactory overall, but pupils are often frustrated when the pace of lessons is too slow or too fast. In the satisfactory Year 3 lesson seen, pupils sulked when required to wait their turns in batting or bowling. In the Year 1 lesson seen, pupils had good awareness of health and safety. Supervised by the teacher, they arranged large equipment, and returned it at the end of the lesson.
135. The subject manager is aware of weaknesses in physical education. A good policy for the subject includes reminders about health and safety. Assessment procedures have been agreed and, when fully implemented, will be satisfactory. Resources and accommodation are satisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

136. At the end of Year 2 and in Year 3 attainment is good, and has improved since the previous inspection, when some work was unchallenging. Work is now better suited to the attainment of individual pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Pupils now write extensively, and use computers for some of their work.
137. In Year 1, pupils know some differences between Jewish and Christian festivals. For example, pupils of average attainment know that Jews celebrate Succoth at about the same time of year as Christians celebrate harvest. Higher attaining pupils know that a sukkah is constructed from twigs and branches. All pupils speak of places that are special to them, including their bedrooms and their gardens. They understand the importance of sharing. At the end of Year 2, pupils have good knowledge of Christianity. They recall some of stories told by Jesus, and they understand how he included a message in each one. In an excellent lesson seen during the inspection, pupils remembered the story of the house on the rock, and knew that the message was 'I won't let you down'. They have learned about the Hindu festivals of Holi and Diwali. In Year 3, average pupils begin to understand the meaning of symbolism. For example, they know that food eaten at Pesach symbolises events in Jewish lore at the time of the exodus from Egypt. They empathise with the requirement for aid, following natural disasters such as hurricanes and earthquakes. Progress throughout the school is good.
138. School assemblies are generally Christian in content, and comply with legal requirements. Music establishes feelings of spirituality in all assemblies,

where pupils sing, pray and reflect quietly upon current topics. The best assemblies are led by the headteacher. In a very good assembly seen during the inspection, imaginative and exciting use of resources reminded children that each person is special. For example, pupils were awestruck when a drab piece of quartz was revealed to have one highly polished face. Many visitors participate in religious education lessons and assemblies. Their experiences are relevant, but presentations seen in assemblies during the inspection were too advanced for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The school does not always offer enough guidance to visitors about vocabulary for this age group.

139. Four religious education lessons were seen during the inspection. In two lessons the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory, and in two it was excellent. In the excellent lessons, both in Year 2, fast pace held pupils' interest through a number of activities, including role-play. In a satisfactory lesson in Year 1, learning objectives were unclear and pupils were engaged for a long period in copying from the board. Teachers' subject knowledge is at least satisfactory and, in the best lessons seen, was very good. In all subjects of the curriculum, teachers include time for pupils to reflect upon what they have learned. Teachers' planning is good within year groups, and throughout the school. Assessment is satisfactory. Schemes of work are in place, and the subject manager has good knowledge and expertise. She observes lessons and gives detailed, written feedback. In the lessons seen, pupils' attitudes were always satisfactory and, in the best lessons, were excellent. The quality of pupils' written work varies between sound and very good, and is influenced by teachers' expectations. Resources for religious education are satisfactory.