

INSPECTION REPORT

Maidenbower First School

Crawley

LEA area: West Sussex

Unique reference number: 125962

Headteacher: Mrs Lynda Lowe

Reporting inspector: Peter Payne
12155

Dates of inspection: 20 - 22 November 2001

Inspection number: 193327

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 category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 8
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Harvest Road Maidenbower Crawley West Sussex RH10 7RA
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Gill Galliano
Date of previous inspection:	17 - 20 March 1997

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Peter Payne 12155	Registered inspector	Science; art and design; music; physical education.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? - The school's results and achievements. How well is the school led and managed?
Anthony Mundy 9388	Lay inspector		How high are standards? – Attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Marcia Foley 13228	Team inspector	Equal opportunities; history; geography; religious education	
Margaret Jennings 25502	Team inspector	English; special educational needs; English as an additional language	
Helen Mundy 26292	Team inspector	Foundation Stage	
John Plant 20132	Team inspector	Mathematics	How well are pupils taught?
Linda Shaw 15629	Team inspector	Information and communication technology; design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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The Registrar
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Maidenbower First School is a three-form entry primary school serving the southern part of Crawley. The area has predominantly owner occupied housing and pupils are drawn from a wide range of educational and economic backgrounds. The school is larger than other primary schools with 334 pupils aged 4 to 8 in 12 mixed ability classes. The attainment of children when they start their school careers covers a full range of ability, including children with special needs and potentially high achievers. The school is popular. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (1.5 per cent) is below the national average and the percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language (10 per cent) is higher than most schools. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs (12.3 per cent) is well below the national average and the percentage with statements of special educational need (0.6 per cent) is below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Maidenbower is a very good school. Children enjoy interesting lessons and they play together harmoniously. The quality of teaching is good and, because of this and the very high standards of attitude and behaviour, learning is good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and the management of the school is very good. All of the staff have a sense of the vision and purpose for the school and share a commitment to develop and succeed. The school gives good value for money

What the school does well

- The headteacher gives outstanding leadership with very good support from governors and staff.
- The high quality of the teaching and the interesting lessons ensure that learning is effective and that all pupils make good progress.
- The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. They enjoy coming to school, respond to the high expectations of them and take pride in their work.
- It is an inclusive school with equality of opportunity and excellent relationships.
- The provision for social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is very good.
- The school's partnership with parents is particularly strong.

What could be improved

- The standards in reading.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection, the school has changed from a First and Middle School for pupils aged from four to nine years to a First School for pupils aged from four to eight. It has carefully addressed and largely composed the key issues that were identified at the last inspection. Clear schemes of work are now in place for all subjects and the quality and strategies of teaching have been reviewed. Effective delegation of responsibilities to the deputy headteacher, senior managers and curriculum co-ordinators has been achieved. The quality of provision for cultural development of the pupils is now very good and the provision for spiritual development is good. The length of the school day for Year 3 pupils has been adjusted. There have been good improvements in information and communication technology, history, music and religious education and satisfactory improvement in the other subjects of the National Curriculum. The school's potential for further improvement is good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	B	A	B	D
Writing	A	B	D	E
Mathematics	A	A	C	D

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

When children start at school, they have the full range of abilities. They make good progress and most achieve the national Early Learning Goals by the age of five. Seven year olds at the end of Year 2 in 2000 achieved standards that were above the national average in reading, average in mathematics and below average in writing. However, when compared to schools in similar circumstances, writing is well below average and reading and mathematics are below average. Over the last five years, the performance of seven year olds has been consistently above the national trend with the exception of writing in 2000. The performance in the end of Year 2 in 2001 indicates a significant improvement in writing and a decline in reading. Challenging targets have been set for seven year olds in 2002. Standards in the other subjects are above expectation at the end of Year 2 in design and technology, music and physical education. They are as expected in art, history, geography, information and communication technology and religious education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They approach their work with interest and enthusiasm and take a pride in all they do. They participate eagerly in all the activities that the school offers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils respond positively to the school's high expectations of them and they behave very well in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils act responsibly and have a very good understanding of how their actions affect others. They show respect for the values and beliefs of others and form excellent relationships with each other and with adults.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is significantly above the national average. Regular and punctual attendance has a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is a considerable strength of the school and has improved since the last inspection. Teachers provide interesting lessons and, because of the good teaching, learning is effective. Teaching of the basic skills of English and mathematics is consistently good and many of the lessons are very good. Particular strengths of teaching include confident knowledge of the subject, very good management of the pupils and a very high expectation of them. Time is used very effectively and the objectives of the lesson are shared with the pupils so that they are clear about what they are going to learn and how successful they have been. Pupils of all ages are able to increase their knowledge and understanding and develop their skills. The provision made for pupils with special educational needs is good. Particularly effective teamwork between teachers, special needs support assistants and teaching assistants ensures that these pupils make good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Of the lessons observed during the inspection, more than three quarters were graded as good or better and nearly half were graded as very good or excellent.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum provides very good opportunities for learning. There is a broad range of worthwhile activities that meet the interests, aptitudes and needs of the pupils. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented very successfully.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special needs is good. Their teachers and learning support assistants know them well and provide clear individual education plans and effective support. These pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The support and care provided for pupils learning English as an additional language is exemplary. They make very good progress. There are good links to the specialist support services.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The very good provision for pupils' spiritual development is reflected in aspects of the life and work of the school and is an element in acts of collective worship and religious education. The very good provision for pupils' moral and social development is reflected in their social skills and behaviour. Good provision for cultural development enables pupils to experience and appreciate the richness of the cultural diversity of British society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and good procedures for health and safety. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and for monitoring their academic progress and personal development.

The school has an excellent relationship with its parents and carers and maintains a very effective partnership with them. They are particularly supportive of the school and comment on the high expectation of work and behaviour. Arrangements for sharing information about work to be covered and

progress and achievements made are very good. There is a genuine open-door policy and the school welcomes parents in to share information and to ensure that their children are happy and learning effectively. The procedures for monitoring the pupils' personal and academic development and progress are good. It is a particularly inclusive and caring community.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides outstanding and inspirational leadership. There is very good support from the deputy headteacher and senior staff who have delegated responsibilities to manage areas of the work of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is effective. They fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities well, play an active part in school life and provide highly committed support.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning in the classrooms is very good. Good use is made of assessment information from national tests and performance in school.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's funds are managed prudently and good use is made of additional grants. Learning resources are good.

There are sufficient suitably qualified and experienced teachers to deliver the National Curriculum and religious education. The very effective team of special needs support assistants and teaching assistants plays an important part in ensuring the good quality of learning and behaviour. The accommodation is very good and good use has been made of the shared areas that connect each group of three classrooms. External and internal decoration is very good. The outdoor play areas are good. Resources for teaching are very good in English and music. They are good in mathematics, science, information and communications technology, history, geography, physical education and religious education. Financial management is good. Very good use is made of information technology to monitor the performance of the budget and for other administrative purposes. The governors have a policy of achieving best value in their transactions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like to come to school. • The way in which the school is managed. • The good quality of the teaching. • The behaviour of the children. • The high expectation of hard work and achievement. • The approachable nature of the staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • The amount of work to do at home.

The inspectors endorse the parents' very positive views of their school. The school expects its pupils to work and play very hard during the school day, and has a policy of not offering additional extra-curricular activities. The inspectors confirm the very high degree of intellectual and physical application and engagement during lessons. The inspectors found that the amount of homework provided across the year groups was about right.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The levels of attainment of the children upon entry to the Foundation Stage are consistent with the full range of ability, including children with learning difficulties and potentially high attainers. Children make good progress in Year R and, by the age of five, most of them have achieved the national Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning and are ready to begin the National Curriculum. Because of their positive attitudes and the commitment and expectation of their teachers and learning support assistants, children in the Foundation Stage work at or very near to their capacity.
2. At the end of Year 2 in the 2000 SATs tests, the percentage of seven year old pupils achieving the expected level in reading was close to the national average, in writing it was below the national average and in mathematics it was close to the national average for all schools. When compared to the performance of similar schools reading and writing were well below and mathematics was below the national average. However, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher than expected standards was about the national average in reading, below the national average in writing and well below the national average in mathematics. Performance in science was well below the national average for the expected standard, but about the national average for pupils attaining the higher than expected standard. Over the last three years, the performance of seven year olds has consistently exceeded the national trend. The relative performance of boys and girls over this period shows no significant difference.
3. The performance in mathematics has been the focus of attention and inspection evidence suggests that the number of pupils reaching the higher than expected standard will be improved. The school has set challenging targets for seven year olds in 2002. These were carefully established and reflect the performance of the year group through the school, including the proportion of pupils with special needs. Inspection evidence suggests that they will be achieved.
4. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in learning and achieve standards that are at least in line with their individual abilities. The significant factors that enhance their progress are the early identification of need, the very effective support provided by teachers and special needs support assistants and the quality of the individual education plans. Although attainment is often below that expected from pupils of a similar age, the majority of pupils meet the targets set in their individual education plans. Pupils with statements of special educational need meet the targets established in the annual reviews. Pupils learning English as an additional language make very good progress. Basic skills are learned very quickly, particularly when they are related to practical activities.
5. In the other subjects of the National Curriculum, standards are above expectation at the end of Year 2 in design and technology, music and physical education. They are as expected in art and design, history, geography, information and communication technology and religious education. The overall standards in information and communication technology have improved and some pupils have developed skills that are well above the national expectation. The recent investments in new equipment and training mean that the school is well placed to improve standards still further.

6. The impact of the literacy hour on the development of basic skills is evident across the curriculum. There are impressive examples of speaking and listening skills used to promote and extend thinking and to clarify the pupils' understanding of their work. Good quality discussion takes place, particularly in science, history, geography, religious and personal and social education where the thoughts and ideas of the pupils are developed and valued. Pupils use their numeracy skills in the production of graphs in science and geography. They use computers for data handling. As the facilities have been extended, pupils have been able to make increasing use of information technology to support their learning. In Years 2 and 3 they use the Internet and CD-ROMs to find information for a growing range of subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. 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-nine per cent of the parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire confirmed that their children like coming to school. The inspection evidence, including many conversations with pupils, endorses the parents' view. The very good attitudes noted in the last inspection have been maintained.
8. Children in the Reception classes learn positive attitudes by observing the excellent relationships between parents, teachers and support staff. They enjoy meeting adults and other children, and are confident and secure in classroom and school routines. When working alone or in groups they are encouraged to complete activities. The development of personal and social skills underpins the work of the Reception classes.
9. Pupils come to school enthusiastically. They enjoy lessons in all subjects of the curriculum, 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 a Year 1 physical education lesson where, in response to excellent teaching, pupils developed dance sequences of very high quality.
10. Pupils work well in groups, readily exchanging ideas and sharing materials. Pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, have very good attitudes. In discussion with visitors, they are friendly and polite, and proud of their achievements. They are impressive ambassadors for their school.
11. Behaviour in classrooms is good, and pupils' focus upon learning contributes to their good progress. Most lessons advance at good pace, without pauses or distractions. In lessons where the pace is slower, or the content not stimulating, behaviour is less consistent but always satisfactory. Behaviour is very good in the open areas of the school building and in the playgrounds. Brief, positive rules for behaviour are displayed in most classrooms. Pupils cheerfully conform to the rules and, in all year groups, respond very well to teachers' skills in class management. Discussions with parents and pupils during the inspection confirm that incidents of serious misbehaviour, or aggression between pupils, are rare and are dealt with effectively when they do occur. No pupil has ever been excluded.
12. Pupils' personal development is good overall. They are thoughtful and mutually respectful, and they willingly carry out everyday duties in classrooms and throughout the school. All year groups are represented on the school council. Pupils in Year 3 are responsible for issuing and collecting playground apparatus at lunchtimes. Some pupils in Year 3 help younger children with their reading.

13. 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.
14. Attendance is very good and is significantly above the national average for primary schools. The number of unauthorised absences is significantly below the national average. Regular and punctual attendance has a positive effect upon pupils' attainment and progress. Registration periods are efficient and lessons begin promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. Teaching is good or better in over three-quarters of lessons and more than half are very good or excellent. Overall, the high quality of teaching and its impact on learning is a very significant strength of the school. The teachers work very hard to produce interesting and exciting lessons. The success of their lessons is firmly based on their detailed and thoughtful planning. Teachers plan together in year group teams where there is a good mix of expertise and experience. They share ideas and evaluate their work together. All three newly qualified teachers identified this joint approach to planning as major factor contributing to their successful induction into the school. For their part, the newer teachers bring to the school fresh ideas and a good knowledge of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy to help guide their lesson planning in English and mathematics. Amongst the teachers, there is a very good balance and spread of expertise that enables good practice to be shared. More experienced staff are able to demonstrate models of excellence in teaching that helps promote high standards. There is a significantly high proportion of excellent teaching that is spread across the year groups and that occurs in different areas of the curriculum. For example, excellent lessons included music in reception class, dance in Year 1, history in Year 2 and literacy in Year 3.
16. Expectations are high and the teachers are well organised so that the pupils know what is expected of them. The teachers manage their pupils very well and this promotes very good attitudes and behaviour. Special needs support assistants and teaching assistants provide sensitive and effective support for groups and individuals. They help pupil with SEN to make good progress. In a very good Year 1 history lesson, a stunning 'cellar' created for Guy Fawkes captured pupils' imagination and engaged them in exciting role-play. The high standard of teaching contributes very positively to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Collaborative work contributes well to the pupils' social development. Often, the teaching inspires pupils. In an ICT lesson in reception class, a boy watched a programmable toy move forwards and then back. "That was amazing!" he told his teacher. Lessons are very inclusive as teachers use a wide range of teaching strategies to ensure that all pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, are involved fully in new learning. One morning, Barnaby Bear introduced a mathematics problem about shapes to all three Year 2 classes at the same time. At the end of the day, the three classes gathered together, with the bear, to reflect on the solution to his problem. One pupil enjoyed the problem so much that he spontaneously went to the bear to say, "Thank you, Barnaby."
17. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has strengthened teachers' knowledge of the basic skills, particularly in the teaching of writing and in mental mathematics. The teaching of reading is a concern as standards in reading are significantly lower than the high standards of writing. Teachers support the development of literacy and numeracy skills

very effectively through strong cross-curricular links. There is, however, evidence that pupils would benefit from more structure in the teaching of reading so that they develop the confidence to use the skills that they have learned across a wide range of texts and subjects. The use of homework is appropriate.

18. Occasionally teaching is less effective. In some lessons, all pupils work on the same activities in rotation and this can sometimes cause frustration. The tasks can be too easy or repetitive for the higher attaining pupils or too difficult for lower attaining pupils. In a small number of lessons, teachers do not make sufficient adjustments to language to enable pupils with SEN to fully grasp the instructions. In mathematics lessons, pupils work well with minimum supervision, but occasionally 'independent learning' tasks are not effective because the pupils are left unsupervised for too long.
19. Pupils' acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding is satisfactory. They are developing satisfactory intellectual, physical and creative skills. Pupils work very hard and produce a good quantity of work that becomes more evident as they progress through the school. They are interested in learning and concentrate very well. They are very eager to succeed. As they get older, they begin to work well independently. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and respond to the high expectations which adults have of them. The increasing use of ICT improves their understanding and is used to enhance their work.

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

20. The school provides a good range of interesting and worthwhile opportunities for learning which meets the needs of all pupils. These meet statutory curricular requirements and the provision for religious education. All pupils are included and supported to take advantage of the learning opportunities offered. Teachers draw on the background of pupils with English as an additional language where possible in the teaching of history, geography and religious education and this makes them feel part of the school community. Gifted and talented pupils are nominated for an enrichment programme and throughout the school children with special educational needs learn well. They have good support from external agencies.
21. The school has adopted the national strategy for the teaching of literacy and has effective systems in place for teaching the basic skills of spelling, writing and handwriting in Years 1 to 3. The structure of the literacy hour has been modified and is proving to be very effective in supporting the development of writing. The school uses drama and theatre workshops to good effect so that literacy has come alive and visitors provide examples of "living texts".
22. Strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are well developed and have been particularly effective in improving standards in writing and mathematics. In the light of the high achievement in writing it is timely to review the balance of time spent on writing, reading and speaking and listening to make standards more consistent across all aspects of English.
23. The way in which learning is organised, in blocks of time, leads to some very good quality work. For example in design and technology pupils had time to review toys with wheels, design their own versions, learn the practical skills needed to construct them and then to evaluate their toy. History provides particularly exciting and stimulating learning opportunities, but there is a six-month gap between geography activities in Years 2 and 3 which slows down learning. Carefully constructed links between

subjects really improve learning, for example in the developing use of literacy skills in ICT, design and technology and mathematics.

24. The school has a policy of not providing extra-curricular activities, as learning is rich and challenging during the school day. High quality display extends the learning environment outside the classroom, particularly in ICT in Year 2, by supporting independent learning, giving prompts for improving work and providing instructions. There is a comprehensive programme of educational visits that enrich learning.
25. Good use is made of local resources to give learning meaning, particularly in history, geography and RE. Visits to Fishbourne for the Romans, the Rainbow theatre for role-play and Preston Manor for the Victorians bring understanding about the past alive. Children learn about contrasting localities in geography by visiting Gatwick airport and Balcombe village and two local churches are visited to develop understanding about Christianity. These visits greatly increase pupils' learning and achievement. Parents can support learning outside the school day because they are informed of future learning through a very effective home-school contact book.
26. Many opportunities are provided for pupils' social development during the school day. They collaborate in their work, particularly in ICT where they help and learn from each other when working independently in the ICT suites. In design and technology work is displayed that has been produced and evaluated by pairs of children working together. In mathematics there is plenty of interactive work. Problem solving and investigative work was very evident in science. These opportunities result in pupils being responsible in their attitudes and able to work independently without close supervision.
27. The programme for personal, social and health education is good, and has been reviewed and updated by the recently appointed co-ordinator. Most components of the programme are allocated to curriculum areas, and specific topics such as stranger danger are taught in co-operation with specialist visitors. All classes have weekly circle time sessions, and issues raised during circle time are considered by the school council.
28. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, and has improved since the previous inspection, when it was a key issue for action. Provision for spiritual development is very good. Opportunities are planned in religious education and assemblies, but not explicitly in other areas of the curriculum. All pupils are aware of the school's 'special thoughts box', where they may suggest people to be mentioned or remembered in school assemblies. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to develop spiritual awareness. The atmosphere is gently reverential, and pupils settle quickly and behave very well. They often sing as they enter and leave the hall. During the inspection, the headteacher led a very good assembly on achievement. She warmly appreciated pupils' efforts in each class, and particularly congratulated the 'always' children, whose efforts are sustained over long periods of time. Good relationships are established with local churches, and a clergyman is a frequent and welcome visitor. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have pride in their own work, and are respectful of the work of others. Many pupils in Year 3 have responsibilities, including reading support for younger pupils, and care for the school environment. During the inspection, events in classrooms drew spiritual responses from pupils. For example, in a Year R information and communications technology lesson, a robot vehicle was programmed to complete a circuit of the floor. As it returned precisely to its starting point, a pupil said 'That's amazing!'

29. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. A sense of value is promoted in assemblies and in the school council. Adults set strong moral examples, and the very positive relationships in the school encourage very good behaviour and self-discipline in most pupils. Adults make good use of praise to celebrate individual and group achievement. Pupils know and respect school and classroom rules. They have great pride in their school, and show respect for teachers and the other adults who help them every day. They are encouraged to be aware of the needs of others. Instances of aggressive behaviour or bullying are rare, and are dealt with sensitively and firmly by staff.
30. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and staff, are very good. In the playgrounds, pupils mix readily, and are fully occupied, although the school's low perimeter fencing precludes informal ball games. Older pupils are aware of the needs of Reception pupils who are new to the school. In lessons, pupils work amicably in small groups. They learn to co-operate, share ideas and equipment, and communicate quietly. During the inspection, good co-operation was noted in a Year 1 history lesson, where pupils 'paired and shared', and in Year 3 science lessons where apparatus was shared and pupils showed one another their discoveries. Educational visits and visitors to school contribute positively to pupils' social education. In all classes, pupils have responsibilities for tidiness and taking care of resources. They enthusiastically raise money for local and national charities.
31. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school participates in town music events and pupils visit museums to study local and regional culture. All year groups have some knowledge of a number of faiths and cultures, and the school is beginning to establish some multi-cultural or multi-ethnic links with other groups and communities. During the inspection, in a Year 1 registration session, pupils responded in a variety of languages to their teacher's greeting. Recent visitors to the school have included theatre groups, authors and musicians. Paintings by a range of European artists are displayed around the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The safe and caring environment maintained since the previous inspection has a positive effect on 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. All staff understand child protection issues and they discreetly implement the school's procedures, although they have not had recent training.
33. 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 risk assessments for the site and for specific activities. Several members of staff are qualified in first aid, and all staff are sensitive to the needs of pupils.
34. Good supervision ensures pupils' safety in the playgrounds at break times and lunchtimes. Midday assistants are conscientious and attentive. They take close interest in the pupils' activities. 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 very good knowledge of individuals and families. The school's special needs support assistants and teaching assistants develop good relationships with pupils. Procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development are good, although largely informal and based on teachers'

observations, knowledge and understanding of individuals. Teachers are expected to note pupils' significant developments, but no whole-school procedure is established to ensure consistency as pupils move through the school.

35. A starter pack including a 'This is Me' scrapbook for children 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 the adjacent middle school.
36. A good policy promotes very good behaviour in the school building and in the grounds. Brief rules are displayed in most classrooms, and pupils conform to teachers' high expectations of behaviour. The provisions of the anti-bullying policy are implemented consistently and thoroughly. Parents' concerns are specifically addressed in the policy, but their involvement in the resolution of incidents is unclear. However, parents and pupils have few concerns about bullying. They trust the process of discussion and reconciliation to resolve any incident reported to the staff or the headteacher. Staff and governors have agreed a policy on the appropriate use of necessary force to restrain violent or disturbed pupils and the procedures for noting such incidents.
37. The school's informal system of merit awards acknowledges pupils' good behaviour, good work and effort. The headteacher awards a variety of stickers for daily achievement. Sustained good work and personal qualities are rewarded with merit certificates, presented at weekly achievement assemblies. The school functions very well as a happy and orderly community.
38. Systems for monitoring and promoting attendance are excellent and contribute to the very good levels of attendance in each year group. Pupils' unexplained absences from school are immediately investigated, and regular support is provided by the educational welfare service.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. Parents' views of the school are extremely favourable. Very few parents indicated disagreement with the positive statements in the pre-inspection questionnaire. Parents make an excellent contribution to their children's learning. They are keen to be involved and make very good use of the many opportunities offered.
40. The school has very effective links with parents, who are welcome to visit at all times. The inspection confirms their view of very good two-way communication, and very good relationships with class teachers and other members of staff. Some parents and friends provide regular, valuable help in lessons to groups of pupils and to individuals. The school has a training programme for parent helpers, and uses their specialist skills and interests to broaden the curriculum.
41. The friends' association organises regular social and fund-raising events, and contributes significantly each year to the school's budget. Some events are organised in collaboration with another local first school and the adjacent middle school. The combined 2001 fireworks evening attracted many spectators and the schools shared a profit exceeding £5,000. Recent purchases funded by the friends' association have included computers, playground equipment and numerous books and small items for classrooms. Very good co-operation is established between the friends and the governing body. Some families are active on both committees.

42. The quality of information for parents is generally very good, although the school prospectus and the 2001 governors' annual report to parents do not conform fully with legal requirements. Parents in each year group are invited to an informative meeting with the headteacher at the start of the school year. At the start of each term, parents receive a printed summary of the work to be covered in each year group. Regular and occasional newsletters are informative about school events and important dates. The national strategies for Literacy and Numeracy were explained to parents at evening meetings. The school's use of contact books is exceptionally effective. Class teachers update the hard-backed books each week with details of the work to be covered in English and mathematics. Parents write details of their children's home reading and include other relevant information or questions. Teachers' responses are prompt and specific.
43. At two consultation evenings each year, parents are clearly informed of their children's progress. Additionally, teachers participate in an informal evening where children show work to their parents. 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.
44. 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 Reception classes, 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?

45. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides the excellent and inspirational leadership that has ensured the success of the school. She is supported by the staff and governors who share a very positive commitment to the development of the school and raising of standards. There is a clear sense of direction and purpose.
46. The school's aims and values are published and widely distributed. The behaviour, diligence and high quality of relationships at all levels about the school demonstrate the commitment of pupils and adults to live up to them. Significant features of the aims are an explicit commitment to realise each individual's potential, developing positive attitudes and values within a secure and caring community. The school has a commitment to policies and practices that promote the inclusion of all pupils in the educational opportunities that it provides. There is an explicit commitment of staff, governors and parents to the aims of the school.
47. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and some subject co-ordinators monitor the quality of teaching in classrooms by observation or by evaluation of the work of pupils. Outside agencies are also brought in to validate the quality of work in the classrooms. This is a significant development since the last inspection. The school evaluates the performance data produced by national tests and its own internal testing. This information is used to establish realistic and challenging performance targets, particularly at the end of Year 2.
48. The day to day management of the school is good. All staff have current job descriptions which establish their roles and the expectations of them. The headteacher

is supported by an effective deputy who has clearly defined areas of responsibility. There is good delegation of responsibility to the subject co-ordinators, enabling them to manage and develop their own areas of operation. The majority have recently changed their subject responsibility and are beginning to develop the monitoring of standards in their new subjects. The programme of performance management for teachers is in place. Their targets are reviewed and agreed. Training needs are identified with regard to both the individual and the school's needs.

49. The governing body is effective. They fulfil their statutory duties. Governors play an active part in the school life and provide strong and highly committed support. The committee structure is logical and well organised. Committees have clear terms of reference which are reviewed to confirm their continuing effectiveness. The governors have a clear vision for the development of the school and make an appropriate contribution to the construction of the school's development plan and priorities. The governors receive good quality information about the school's performance and their visits are focused on areas of current interest to the committees on which they serve.
50. Educational priorities are established by staff and governors in the development plan and supported by the prudent use of funds. There is a well-established process for constructing the plan and a number of strategies are used to identify priorities for future years. A notable feature of the planning process is the very active involvement of all the staff and governors.
51. The school is well staffed and there is a good match of qualifications and experience to deliver the curriculum. Excellent induction processes are in place to support teachers, special needs support assistants and teaching assistants who are new to the school. Mid-day supervisors are effectively trained and deployed. They play an important part in ensuring the quality of learning and good behaviour. A real strength of the supervisors is their ability to help pupils to structure their play activities.
52. The overall quality and extent of the accommodation are very good. The staff have created very positive learning environments, particularly in the shared areas which link the sets of three classrooms. The outdoor play spaces are very good. Resources for teaching and learning are good and readily accessible. The high quality of the learning environment and the school surroundings owe much to the standards achieved by the caretaker and his staff and to the care and pride in their school shown by the pupils and adults.
53. The financial management of the school is good. The finance committee of governors is provided with accurate information through thorough analysis by the bursar of the monitoring statements provided by the local authority. Very good use is made of new technologies to track and monitor the budget and for other administrative purposes. When it is necessary, firm action is taken to avoid overspending. The governors have a policy of achieving best value in their transactions.
54. The school has been successful in attracting additional funding and specific grants, such as the New Opportunities Fund and the National Grid for Learning, and makes good use of them. Additional funds and grants are wholly applied to their designated purposes and usually supplemented from the school's budget. The members of the administrative staff are effective, enabling the day-to-day procedures of the school to operate smoothly. This allows the headteacher and staff to focus upon teaching and learning. The school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. In order to improve further the already high standards achieved, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

Raise the standards of reading to match the high standards of writing*, by:

- making use of assessments of individual reading achievements to guide planning and target setting;
- making reading activities a more significant element of the literacy activities;
- exploiting opportunities for developing reading skills in the other subjects of the curriculum;
- developing the reading support skills of learning support staff and other adult helpers.

(Paragraphs 18, 22, 63, 73, 75, 79 and 80.)

* *The school has recognised the issue and it is already a priority in the school development plan*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	59
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
15	32	31	22	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	334
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	41

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	33

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	41	52	93

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	28	36
	Girls	49	47	52
	Total	79	75	88
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (86)	81 (90)	95 (97)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	31	36	34
	Girls	49	51	47
	Total	80	87	81
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (87)	94 (93)	87 (94)
	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	0
Indian	4
Pakistani	8
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	315
Any other minority ethnic group	4

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)	14.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR– Y3

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	228.5

Financial information

Financial year	2000 – 1
	£
Total income	631,282
Total expenditure	629,797
Expenditure per pupil	1,959
Balance brought forward from previous year	12,691
Balance carried forward to next year	14,176

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	334
Number of questionnaires returned	130

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	20	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	33	5	5	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	32	1	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	52	36	9	0	3
The teaching is good.	67	28	0	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	41	7	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	25	0	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	32	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	57	39	3	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	76	22	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	29	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	31	25	5	15

The school expects its pupils to work and play very hard during the school day, and has a policy of not offering additional extra-curricular activities. The parents' response to the last question is understandable, but the inspectors confirm the very high degree of intellectual and physical application and engagement during lessons. They do not feel that additional programmes of extra-curricular activities would be appropriate for this school.

Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by the parents. At their meeting with the registered inspector, they were exceptionally positive in their support and praise for the school and for the very strong partnership that had been built between them.

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

56. Children enter the Foundation Stage in the school year of their fifth birthday. Eighty six children are currently in the three Reception classes. Children with birthdays from September to December are full time for three terms. Children with birthdays from January to the end of April are part-time for autumn term, and are then full time for spring and summer terms. The youngest children, with birthdays from May until August, are part time for autumn and spring terms, and full time for summer term. This is consistent with the policy of the local education authority.
57. Each Reception class has children from each age band, and similar numbers are allocated to each class. Most children have pre-school experience at playgroups or nurseries. Some part time children also continue part time at their nurseries. Two children in the Foundation Stage are currently identified as having special educational needs. With additional help from classroom assistants, they are fully integrated into all classroom and school activities. Additionally, a child attending for ten hours a week is awaiting a statement of special educational needs. Three children with English as an additional language receive special help twice a week.
58. Evidence from baseline assessment indicates that children currently in the Reception classes are of broadly average attainment. The previous report judged the standards in the Early Years to be good. Current Foundation Stage standards are judged to be satisfactory, but the criteria upon which these judgements are now based are far more rigorous. By the time children are ready to begin Year 1, the majority is likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. The programme for personal, social and emotional development is good. Children are keen to attend, and they settle very quickly each day at school. They speak confidently, and communicate well with other children and with adults. They are eager to participate and to learn. Their concentration is satisfactory, but some younger children and some lower attaining older children sometimes become inattentive during extended sessions. All children are encouraged to understand their feelings and the feelings of others. For example, in a good religious education lesson during the inspection, children selected pictures to demonstrate a variety of feelings, including happy, sad and surprised. The teacher made good use of carefully selected resources, and ensured that all children participated in the lesson. In all classes children are confident and are not afraid to make mistakes. The school has a good policy for parental involvement at the start of each day. Parents settle their children into the classrooms by helping with activities, and then leave quietly before registration. Children learn positive attitudes by observing the excellent relationships between parents, teachers and learning support staff.
60. Behaviour in the Foundation Stage is at least very good and is often excellent. Children learn to wait patiently for their turns in activities and they share equipment amicably. In all classes, they have good co-operative skills. During the inspection, at the close of a good physical education lesson, teams of children quickly and efficiently cleared the hall of benches and mats. Most children dress and undress independently and higher

attaining children manipulate zips and small buttons on their clothing. Teachers constantly praise the children's efforts and personal kindnesses and at weekly assemblies for the whole school, special achievements are rewarded with headteacher's certificates. Adults are very sensitive to the needs of all children, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.

Communication, language and literacy

61. When children enter the Reception classes, their speaking and listening skills are average for their age. They are developed by satisfactory teaching. Children listen carefully to instructions from their teachers and they exchange information when working and playing together. Children's vocabulary is satisfactory and is often extended during lessons.
62. Children enter the Reception classes with a very wide range of attainment in reading and writing. The school does not have a structured reading scheme, but has a very successful policy for teaching children to enjoy books. Each day, parents choose books to read at home with their children. They can take additional books and a school book bag for their pre-school children. Children understand that pictures tell stories and that print conveys meaning. They turn the pages of familiar books and briefly answer questions about the pictures. They can differentiate between photographs and drawings and they have good understanding of the meaning of 'information'.
63. The teaching of phonics is satisfactory and teachers successfully link simple actions to the sounds of letters. However, the reading strategies taught do not always meet the needs of all the children because they enter school with a wide variety of reading experiences and skills. For example, some children of average attainment confuse letter sounds and letter names and sometimes have difficulty in word-building. The strategies enable some children to identify key words, but do not equip them to read simple sentences where few key words are included.
64. Children's writing skills vary. A few children can write their names. They write frequently and their developing writing is satisfactory. In a lesson where a teaching assistant asked the children well chosen questions about pictures of vehicles, they responded imaginatively before starting their written work. Using phonic knowledge, they made good attempts to write some words and they filled the gaps with pretend-writing.

Mathematical development

65. Children's counting skills are good and their mental mathematics skills are very good as a result of good teaching. For example, in a registration session during the inspection, children quickly calculated that one child missing from the class reduced the total from 29 to 28. Children of average attainment know that 21 is one more than 20 and they can accurately count random objects to twelve. Their knowledge of space, shape and measure is satisfactory. Children of average ability can recognise some numbers to ten. They can write their ages and some can write their house numbers although they sometimes write the numbers backwards. They can total two groups of objects, but some are less certain of the meanings of 'more than' and 'less than'. Children of all attainments have some experience of making class graphs to solve simple mathematical problems.

66. Most children can copy simple patterns. In all classes, they have satisfactory mathematical language. Children of average ability understand 'bigger' and 'smaller', but some are confused by 'tallest'. Most children have good knowledge of positional language, including 'by the side of', 'in front of' and 'in between'. In one lesson using the device of a "parachute", they correctly followed the teacher's clear instructions to change places with children on opposite sides by running under the fabric. In an information and communication technology lesson with the floor robot, the teacher made good links to mathematics. She asked the children to estimate, in non-standard units, the number of steps required to traverse an area of the classroom. Children of average ability can recognise and name a variety of two-dimensional shapes, including circle, square, triangle and rectangle. They recognise some three-dimensional shapes, including a cylinder, but some still refer to a cube as a square.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. On entry to the Reception classes, children's knowledge and understanding of the world are average for their age. Good planning and satisfactory teaching in all classes indicate that most children will achieve the Early Learning Goals.
68. Teachers have made good displays in reception classes to remind children of previous learning. Children of all ages and attainments are enthusiastic about their current topic of travel and can recognise and name many vehicles. A good display of children's work demonstrates how children are brought to school. Good collaborative planning by all reception class teachers shows imaginative links with other areas of learning. For example, in mathematics, the plan is for all children to make class graphs to show how they travel to school. During the inspection one class successfully did so.
69. Children of average attainment know the meaning of push, pull and turn. In a satisfactory lesson, the teacher positioned three hoops on the floor and invited the children to decide into which hoop they should place toys and domestic utensils that are pushed, pulled and turned. One child overlapped two hoops, creating an additional push and pull category for a bottle opener. Opportunities for involvement were limited in this whole class session and some children observed the activity rather than participating in it. However, a child with special educational needs received good support from a specialist teaching assistant. Resources for investigative play are good, but teachers' use of resources varies. For example, during the inspection, in an outdoor play session with a waterway, children were asked to move the boats along the water without using their hands. Drinking straws were available and they soon discovered that the boats could be blown along. Because no other options were available, the activity was of limited challenge for the children of higher ability and their experiences were not extended. Children of all ages and attainments have satisfactory knowledge of information and communications technology. In a good lesson observed, the oldest children made good progress in understanding how to program a floor robot to move forwards and backwards. Children can use the computer mouse to control a simple program and print their completed work. They have some experience of home computers and can identify computers in shops and airports.
70. Good displays of model vehicles encourage children to find out how things work. They build vehicles purposefully and imaginatively with construction kits. In the Reception classes, children are offered a good selection of joining materials, including split pins and glue.

Physical development

71. The teaching of the programme for physical development is good. Children are very confident and they have good co-ordination. In the outdoor area they ride safely and confidently on wheeled toys. In a good gymnastics lesson seen, they moved in a variety of ways on apparatus and on the floor. On apparatus they moved by sliding on their stomachs and backs. On the floor they twirled imaginatively, rolled and crawled. The teacher demonstrated how to jump and land safely. Children individually followed her good example. The children demonstrated very good awareness of space. They knew the importance of warming up and cooling down and understood how exercise can cause breathlessness.

Creative development

72. The programme for creative development is satisfactory and is good in some areas. Children's drawings are satisfactory for their age and good teaching in all classes develops their skills. During the inspection they used effective techniques to make observational drawings of wheels. For example, young children knew that smudged charcoal added an extra dimension to their drawings, although their efforts were not always successful. They print purposefully with bright colours and a variety of textured materials. All children enjoy singing in music lessons and assemblies. They have a good repertoire of songs. In an excellent music lesson children sang enthusiastically and quickly learned two songs related to the story of the nativity. The teacher modelled the singing for them and they were able to perform the parts with careful attention to the phrasing and emphasis. Children can identify some instruments and can play simple rhythms on maracas and wood blocks. Imaginative play and role-play are significant features in all classes. To support the current topic of transport, teachers and teaching assistants have converted a small room into a garage and workshop. The children fulfil the roles of customers and mechanics.

ENGLISH

73. In the 2000 national assessments, 85 per cent of pupils aged seven at the end of Year 2 reached the expected levels in reading which was above the national average when compared with all schools. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected levels in writing, 81 per cent, was below the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading, 39 percent, was well above the national average and in writing, 8 percent, was close to the national average. Over the last four years, the performance of pupils has been above the national average in reading and in writing. When compared with similar schools, results in the national tests were below the national average in reading and well below in writing. Inspection evidence indicates that overall attainment in English in Years 1 and 3 is in line with national averages and that by the end of Year 2, pupils now perform better in writing than in reading.
74. Attainment in speaking and listening in Years 1 to 3 is in line with the national average. Pupils listen well to their teachers and to each other. They learn to speak confidently and with clarity. They gain great benefit from opportunities to develop their use of language in role play activities and in the use of "listening corners" in classrooms. The shared role play areas are well resourced and used to great effect. For example, pupils in Year 1 enjoy exploring famous historical figures such as Guy Fawkes and King James the First by enacting the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot in the cellar of the Houses of Parliament. Pupils with special educational needs have good role models when working in small groups with the special needs co-ordinator and with teaching assistants to hear clear speech, develop good diction and an understanding of the way the English sound system works. Pupils in Year 3 enjoy opportunities to practise the

skills of public speaking by using a microphone to present their poems to each other at the end of literacy hour.

75. Standards in reading have declined over the last year despite the good attainment of those pupils who achieve at the higher levels. Only the most able pupils in Years 2 and 3 can talk about their favourite books and can name some favourite authors. The most able pupils make good progress in reading and can read aloud with good expression. They demonstrate an understanding of library skills and know how to find information from non-fiction books. Average and less able pupils do not make this amount of progress and continue to find it difficult to use the sounds they have learnt to attempt new words. Pupils with special educational needs receive support that is sufficiently focused on the development of individual strategies to ensure progress.
76. In contrast, attainment in writing has shown a marked improvement over the last year and is now well above the national average by the end of Year 2. Pupils enjoy writing for a range of different purposes and develop the confidence to behave like real writers. Although pupils in Year 1 find the joined style of handwriting challenging, by the end of Years 2 and 3, the majority of pupils have developed correct letter formation and an even size to their letters. They gain sufficient awareness of the relationships between sounds and symbols to become confident and adventurous when spelling new words. They learn to proof read their work, edit and make improvements. For example, pupils in Year 3 are able to sustain and develop their colour poems learning how to use similes to make their writing more powerful and vivid. They are challenged to become self critical using advice contained in their "Passports to the Perfect Poem" to reflect on their learning. The school has made some very effective links between the teaching of literacy and other subjects. For example, pupils are able to practise skills learnt on the computers to produce final drafts of poems with suitable line breaks and use the backspace and arrow keys to edit stories. They write instructions for making vehicles in design and technology lessons using the skills learnt in literacy lessons.
77. The quality of teaching in Years 1 to 3 is good and in half of lessons seen, teaching was judged to be very good. The quality of teachers' planning is very high. Teachers plan together in year teams and join together after lessons to reflect on teaching that is successful. This is particularly supportive to those teachers who are newly qualified, as teaching plans are adjusted and assessment used well to inform planning. This was evident in a series of lessons where teachers had planned to introduce both the concepts of simile and metaphor and had changed plans as the week developed. Teachers manage their pupils very well and have very high expectations for good behaviour. As a result, pupils remain on task, sustain interest in their work and have very good attitudes in lessons. They show a very high level of concentration and independence in lessons and gain in learning from opportunities to work together, in pairs and in small groups. Teachers use support assistants very effectively both in lessons and in small groups that are withdrawn for focused teaching so that pupils are well supported, concentrate and make good gains in understanding. All teachers take the time at the start of the week's lessons to make the focus clear for learning. In all classes this is written up for pupils to see. However, teachers do not always refer to the focus sufficiently at the start of each literacy lesson so that, as the week develops, some pupils forget the purpose of the activity.
78. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Monitoring of standards by analysis of pupils' written work is in place, but would benefit from more regular work sampling and marking against National Curriculum criteria. The development of a school portfolio containing examples of pupils' written work with assigned levels would help to maintain a consistent view of attainment at each level. The monitoring of

achievement in reading to focus more closely on the strategies used by those individual pupils failing to make progress would enhance current practice. A range of assessment data is kept by teachers and used to forecast pupils' progress. The co-ordinator produces an annual review report and improvement plan, but this is currently driven by the introduction of initiatives at national level rather than being linked to the actions needed to raise standards in the subject in the school.

79. The quality and range of resources for the teaching of English and literacy are now very good. The school has made a good investment in texts to support guided reading and to enhance book areas in classrooms. While the library area enhances the entrance to the school and provides a good range of books for younger brothers and sisters to borrow, it is not currently used sufficiently either in or out of lesson time to promote independent research and study skills.
80. Overall there has been satisfactory improvement in English since the last inspection and standards have been maintained. The National Literacy Strategy is now well in place and is having a marked impact on the quality and range of different writing styles that pupils are using. The school has already identified the need to improve standards in reading and may need to review the balance placed on reading and writing. It has set clear targets for improvement. As the literacy strategy has become established, the school is now well placed to plan for opportunities in speaking and listening and review support for the teaching of reading so that the high standards in writing can be repeated in all aspects of the English curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

81. Overall, pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 2, attainment is average when compared to all schools nationally. In the 2000 Key Stage 1 national tests, 95 per cent of Year 2 pupils achieved the target of level 2 or higher, compared with the national average of 90 per cent. In 2001, the school figure was 92 per cent, still above the national average. Between 2000 and 2001, the proportion of pupils that exceeded the target and reached level 3 rose from 17 per cent to 29 per cent, compared to 26 per cent nationally. Overall, between 2000 and 2001, the performance of pupils improved but remains slightly below average when compared to similar schools. In the present Year 2, standards are not significantly different from last year, although pupils have made a good start and are progressing well. For example, they are comfortable working with data and have developed a good understanding of the properties of 2-D and 3-D shapes. By the end of Year 3, standards are in line with national expectations with about 50 per cent of pupils reaching level 3. Pupils in the present Year 3 are achieving well. For example, they demonstrate good skills in mental addition and subtraction when playing mathematical games. There is no significant difference in attainment across different aspects of the subject, nor in the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with SEN make good progress as do those for whom English is an additional language.
82. Numeracy skills and knowledge are well developed and constantly reinforced. Teachers effectively plan their curriculum so that pupils' mathematical knowledge can be used and applied in other subjects. For example, pupils benefit from the strong links between their dance work in PE and their study of shape and space in mathematics. Overall, pupils' numeracy skills are good and support their learning in mathematics and in other subjects, although sometimes pupils' drawing and measuring work is not sufficiently accurate.

83. The quality of teaching is good and in one third of the lessons it is very good. A particular strength of the teaching is the high quality of lesson planning. Teachers plan jointly in year groups in order to provide a consistent standard of teaching and learning in the parallel classes. In their weekly meetings, teachers share ideas and experience. They evaluate their work thoughtfully and this enhances their subject expertise. It is particularly supportive for the newly qualified teachers. There is a strong emphasis on oral, mental and practical work. Teachers plan imaginative and classroom activities that are designed to engage and challenge all their pupils. As a result, pupils feel included and respond well. They enjoy learning and work hard. For example, when finding out about 3-D shapes, pupils enjoyed using construction equipment to build solid shapes. Several pupils produced exciting models, such as dodecahedrons, that thrilled the rest of the class.
84. There is good progression across year groups. For example, younger pupils experimented with solid shapes to see how well they rolled, while older pupils investigated designs for nets to make cones and cylinders. The teachers are generally good at organising activities and manage their pupils well to ensure good work and behaviour. Collaborative work contributes well to the pupils' social development. Sometimes the pupils are kept on the carpet for too long during the lesson starters and plenaries and pupils' interest wanes. In some lessons, pupils work well with minimum supervision. However, too often 'independent learning' tasks are ineffective because the pupils are left for too long unsupervised. Special needs support assistants and teaching assistants often provide sensitive and useful support for groups and individuals. However, such support is not always available in mathematics time. In some lessons, there are too many activities taking place for the teacher to monitor effectively all of the work.
85. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The most significant development has been the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy that has provided the staff with a very effective framework for planning and assessing pupils' learning. Systems for tracking pupils' progress are very strong and teacher assessments are usually accurate. However, pupil performance data is still not used fully to support target setting and hence to inform curriculum planning. There is a new mathematics co-ordinator who is keen to build on the good progress achieved by her predecessor. By reviewing the effectiveness of all aspects of the Numeracy Strategy, the school has begun to address priority areas for development, particularly by looking to extend existing good practice.

SCIENCE

86. In 2000, teacher assessments showed that the number of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard of level 2 was below the national average and the average for similar schools. The number of pupils achieving the higher level 3 was close to the national average and the average for similar schools. Teacher assessments for 2001 show that the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 has risen slightly and the percentage of pupils achieving level 3 has risen considerably. The school has maintained the standards found at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment across all areas of the science curriculum is good.
87. Pupils make good progress. Pupils aged seven have a good understanding of forces having an effect on a moving object. They can generate ideas for an investigation and know how to make a test fair. In previous work they have observed and recorded the

properties of materials and, during the inspection, they were discovering the secrets of electrical circuits using batteries, wires and bulbs. Their genuine excitement and reaction to their discoveries was quite infectious. In Year R pupils confidently recognise forces such as pushes and pulls. In Year 1 they investigate a number of phenomena associated with light and in Year 3 the work associated with flooring materials provides opportunities for investigation and the design of fair tests.

88. The teaching of science is very good. Teachers plan in year groups, and this provides a very structured approach to their teaching. Teachers extend their pupils' learning and enable them to observe phenomena, such as the response of potential flooring materials to abrasion, to make simple predictions and to provide explanations. Because lessons have a good pace and teachers are particularly skilful at questioning, pupils are very interested in the work and their learning is good. A very notable feature of the science lessons observed was that because the pupils are confident and secure, they feel able to make suggestions and predictions without fear of ridicule. Their views are listened to carefully and are valued by teachers and pupils alike. Good use is made of ICT when it is appropriate to do so, including the use of programs for data handling, information retrieval from CD-ROM and the Internet and some simulation software. Teachers involve all pupils equally and consequently all pupils, including those with special needs and those whose first language is not English, make similarly good progress in their scientific understanding and knowledge.
89. Pupils' attitudes to science are very good. They are interested in the subject and concentrate on their work. When working in groups, in situations which can present many distractions, they remain focused on their tasks and are keen to extend their ideas and discuss their observations with each other. Pupils listen well to each other and accept each other's instructions and suggestions. Their behaviour is excellent.
90. The co-ordinator has only recently taken on responsibility for science. She has good subject knowledge. The school has identified the investigative aspect of science as a priority and this has been addressed through staff training and by placing additional emphasis on teaching investigative skills. The medium term planning has recently been revised and includes impressive links to other subjects of the National Curriculum and health education. Assessment procedures are well organised. Some subject monitoring has taken place, particularly by the headteacher. Resources for science are good.

ART AND DESIGN

91. The standards achieved in art and design by seven year olds at the end of Year 2 are at least as expected, and pupils make good progress. Pupils in Year 3 achieve good standards. The standards reported from the last inspection have been maintained and some of the work seen is of a very high quality. Children in the Reception classes have explored the possibilities of a very wide range of media and simple techniques. They use painting extensively to support and illustrate their work. Pupils in Year 1 have observed the nature and shape of faces in detail and then drawn and painted self portraits using their new found knowledge of colour mixing to achieve impressive skin tones. They have created and printed pictures on computer using appropriate painting programs. In Year 2 there is a good development of skills with some striking examples of observational drawing with very close attention to details of shape, colour, light and shade, using pencil and pastels. Pupils in Year 3 were researching and exploring the philosophy and techniques of the Austrian artist Hundertwasser, using a range of media to exemplify his approach to decorative architecture, including the generation of images

using ICT. Art techniques are used throughout the school to support and enhance the work in other subjects. Sketchbooks are used, but the quality of work in them varies.

92. No formal art lessons could be observed during the inspection. However, evidence from teachers' planning, scrutiny of work displayed in classrooms and the range of original artwork displayed about the school indicate that the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory. Discussions with pupils about their work in art suggest that they are able to explore techniques and use them to illustrate a range of work in other subjects. Pupils in Year 2, for example, were confident when describing the ways in which their knowledge of IT programs helped them to be confident when creating visual images on the computer.
93. The co-ordinator has only recently taken on the art and design brief and her leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The scheme of work is based on a logical progression of acquisition and development of the various skills of the artist. Resources are adequate for all aspects of the subject, including three-dimensional work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. There were no opportunities to observe design and technology lessons during the inspection because of the construction of the timetable. It was not possible to make a judgement about standards for Year 3 pupils.
95. Standards in Year 2 are above national expectations based on the work seen that was done during the first half of the autumn term. Pupils began by evaluating toys with wheels in preparation for making a vehicle for Barnaby Bear. A carefully constructed sheet focused pupils' attention on how the wheels work and resulted in carefully labelled drawings. The pupils' own designs were of very good quality and were annotated with materials they would use to make their vehicle. These designs were translated into models with wheels that worked. A variety of methods of making axles were used and the vehicles were finished to a very high standard with paint and glued materials.
96. Higher ability pupils showed particular understanding by their thoughtful choices of materials such as cotton wool for steam train smoke, clear plastic for windows and gold foil for lights. The evaluations were also of high quality because they showed a range of ideas for improvement like adding more detail, making the windows the same size and doing nothing because it satisfied the needs of the pupil. The quality and range of the work shows that all pupils were able to take part and achieve very good standards. Allowing a block of time for this work has made it possible to develop depth of understanding and quality of work produced by the pupils.
97. The teaching of design and technology is good. A teacher showed pupils in Year 1 how to make a sliding mechanism in a face with a tongue that stuck out and in. They were encouraged to make one too and record the materials they had used. They then applied their skills to make a face mask to fit their own face with eyes that moved. The masks were painted in flesh tones which had been mixed during art lessons and accentuate noses and lips by toning and shading. All pupils were able to achieve a finished mask with moving eyes and the work closely matched teacher's planning. This was another example of good use being made of a block of time for pupils to develop and apply their skills to produce a result of quality.

98. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. Planning follows the national scheme of work and a range of experiences is planned to develop skills systematically. A variety of materials are used to ensure full coverage of the programmes of study. The subject has a new co-ordinator who has a good understanding of standards in design and technology and how to plan quality activities which encourage pupils to use their creativity in the design process. Some improvements could be made by making greater use of ICT by pupils and include more artefacts from other cultures for pupils to review.

GEOGRAPHY

99. No lessons were seen in geography as no teaching in the subject was taking place at the time of the inspection. However, a discussion was held with the new subject co-ordinator and displays and pupils' work were studied. In addition Year 3 pupils and staff were questioned about their work.
100. Sufficient evidence was available to judge that by the age of seven pupils meet the national expectation overall in geography. Their place knowledge is satisfactory and they can use simple atlases and globes to locate known countries well. Whilst they know some countries, including those of the United Kingdom on the map, they do not know that the huge chunks of land on the world map are named continents. The character of travelling Barnaby Bear has been an excellent stimulus to enthuse the children and their teachers in geography and has allowed seamless links to take place with the history curriculum in which Barnaby becomes a time traveller. Their ability to ask geographical questions is better than that expected at this age and they can ask some very good questions for the bear to find out on his travels. They can suggest the clothes that should be packed to journey to some countries, thereby showing a general overview of the weather in those places. They can draw items that Barnaby brings back as souvenirs from Australia, indicating that they have satisfactory knowledge of places and the way of life there. Their understanding of the environmental aspect of the subject is not very well developed. This is because little scope for focus on environmental quality is included in the scheme of work.
101. Progress in geography is satisfactory, with clear progression in ideas and skills from age five to eight. Pupils in Year 3 have a good knowledge of the local facilities in Maidenbower and know which products and services can be obtained there. They have carried out a potentially excellent investigation suggesting questions to be used to collect using data linked to numeracy. The data was to be collected through homework to find out local work travel patterns and ICT was a useful way to graph the results. However, the project did not use all classes' data to get a representative result nor were pupils asked to analyse the resulting simple patterns spatially using Ordnance Survey and road atlas maps. Consequently their final learning was more limited than it should have been.
102. Pupils enjoy their geography learning. Fieldwork opportunities through visits to Gatwick Airport, Maidenbower and Balcombe as a contrasting village are good, although little use is made of the school grounds to develop directional or mapping skills or environmental quality work. Resources are good and have improved since the last inspection.
103. The school makes sensible links between humanities and other subjects and this has a good impact on pupils' understanding and motivation and often saves time. However, there are some very long periods of time when no geography is taught at all because it does not link naturally with the topic being taught. Since the environmental aspect of

the subject is given inadequate attention in the scheme of work, there is a need to readjust the imbalance regardless of topic links.

104. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection. Records of pupils' progress against the unit of work expectations are well kept in some classes, but this assessment system is informal and is not yet a policy followed by the whole school to track progress. The subject co-ordinator, who is well qualified to lead the subject, has just taken up its leadership again. Clear expectations from the headteacher as to what is required in line with the school improvement plan means that she has begun to monitor and evaluate work and lessons. It is too early for this to have any significant impact, but it has given the subject leader a good way forward.

HISTORY

105. Provision for history is good. At age seven pupils meet the national expectation for history. Six year olds are able to describe the events which led to Guy Fawkes' capture by sequencing pictures. They can tell the difference between light sources of the past and present through the use of real and reproduction objects which they handle and discuss. Seven year olds can recount the travels and main life events of Florence Nightingale and describe the reasons why she is remembered for her impact on hospitals in the Crimea. Pupils' standards and achievements in historical enquiry, one particular aspect of National Curriculum history, are above that which is expected by age seven, due to very effective teaching in the infant years. Pupils are able to ask relevant historical questions which they can follow up through their lessons within the good structures planned by teachers. They can act as young historical detectives, using a range of resources from home and school, to find out about famous people from the past. For example, they can extract information about the past well from photos and paintings. The highest achievers know, even though they cannot express the idea in very clear terms, that photos of the past are a more reliable source than paintings.
106. No history lessons have yet taken place in Year 3, but interviews with pupils and scrutiny of previous Year 3 work indicate that historical enquiry continues to be a strength in the junior part of the school.
107. All pupils make good progress in the subject and are challenged to learn well due to the very good overall quality of teaching. Teachers make learning history exciting and often fun, due to the wide range of sources and resources with which they present pupils. For example, Year 1, as part of learning about Guy Fawkes in a range of ways, have an outstanding opportunity to use their knowledge in a supervised rôle play in a small room turned into the cellars of the Houses of Parliament.
108. Teachers create a good atmosphere for learning the subject in the methods that they use to teach and the way in which they get pupils to contribute to the stimulating displays. The use of visiting dramatists and site visits to places such as Balcombe, Fishbourne Roman Villa and Preston Manor in Year 3 is a strength of the subject. Teachers' capacity to raise pupils' curiosity and get them asking questions to research is very good. They use clear language about the past and present and make very good use of challenging time lines on display to reinforce the pupils' developing knowledge of the chronology of their focus events and inventions in Year 2.
109. Special needs support assistants and teaching assistants support teachers in their work well. Ongoing assessment of how the pupils are doing in lessons is often good, for example, when teachers and classroom assistants listen to and question pupils

who are sharing their ideas in pairs. It is clear that pupils with additional language needs as well as other special educational needs are learning well in these situations. However, there is no whole school system for tracking pupils' progress over time.

110. Improvement in the subject since the time of the last inspection is good due to the knowledge and understanding of teachers. This is an achievement as this subject often suffers due to the time impact of the national Literacy and Numeracy strategies. The new subject leader has a continuing vision for the subject through classroom observation and work monitoring done so far and has rightly identified the subject's strengths.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

111. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations in Years 1 to 3. Pupils in Year 1 are able to assemble faces from an assortment of parts, create firework pictures and edit text using the "shift", "backspace", "space" and "arrow" keys. These skills are developed and in Year 2 pupils can use the mouse confidently to drag shapes to match up with the correct description and add a sentence of their own. More able children can correct their work as they go, and all can print their work independently. Year 3 children improve their precision with the mouse in creating concentric shapes and using the pencil tool to draw a building. They increase their knowledge of painting tools by using "fill", "rubber" and "undo" keys and selecting colours for insertion. They are able to suggest ways of improving their skills. In Year 3 they have, in addition, one session each week in the local middle school ICT suite where they can be taught specific skills in a class group. This makes for effective teaching.
112. Throughout the school the basic skills are taught in focused teaching sessions and good display reminds children which keys or tools are significant. Opportunities are made in English and history to practise punctuating their work and this serves to practise basic skills in ICT and literacy. Sometimes less able pupils do not complete the task and their satisfaction would be improved if they had a smaller amount of text. Teachers have a greater level of confidence to teach ICT and demonstrate skills to groups as a result of their New Opportunities Funded ICT training. Good joint planning by each year group makes clear what has to be taught.
113. Work is planned based on the national scheme of work and in the lessons which were observed there was a good match between planning and what was taught. Some samples of work were seen which indicate, together with the planning, that there is full coverage of the programmes of study for ICT. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection because the wide range of applications and planned scheme of work show that all aspects of ICT are being taught and experienced by all pupils. ICT is used to develop learning in a range of subjects. Examples include the use of CD-ROMs to find information and develop geographical learning, using the programmable floor robot in maths and using drawing and painting packages in art to support creative development.
114. All teachers make very good use of ICT in display and make sure that ICT specific vocabulary is displayed clearly. This provides support for independent learning when an adult is not present and pupils need to remember instructions. The display in the Year 2 shared area is exemplary. Pupils are shown how to improve their work by good spacing and the use of line breaks and are asked to comment on the text they see in everyday life. This serves to increase their awareness of ICT and to think about how

they can use it to improve their work. The weekly objective for ICT is displayed and a challenge to provide for more able children.

115. The subject is well managed and has its own forward plan which is reflected in the school development plan. Planning includes budgeting to improve pupil computer ratios in line with the national targets for 2004. The newly appointed co-ordinator is familiar with the plan and is taking responsibility for the subject including plans to monitor to ensure consistency of teaching.
116. Good use has been made of grant funding and the school's own resources to set up a groups of six computers in each year group activity area. All the computers have the same set of programs, which enables pupils to become familiar with them and to work independently. A technician supports the school by ensuring that the equipment is always in good working order and consequently children receive their entitlement to ICT. Internet safety is covered by a policy detailing how the school will protect children and ensure safe use of e-mail and the Internet.

MUSIC

117. The standard of music across the school is above expectations. Singing is good throughout the school because of the quality and enthusiasm of the teaching and the wide range of opportunities that are provided to learn, refine and perform songs. The quality of singing in lessons and in assemblies is very good. Pupils in Year 1 learn about the different types of percussion instruments and use these to accompany their singing. They show good rhythmic skills. For example, in a Year 2 lesson based on the theme of music for celebrations, pupils made up a rhythmic repeating pattern and they successfully performed their ideas to the class. Musical terminology is introduced at appropriate times and pupils are genuinely interested in the technical aspects of the subject.
118. The quality of teaching in music is very good. Teachers have good levels of technical competence, plan lessons well, are able and prepared to perform credibly, have high expectations of what pupils can do and are prepared to take acceptable risks. They have developed excellent techniques of questioning which bring out the pupils' knowledge of the subject and give them opportunities to make suggestions and choices. Very good relationships have been established and teachers ensure that music is fun. They have very high expectations and their management of pupils both in class lessons and in year group activities is excellent. Because of the very good quality of teaching in the majority of music lessons observed, the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils was either very good or excellent. This resulted, for example, in pupils understanding the importance of listening attentively and of repeating rhythms accurately.
119. Pupils enjoy learning about and making music. They are eager to respond to questions, treat their instruments with respect and are able to demonstrate a very high level of co-operation during group activities. Many pupils show a secure sense of pitch and they have a very good memory for words. They show a satisfactory understanding of the way the instruments can be played to create an effect. They have opportunities to listen to music from a range of cultures, including their own. Pupils with special needs are fully integrated into musical activities and they respond well. They are attentive and very well behaved. Opportunities are taken to introduce music from other cultures through recordings and live performances from visiting musicians. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

120. Music is very well managed across the school and has made good improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge and understanding of music and provides support for her colleagues. Resources for music are very good. Instruments are of good quality and are well maintained. There is a good range of recorded music from a range of cultures and traditions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

121. Overall standards in physical education are above expectations. All pupils, including those with SEN, enjoy the subject. They work very hard. Both girls and boys achieve well and make good progress. Most pupils have a well-developed sense of balance and timing. In dance pupils show increasing skills as they extend their range of movement and postures, combining elements to form imaginative sequences. Many pupils are able to interpret their work well within a context such as autumn leaves.
122. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. A particular strength of the teaching is the effective shared planning that builds on the good subject expertise amongst the staff and ensures consistency across classes. Teachers enjoy the subject and this encourages the pupils. They manage their pupils well so that the pupils approach the subject enthusiastically with a shared commitment. Pupils behave very well. They listen carefully to instructions and work very hard to improve their routines. The teachers use an effective range of strategies to engage and challenge the children. For example, there is extensive use of paired and group work so that pupils can share ideas and opinions. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate each other's work, highlighting the best parts and suggesting ways to improve. In a very good Year 2 lesson, the teacher modelled strong and weak transitional movements in order to develop the pupils' evaluation skills. This proved to be a very powerful learning strategy. In some lessons, there is very good use of demonstration to enhance learning. However, sometimes demonstration is rather rushed and the coaching points are not sufficiently emphasised. Performance plays an important part in the most successful lessons. For example, in an excellent Year 1 lesson, the teaching and learning was beautifully choreographed to music. The teaching programme enabled pupils to practise purposefully before giving their final polished performances. The teaching of PE contributes significantly to the pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
123. The PE curriculum is an appropriate balance of indoor and outdoor activities including gymnastics, dance and games. Teachers pay appropriate regard to issues related to health and safety. In lessons they highlight the effect of exercise on the body and discuss with pupils the importance of healthy exercise. The co-ordinator has played a major role in maintaining the high standards within the subject since the last inspection. She has carefully monitored the quality of teaching and learning through lesson observation. She has willingly shared her expertise and love of the subject by giving demonstration lessons and by providing other teachers with clear guidance and support in their planning and delivery of the subject. External advice has been welcomed, for example, to support the teaching of games. As a result, teachers have gained in confidence and are able to achieve consistently good standards. The leadership of the subject is excellent.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

124. By the end of Year 2, seven year old pupils have achieved satisfactory standards in line with the expectations of the West Sussex Agreed Syllabus. They have developed

some knowledge of different faiths and can appreciate that some people have particular celebrations and symbols which have a religious meaning for them. Pupils' capacity to respond sensitively to the needs and feelings of others is well developed in RE lessons due to the skilful management of teachers. Pupils' progress in expressing their feelings relating to occasions, themselves and their reactions to others is good. For example, the majority move from thinking at the age of six that the only precious gifts are those which cost money, to an appreciation at age seven that the most long lasting and essential acts and gifts are those which show care and love for fellow pupils and adults.

125. Although no lessons were seen in Year 3, evidence from work on display, collected in the subject co-ordinator's file and gained through interviews with pupils shows good standards of recorded knowledge about Divali. Although pupils know what activities they have done in RE, they are less sure about the bigger picture as to why they are learning these things.
126. Pupils learn well in lessons as a result of largely good teaching with many very good features. Teachers' high expectations and skilfully led discussions give pupils of all abilities the opportunity to make contributions to the topic under discussion. Often the experiences of pupils of different faiths and backgrounds in the class are used well to involve those pupils in a natural but motivating way, as in a Year 2 lesson on celebrations. Many RE lessons include some moments for reflection close to the end of the lesson. These are successful, promote calmness and reinforce learning. The contribution of the subject to spiritual education is very good.
127. Some satisfactory and good lessons do not always make the best use of time. Whilst teacher led discussion is well focused and essential, it sometimes goes on too long and pupils lose opportunities to make a quick structured independent recording of facts learned for future recall.
128. The new subject leader has realised that greater subject knowledge about different religions is a need for many staff and that it is her role to address this for herself and others. She has made a good start by producing a teacher resource book on Divali with the aid of the teacher for English as an additional language. Lesson observation has been a useful way of learning about standards and has led to supportive discussion. ICT in the form of web sites and CD-ROM information, although recognised as a potential resource for teacher knowledge, are as yet unused. Picture and object resources for pupils have increased significantly since the last inspection and are used well in lessons. So have the use of visits to churches and the involvement of different faith visitors from the local community. There is currently no system for tracking pupils' progress in the knowledge aspect of RE as pupils move up through the school.