

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **TOWERS INFANT SCHOOL**

Hornchurch, Essex

LEA area: Havering

Unique reference number:102309

Headteacher: Mrs E J Duffield

Reporting inspector: Mr S R Beaumont  
8440

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2001

Inspection number: 193336

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Osborne Road Hornchurch Essex
Postcode:	RM11 1HP
Telephone number:	(01708) 447407
Fax number:	(01708) 443533
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Alan Castell
Date of previous inspection:	April 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
8440	S Beaumont	Registered inspector	Science Religious education Physical education Foundation Stage	The school's results and pupils' achievements Improvements since the last inspection
19798	J O'Keefe	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well is the school led and managed?
27061	I Stainton-James	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography History Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
20951	P Littlejohn	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Special educational needs English as an additional language	How well are pupils taught?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a smaller than average sized infant school with 176 pupils. It is usually over subscribed. Children enter a reception class in the September following their fourth birthday with skills broadly in line with children of this age nationally. At present there are 15 more boys than girls. Eight pupils claim free school meals, which is lower than the national average. Thirty one pupils have special educational needs, including one who has a statement, which is again below the national average. Seven children are from families of Indian or Caribbean origin, which is lower than in other schools locally. The school serves a favoured socio-economic area, and there is little movement of pupils, other than to the junior school on the same site in the September following their seventh birthday.

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

This is a good school in which pupils gain standards above the national average in many subjects. Pupils make good progress except in science and in some other foundation subjects, where they could do better if there was not so much emphasis on English and mathematics in the curriculum. Teaching is of good quality, especially in reception and Year 2 classes. There is sound leadership, and the school gives satisfactory value for money. The strengths of the school outweigh the weaknesses.

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

- Gains high standards in mathematics, which are well above those achieved nationally.
- Provides good and often very good teaching in the reception classes and in Year 2.
- Ensures that pupils develop good personal and social skills.
- Provides good resources for learning.
- Governors give very good strategic direction to the school.

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

- The teaching of science to increase the number of pupils achieving higher levels.
- The balance of the curriculum, ensuring that subjects other than mathematics and English get fuller coverage, and pupils perform even better in them.
- The provision of extra-curricular activities to broaden experiences available.

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

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

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in April 1997. There has been a marked improvement in the teaching of mathematics, and in pupils' performance. Where this was a weakness it is now a strength of the school. There has been a decline in the quality of teaching and standards reached, especially for higher attaining pupils, in science. There has been an improvement in standards in art and design and in design and technology. The assessment policy is now being used well, and there has been an improvement in the pace and quality of lessons in the Foundation Stage, and in Year 2. Teachers are now planning activities with greater challenge in more subjects, especially for the higher attaining pupils. All policies have been revised and schemes of work created to meet new requirements, other than for physical education. There has been substantial improvement in outdoor areas and in the availability and use of learning resources throughout the school, and this has had a positive effect in raising standards. The school has made good use of recent government initiatives in raising teachers' confidence and skills in using computers, and in local initiatives for improving writing. These have helped to raise standards. The school is well placed to make further improvements.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
reading	B	C	C	D
writing	B	B	C	E
mathematics	C	B	A	B

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

These results show that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 were broadly in line with those achieved by pupils of this age nationally in reading and writing, but well above the national average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools (those with fewer than 8 per cent claiming free school meals) results are below them in reading, well below them in writing, and above them in mathematics. Results for 2001 show that standards were maintained in mathematics and improved in reading and writing. Standards in science remain at the national average for pupils gaining the expected level for pupils of seven, but the percentage of pupils gaining the higher levels (that expected of nine year olds) is below that achieved nationally. There has been a very good improvement in the results in mathematics, which was a key issue from the last inspection.

There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls, or of pupils from ethnic minorities. The school has effective policies for including all pupils in activities. The school meets its targets set with the local education authority in English and mathematics.

Children enter the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday with skills broadly in line with children of this age nationally. Most children enter Year 1 having achieved the early learning goals, with many exceeding them. Inspectors judge that pupils currently in Year 2, at the end of Key Stage 1, will be well above the national average in mathematics, above national averages in reading, speaking and listening, and broadly in line with the national average in writing. They will be below the national average in science. They are likely to be above nationally expected levels in design and technology, art and design, and in information and communication technology. In physical education and geography pupils are on course to achieve nationally expected levels. In religious education they will meet standards required in the Havering Agreed Syllabus. Inspectors do not have enough information to judge standards in music or history.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Children enjoy coming to school. They have good attitudes and are generally eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour throughout the school is good. A very small number of pupils show challenging behaviour in some lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils develop well, they carry out responsibilities very well and show good initiative for their age. They work and play well together, and relate well with their teachers and with each other.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory, with higher than average authorised absence. The school states that this is because a high number of parents take their children on holiday during term time.

The attitudes, behaviour and relationships of pupils are very positive factors on standards achieved. Non-attendance is having a negative effect on the quality of learning.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	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.*

Teaching in reception classes and in Year 2 is good. It is satisfactory in Year 1. There is good and often very good teaching of literacy and numeracy throughout the school. Teachers plan their lessons well, and the teaching of basic skills is very good. Good teaching is given to pupils with special educational needs. The quality of learning for the full range of pupils is good.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Although the National Curriculum is fully taught, there is an over-emphasis on English and mathematics which leads to an unsatisfactory balance. This means that other subjects do not have sufficient time allocated for all pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision, and educational plans are carefully constructed and used. Pupils meet the targets that are set for them.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Only one child currently needs additional help, and this is being given.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is good overall. It is good in developing moral and social skills, and satisfactory in bringing about cultural understanding and spiritual growth. Opportunities for reflection, stillness and for deepening experiences are sometimes missed.
How well the school cares for its pupils	All who work in the school know the children well, assess their progress effectively and ensure that they are well looked after.

The school has satisfactory links with parents and works closely with them, particularly when their children start in the reception classes. Parents are sent good information detailing how their children are getting on, but not enough about what they are being taught.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and other senior staff give sound leadership based on careful consideration and consultation with other teachers. Curriculum co-ordinators do not visit other classes sufficiently to check on the quality of teaching and advise if standards are high enough.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors give good leadership. They have a clear vision for the development of the school. They bring excellent commercial and technical skills, which are used well. All statutory responsibilities are fulfilled other than in the completion of a risk assessment.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is aware of its strengths and weaknesses and has prepared an appropriate development plan to improve performance. Results from tests are carefully analysed to see if any groups of pupils are not performing well enough.
The strategic use of resources	The school gains all available grants and uses them to good effect, checking that they get good value for them. Resources for learning are very good, and these are well used. Teachers are well deployed and work well with the small number of classroom assistants employed.

The school is fully staffed with experienced teachers and there are very good learning resources. Accommodation is good. These factors have a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school.</li> <li>• Children make good progress.</li> <li>• Good behaviour.</li> <li>• Good teaching.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information as to what is being taught.</li> <li>• Extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• A particular safety/security aspect.</li> </ul>

Inspectors share parents' views, and have alerted the headteacher to the safety/security issue raised. Other improvement issues are referred to in the report.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Results from national tests in May 2000 show that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were broadly in line with those achieved by pupils of this age nationally in reading and writing, but well above the national average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools (those with fewer than 8 per cent claiming free school meals) results were below them in reading, well below them in writing, and above them in mathematics. Similar results have been achieved over the previous three years, with a steady improvement in performance in mathematics. Results for 2001 show that standards were maintained in mathematics, and improved in reading and writing. Standards in science remain in line with the national average for pupils gaining the expected level for pupils of seven, but the percentage of pupils gaining the higher levels (those expected of nine year olds) is below that achieved nationally.
2. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls or of pupils from ethnic minorities. The school has effective policies for including all pupils in activities and expects appropriately of them. There has been a very good improvement in the results in mathematics, which was a key issue from the last inspection.
3. Children enter the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday with skills broadly in line with children of this age nationally. They make good progress in the reception year, and achieve and often exceed the nationally expected levels in all areas of learning. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1, and the school meets the targets that are set. In the work seen and in observations during the inspection, there were particular strengths noted in number work in mathematics, and in speaking and listening. There was a weakness in that not enough pupils are achieving the higher levels of which they are capable in science.
4. Inspectors judge that pupils currently in Year 2, at the end of Key Stage 1, will be well above the national average in mathematics, above national averages in reading, speaking and listening, and broadly in line with the national average in writing. They will be below the national average, as assessed by teachers, in science. They are likely to be above nationally expected levels in design and technology, art and design, and in information and communication technology. In physical education and geography pupils are on course to achieve nationally expected levels. In religious education they will meet standards required in the Havering Agreed Syllabus. Owing to timetabling and insufficient evidence, inspectors are not able to comment on standards in music and history.
5. Standards have improved in English, mathematics, art and design, and in design and technology since the last inspection. This is because teaching has improved. Standards in science have declined because insufficient time is given to it.
6. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and individual education plans are fully in place. The school keeps detailed information about targets for development and takes action to meet the educational needs of the pupils. The school consults with parents and makes use of various agencies to support its work. Pupils' progress is assessed against their individual targets and they make sound progress. Pupils' individual education plans are reviewed at appropriate intervals. This enables all the pupils to be fully integrated into every aspect of school life and has a positive impact on their attainment and personal progress.
7. Higher attaining pupils are now making satisfactory progress in English and mathematics because the pace of lessons has improved and more challenging tasks are set. This has not occurred in the teaching of science.

8. There are no pupils with English as an additional language in Key Stage 1 who need added support. At this stage of the term there is insufficient evidence to report on the progress of the one child with English as an additional language in the reception class.

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

9. Pupils clearly enjoy coming to this school and have good attitudes to their work. Year 2 pupils, when asked, said they loved the school and would recommend it to others. Their good attitudes have a positive effect on their academic progress.
10. In the Foundation Stage, children progress very well in their personal and social development. They take turns and share resources, listen carefully to teachers and generally concentrate well. In Years 1 and 2, almost all pupils listen carefully to teachers and each other and try their best in lessons. Pupils behave well in and around the school and parents value this aspect. Pupils are friendly and courteous and can talk confidently to visitors about their work. They understand that the way they behave has an effect on others.
11. Personal development is very good and is a strength of the school. Pupils are mature and sensible. Independence skills are encouraged well in the reception year and children are soon able to put on their own clothes and choose activities. Pupils show very good levels of personal responsibility and have very good initiative. At lunchtime pupils queue in an orderly fashion, independently choosing their food and then paying for it themselves.
12. Bullying is not a problem in the school and pupils are confident that, should it occur, teachers would deal with it quickly and fairly. Relationships are good. Pupils treat each other and staff with kindness and respect. Pupils all work and play well together which contributes to the happy and harmonious atmosphere in the school. Overall, the good levels of pupil behaviour and attitudes to their work have been sustained since the last inspection. All pupils are included in the total life of the school, whatever their level of attainment or ethnic background.
13. Attendance levels in the school have deteriorated since the last inspection and are now unsatisfactory, being below national averages. Although unauthorised absences are about average, figures for absences agreed by the school are higher than normal. This is mostly due to the high number of family holidays being taken in term time. Punctuality is not a problem in the school and there have been no exclusions. Registers are taken promptly at the beginning of each session and all lessons start on time.

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

14. The quality of teaching is good overall. Of the teaching observed during the inspection, 95 per cent was satisfactory or better. Seventy five per cent of teaching was good or better and 28 per cent very good. This represents a considerable improvement in lessons rated good or better since the school was previously inspected. Nearly all parents who replied to the questionnaire agreed that teaching was good. Parents who attended the meeting prior to the inspection also felt that their children were well taught. In the small number of lessons where teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory, this was due to insufficient challenge for pupils, a lack of pace in lessons and unsatisfactory control and management.
15. Teaching is consistently good or better in the reception classes and in Year 2. It is satisfactory in Year 1. There is consistently good teaching of literacy and numeracy throughout the school.
16. Teaching is consistently good and sometimes very good in the reception classes where the teaching of basic skills is a strength, as are the teaching methods used, based as they are on a good understanding of the needs of young children. In Year 1, the majority of lessons were satisfactory, and some good, with one mathematics lesson, very good. Two lessons were unsatisfactory. In Year 2, over 90 per cent of lessons are good or better, with over 50 per cent of teaching being very good. Teaching was never less than satisfactory.
17. As a result of this standard of teaching, pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve good results in relation to their prior attainment, particularly in mathematics and

English. The quality of relationships is very good and, consequently, pupils are secure and confident learners. The management of pupils' behaviour is generally good in reception and Year 2, with the result that pupils settle to work promptly and little learning time is lost.

18. Teachers' planning and their teaching of basic skills are very good. Where lessons are most effective, teachers plan their work thoroughly and are clear about what they expect pupils to learn. Their subject knowledge is very good and they teach basic skills well. Lessons contain a range of activities that are well matched to pupils' individual needs and experience. Questioning is carried out skilfully to judge pupils' understanding and allow pupils to explain the strategies they have used. This was particularly apparent in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, where a pupil explained that he had noted a diagonal pattern of numbers on the 100's square when adding 11. The pace of these lessons is brisk and every opportunity is taken to extend pupils' learning. In the most effective lessons, the teacher uses the final session to establish what the pupils have learned and what remains to be done. This information is then used as the starting point in planning the next lesson.
19. Where lessons are less effective, teachers' planning does not identify precisely enough what pupils should learn and as a result, the pace and focus of the lessons are not good enough. This occurs most often in subjects other than mathematics and English, particularly where there is a lack of confidence in teaching the subject. Sometimes, particularly in Year 1, pupils' behaviour is not managed well enough to ensure that all pupils make the progress they could and should. In some lessons classroom assistants are passive for too long, especially during the initial teaching session.
20. Literacy and numeracy are well taught, carefully following the nationally suggested frameworks and structure for these lessons. Tasks are well matched to pupils' differing abilities and classroom assistants are well used to support individuals or groups. In most cases all parts of lessons are well taught. However, in some there is too little time left for summing up. This is an important part of the lesson and if inadequate time is devoted to it, opportunities for review, consolidation and extension of the task through discussion are lost. The teaching of science is unsatisfactory, particularly as not enough experimental work is included, and higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
21. Teaching in all subjects is based on clear lesson planning which gives good structure to lessons. Teachers are clear about what they are teaching and regularly inform their pupils of the lesson objective. Pupils are therefore able to understand what they are expected to achieve. These lesson objectives are often revisited in the summing up sessions, exploring with pupils what they have learnt. In the good or better lessons, the teachers ensure that the pace of the lesson is sufficiently challenging for all pupils.
22. The very positive relationships between teachers and pupils are a significant factor in the successful lessons and help to ensure good pace. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite, courteous and well mannered, both to adults and to each other. They listen with attention to their teachers and other adults who help them, responding with enthusiasm to their questions and instructions.
23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good, as it is for those very few pupils with English as an additional language. Where teaching is good or better, teachers and classroom assistants plan work together that is well matched to targets in individual education plans. Teachers and classroom assistants work closely together to ensure that these pupils have the support and guidance that they need.
24. Assessment of work in numeracy and literacy is very thorough with extensive data on the progress of individual pupils and the setting of challenging targets. Assessment in other subjects is satisfactory, but the lack of clear examples of levels limits teachers' accurate evaluation of standards and progress.
25. The marking of pupils' work, although carried out regularly, is not consistent throughout the school. At its best it is informative to the pupil about ways that work may be improved. Often a mark or single word comment gives little guidance to the pupil, rather than advice on how the

work could be improved. Although marking has improved since the last inspection, it is still not always used to best advantage.

26. The amount of homework set is appropriate and is an effective and integral part of much learning. Activities set are appropriate and often closely linked to what is being taught in lessons.

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

27. All pupils are provided with a satisfactory range of worthwhile learning opportunities. The curriculum provided for the children in the Foundation Stage is good. These children are offered a stimulating range of experiences in all areas of learning as required in the new curriculum. Pupils between five and seven experience a satisfactory range of opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding. However, the curriculum for these pupils, although offering a satisfactory range, is unbalanced. Time is not appropriately allocated for the teaching of science and for other subjects other than English and mathematics. There is an over-emphasis on English and mathematics and insufficient time for the successful teaching of science. Science, during the week of the inspection, was only allocated forty-five minutes whilst geography and physical education received almost double this time. Weekly timetables showed that some lessons had an introduction on one day, with completion on the day following. One timetable allocated the whole of Friday afternoon to 'choosing'. At present, time is not well allocated and used to ensure that the curriculum is well balanced.
28. There has been an improvement since the last inspection in that all subjects other than physical education now have up to date schemes of work, from which teachers can plan their teaching programme.
29. All pupils have full access to the full range of learning opportunities offered. All statutory requirements are met. The teaching programmes provided for the development of literacy and numeracy are good and are steadily having a positive impact on pupils' learning and the standards they achieve in English and mathematics.
30. The school's positive commitment to providing equality of access to the full range of the school's curriculum for all pupils reveals itself in the good provision for pupils with special educational needs and in the work set for higher achieving pupils in English and mathematics. The special educational needs co-ordinator keeps good records and individual education plans are developed in full co-operation with parents and teachers.
31. The provisions for personal, social and health education are satisfactory and matters relating to health matters are dealt with sensitively by the school.
32. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is unsatisfactory. Teachers regularly hear pupils read at lunchtime, but there are no other planned activities organised by the school, either at lunchtime or after school. Pupils do, however, get the opportunity to play tennis, which continues in the junior school, but this is organised and run by a parent.
33. The pupils relate well to each other and are enthusiastic learners. Almost all pupils move to the junior school at the age of seven. Although there is some contact between co-ordinators in the two schools it is insufficient and not as close as would be expected considering the location of the schools being only separated by a football pitch. In order to ensure curriculum continuity, closer links would be beneficial.
34. Overall, the school's provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Whilst the provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory, the provision for personal, moral and social development is good, but is not planned in sufficient detail. This is recognised by the school as an area for development.
35. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies are well planned and are becoming increasingly reflective so that pupils are required to think about spiritual and moral issues in a calm and positive way. However, there are few opportunities for reflection included

in lessons in other subjects. The school satisfies the law by providing a daily act of collective worship, which regularly includes sharing values of a Christian nature and an opportunity for prayers or reflection.

36. From their earliest days in the school, pupils begin to understand the difference between right and wrong and between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. School and class rules are presented in the context of the needs of the community and carefully explained. Pupils understand the fair systems for rewards and sanctions used by the school and look forward to having a piece of work read out in the Friday assembly.
37. The school also gives high priority to pupils' social development, and work in this area is good. All adults in the school, including administrative and midday staff as well as teachers and teaching assistants, show pupils the positive advantages of hard work, consideration for others and kindness. Examples include the organisation of lunchtime, which makes it a pleasant and companionable experience. The use of a cafeteria system in which pupils pay for their lunch develops their self-confidence as well as assisting in their numeracy.
38. Cultural education is satisfactory although little opportunity is given for either appreciating or participating in music. Art introduces pupils to the work of famous artists such as Degas, Van Gogh, Klee, Manet, Monet, Picasso and Seurat, and these are often followed up in lessons. The library has a selection of books featuring stories from other cultures such as "Nini at the Carnival" from the West Indies and "Tortoise Dream", an African Folk Tale, which gives pupils an insight into other cultures. There are few children from families from ethnic minorities, but the school makes sure that other cultures are valued and ensures that children are aware that they live in a multi-cultural society.

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

39. This is a caring school where staff get to know pupils and their families well. Good procedures are in place for dealing with pupils who have had an accident or are feeling unwell. Nearly all staff have received recent first aid training and office staff to whom pupils are taken treat them with kindness and sensitivity.
40. The premises are clean and well maintained by the hardworking school keeper. Although regular health and safety checks take place and issues are dealt with promptly, the school does not yet undertake formal risk assessments as required by law. One health and safety concern, which was raised by parents and upheld by the inspection team, has been recognised by the school and will be addressed.
41. Useful procedures are in place for dealing with child protection issues. The headteacher is the person designated to deal with any concerns and local guidelines are followed. All staff have been trained in this sensitive area.
42. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory overall. Information on the registers is computerised and useful records are kept of pupils' attendance patterns. However, attendance is below average due to the high number of family holidays taken in term time. The detrimental effect this has on pupils' progress is not currently being made clear enough to parents by the school.
43. Good procedures are in place for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and pupils respect and value the system of sanctions and rewards.
44. Teachers and classroom assistants use the information they gather to plan work effectively for all of the pupils, and this contributes to progress. Teachers use assessment well to promote learning, and use the information it generates to set suitable targets for pupils in English and mathematics. The assessment of written work is used well to plan for future work and is helping to guide higher-attaining pupils towards the more demanding levels of the National Curriculum, especially in mathematics and English. Regular use of commercial tests and the development of a new marking policy ensure that assessment is well used and this has a positive effect on

pupils' progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The school is careful to monitor and support pupils' personal development, and does this effectively.

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

45. Parents are pleased with the education and care the school provides, although they do not feel sufficiently informed about the work their children will be covering each term. Parents have good opportunities to learn how mathematics and English are taught in general terms, but they are not told which topics their children will be covering during the coming term or year and on how they can help them at home. This has a negative effect on the quality of learning.
46. Parents receive useful information from the school in the form of the prospectus, newsletters and the governors' annual report. Parents find that class teachers are approachable and supportive. Termly consultation meetings are held to enable parents to hear how their children are progressing with pupils' annual reports issued in the summer term. These reports are very informative and readable. They give parents a clear picture of how their children are progressing and set targets for pupils to work towards.
47. Parents support the school well. A very strong parents association, run jointly with the junior school on the same site, organises regular fundraising and social events. These are well supported and raise significant amounts of money for the school. Most recently these funds have been used to develop outside play areas. A small but significant number of parents help in classrooms on a regular basis. Parents contribute to their children's learning at home through their contribution to the reading record books. A home-school agreement is in place. The school has maintained the good support of parents since the last inspection.

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

48. The headteacher, supported by key staff, provides sound management and leadership of the school. The headteacher has been in post for twelve years. She has a caring approach and values her staff. She takes a measured approach to decision making, ensuring everyone is consulted. The contribution of senior staff is satisfactory overall. The deputy headteacher has responsibility for a class and also oversees two subjects and the assessment of pupils' progress. She has two hours non-contact time each week for her deputy headteacher's role. She meets regularly with the headteacher to discuss specific issues.
49. The co-ordinators for English, mathematics and the Foundation Stage are very effective. They provide good support to their colleagues and, particularly in mathematics, this has been reflected in increasing pupil standards. The co-ordination of other subjects is less impressive due to the inappropriate allocation of responsibilities, which results in the headteacher having to cover areas, such as physical education and music. Curriculum co-ordinators do not visit other classes to check on the quality of teaching and learning so as to be able to give clear advice to their colleagues.
50. The school's aims and values are reflected satisfactorily in its work, other than in providing a balanced curriculum. Staff are committed to including all pupils in the total life of the school and ensuring that they all progress.
51. A strong and very effective governing body supports the school very well. It is a strength of the school. Governors are well informed, committed and enthusiastic. They bring their own expertise to the running of the school to very good effect. They know the school well, and have a clear vision for its future. They have attended many training courses and regularly visit the school. The governing body is fulfilling almost all of its statutory duties, but still needs to ensure that regular health and safety risk assessments are taking place. Performance Management procedures are in place for all teachers.
52. The school's monitoring and evaluation of its own performance and its ability to take effective action is satisfactory and it has set itself challenging targets. Results from National Curriculum tests are carefully analysed and checked to see that boys and girls and children from ethnic minorities are making similar progress. The school has appropriate priorities set out in its school

development plan, including measures to remedy the unsatisfactory provision for science. All staff contribute to this plan and the governing body is also involved in formulating it.

53. Governors are adept at gaining all available grants, and they spend these wisely and imaginatively, in accordance with their conditions. Financial control is good. A recent audit records that all financial procedures are fully in place. Administrative staff provide very good support and ensure that teachers are freed from non-teaching tasks. The recent 'carry forward' of money from one year was for planned expenditure on resources and improvements to outside areas. Governors in the current year plan to spend all available income for the benefit of pupils presently in the school. Governors carefully analyse expenditure against that recorded by other local schools, check on results and are careful to ensure that they are getting value for money.
54. The match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory overall. Most classroom assistants are used well to support teachers other than in some literacy lessons where they were not fully deployed during whole group times when all pupils are seated on the carpet. Arrangements for the induction of new staff are satisfactory.
55. The school has good accommodation, which helps staff to deliver the curriculum effectively. Classrooms have good space for pupils and teachers to work, but storage space is limited. The recently refurbished library provides a welcoming and stimulating area for pupils to choose books and find things out. Outside areas are spacious with an attractive and colourful new Millennium Garden, which enables pupils to sit and talk with their friends at breaktimes. Work is underway to provide the much needed outdoor learning area for pupils in the Foundation Stage. The school benefits from a very good range of learning resources for most subject areas. The recent high expenditure on them has had a positive effect on the quality of learning. Pupils use learning materials well, and take great care of them.

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

In order to raise standards further the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- i. Improve standards in science, especially for higher attaining pupils, by giving more time to its teaching, revising the scheme of work to cover all that is required at Level 3, and ensuring that all teachers know what Level 3 performance requires (paragraphs 3, 7, 20, 92, 93, 94);
- ii. Ensure that there is a better curriculum balance in Key Stage 1, moving away from an over-emphasis on literacy and numeracy to make sure that other subjects are given more time, and that this is better organised. This to lead to improving standards, especially in music, physical education and geography (paragraphs 27, 28, 121, 126);
- iii. Increase extra-curricular activities to broaden and enliven opportunities for learning (paragraph 32)

In addition the governors, headteacher and staff should consider the following in their action planning:

- a. arrange for parents to know what topics their children will be covering, and what they will be learning, so that they can help them at home (paragraph 46);
- b. require curriculum co-ordinators to check on the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects, and to liaise with their junior colleagues to make sure that learning is continuous (paragraphs 49, 90, 95,126);
- c. use more music in assemblies and in other lessons (paragraphs 121,125);
- d. improve the quality of teaching and learning in physical education by employing an adviser as planned, and by using music more fully in movement sessions (paragraph 126);
- e. work with parents to improve pupils' attendance (paragraph 42);
- f. ensure that classroom assistants are fully used throughout literacy lessons (paragraph 76);
- g. increase opportunities for stillness, reflection, and spiritual development in all subjects (paragraphs 34, 35); and
- h. undertake risk assessment, as required (paragraph 51).



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	11	19	8	2	0	0
Percentage	0	28	47	20	5	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point..

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	176
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	31

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
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	29[41]	31[23]	60[64]

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25 [37]	28 [40]	28 [41]
	Girls	28 [23]	29 [23]	31 [23]
	Total	53 [60]	57 [63]	59 [64]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 [94]	95 [98]	98 [100]
	National	83 [82]	84 [83]	90 [87]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26 [38]	29 [41]	28 [41]
	Girls	31 [23]	31 [23]	31 [23]
	Total	57 [61]	60 [64]	59 [64]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 [95]	100 [100]	98 [100]
	National	84 [82]	88 [86]	88 [87]

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	5
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	102
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*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 – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.2
Average class size	29.3

#### **Education support staff: YR– Y2**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	85

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	422,958
Total expenditure	417,154
Expenditure per pupil	2,370
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,721

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	171
Number of questionnaires returned	55

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	29	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	40	2	0	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	49	0	0	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	51	5	2	13
The teaching is good.	56	33	0	0	11
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	35	9	0	9
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	31	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	31	2	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	36	44	15	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	51	38	5	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	40	2	0	11
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	29	35	5	15

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents are supportive of the school and are generally satisfied with what is provided, other than in extra-curricular activities and in working closely with parents.

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents noted that there was close working with them, except in giving them information about what was being taught. A parent brought up a safety/ security issue for inspectors to investigate.

## **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. When inspectors visited the school the children had only been in the reception class for three weeks. Children are admitted each September, following their fourth birthday. At this stage of the school year the older children came for morning and afternoon sessions, with the younger children attending in the mornings only. Almost all children enter a reception class having had pre-school education, and most have skills which are broadly in line with those expected of four-year-olds nationally.
57. Children make at least good progress in all areas of learning, and by the time they start Year 1 the great majority attain the expected early learning goals. In mathematics they exceed them. This is confirmed by baseline assessments taken soon after children come to school, and again at the end of the reception year.
58. The quality of teaching is good or better in all areas of learning, with many examples of very good teaching. The two teachers have a very good understanding of how young children learn. They plan learning sessions very well, and are careful to ensure a good mix of direct teaching, structured activities and self selected play. Classroom assistants are very effective in working with groups and individuals, and work closely with teachers to very good effect. The quality of teaching is having a very positive effect on children's learning, and on the good progress which they make.
59. There have been considerable improvements in planning, resources and the quality of learning in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. Further developments are planned to improve facilities for outdoor activities. There are good resources, but no covered outside area, and this limits opportunities for activities. There is very good leadership. The co-ordinator has, in final draft, a very detailed scheme of work for the new Foundation Stage curriculum. She has worked closely with Key Stage 1 co-ordinators to ensure that what is taught in Key Stage 1 builds on to the skills gained in the reception class.

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

60. The children's personal, social, and emotional development is good. Because the school is careful to liaise with pre-school playgroups and nurseries, and to meet with parents and their children before they start school, children feel secure and confident. They quickly learn to take turns and recognise that there are times to talk, and times to listen. They had already established good relationships with adults in the classroom, and were doing so with other children and forming friendships. They move sensibly between activities, and many are able to dress themselves following physical activities, with several helping each other in this. They are eager to learn, co-operate in clearing up activities, and in most learning situations they learn with a smile. Children play and work together well and carry out small responsibilities. A teacher was careful to nominate a child who had just come to the school as a 'helper'. All adults give children good examples of behaviour, and it was noted that during an outside activity children were prompt in saying, "excuse me" if they needed to pass another on a wheeled toy. Teachers keep good records of personal development, and this has a positive effect.

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

61. Children come to the school with sound speaking and listening skills. Teachers give them many opportunities to become more confident in speaking, and provide good opportunities for listening. They teach phonics in a planned and interesting manner, and children learn letter names and sounds and how to write them correctly. A variety of methods are used, with many well-chosen visual materials. Teachers and classroom assistants are careful to start from where children are, and to use their experiences to extend their vocabulary. Children are on course to exceed the early learning goal by the time they move to Year 1.

62. There is a very good collection of books, and children select from them and understand that written words in books and elsewhere mean something. They enjoy handling books. Teachers use stories and role-play well to extend imagination and develop interesting speech. There are writing areas, which are used imaginatively for writing and drawing. Children use these well to communicate their ideas and feelings. A good example of this was a boy drawing his mother with a nosebleed, and his feelings about it all.

### **Mathematical development**

63. Teachers present this area of learning notably well. It is helpful that the school co-ordinator for mathematics is teaching a reception class. At the end of the reception year it is likely that the great majority will have achieved the nationally expected levels, with many exceeding these. This is because the quality of teaching is very good. Children are already on the 'stepping stones' to achievement. Many can count confidently to ten using their fingers, and some to twenty. Children show an understanding of 'one more than,' and of 'the number before'. Very good teaching was noted where the teacher used a number stick, without numbers written on it, and got children to say where certain numbers would go. This and other techniques ensure that children understand what they are doing, and this helps their learning greatly.
64. Teachers use children's own experiences and other activities going on around them to make learning mathematics interesting and fun. Teachers and classroom assistants create very well structured learning activities, and work alongside children, supporting and guiding them, but not thinking for them. This has a very positive effect on the attitudes and standards which children gain.

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

65. Children have satisfactory general knowledge. Most know colours and can identify different materials. Some can describe the different feel that materials have. In one learning session children could correctly identify different clothes suitable for different types of weather. They could then put them into groups, using hoops, which helped their mathematical and scientific thinking. Children are particularly adept for their age at using cassette recorders and computers. Children use the mouse effectively to construct pictures and patterns on a computer. Some can also use the keyboard to add their name, and print their creations for others to see.
66. Children gain an awareness of themselves and can sort pictures according to whether it depicts an adult, child or baby. They can talk about their own growth and are beginning to be aware of where they live.

### **Physical development**

67. Children have good physical skills for their age and will exceed expected levels when they start in Year 1. The hall is used well, children are appropriately dressed, and work in bare feet, and this helps the quality of movement which they show. Children have good co-ordination in their movements, and use space to good effect both in the hall and in the outdoor activity area. They 'drive' wheeled vehicles effectively, manoeuvring around others sensitively. They can use hoops and other small apparatus appropriately for their age. Children co-operate with others well in their physical activities, and this helps their development. Children use their hands effectively to draw, paint, cut and stick materials, and manipulate objects.
68. Resources are good, and there are plans to fence the outdoor garden area and buy more large equipment, which will improve opportunities for learning. There are no plans to provide cover for this area. This means that use will be limited.

### **Creative development**

69. There is good provision for creative activities. Children are encouraged to develop their skills, express themselves and to learn from others. They will attain the expected levels when they enter Year 1.

70. Children show well-developed skills in painting and drawing. They can use paint in a variety of ways and are pleased with what they produce. Interesting weather pictures were produced and children could talk about them. Teachers skilfully asked children how the weather made them feel, and gained interesting responses. They were delighted to use pipettes to apply colour and were fascinated with the results. One child showed notably well-formed skills in drawing a man in great detail. Generally children can draw from direct observation well. They use materials to construct items from their own experience or imagination, including space ships and houses. They enjoy using clay-like substances.
71. There is a very good collection of instruments for music, but these were not seen in use. Very good opportunities are given for imaginative and creative play. An example of this was in an outdoor session with trikes, trailers and buggies. Here a child stated that he would use the cones to make a way around an accident as he was a policeman, and involved others in this scenario.

## **ENGLISH**

72. In the National Curriculum tests taken in 2000, pupils' attainment was in line with the national average in reading and writing. Similar results were gained in 2001.
73. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in English achieved by pupils in Year 2 are above those gained nationally. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. Pupils' standards in speaking and listening are above average, with pupils speaking confidently to adults and their classmates. They are given opportunities to use their skill in lessons, particularly during literacy hours and plenary sessions, where pupils talk about what they have done in the lessons and how successful they have been in meeting the lesson objectives. In their listening to instructions and stories they demonstrate careful listening through their relevant responses. They make good progress because of the teachers' attention to speaking and listening skills in all subjects and skilled questioning by teachers develops confidence and helps pupils make their meaning clear to others.
74. In Year 2, most pupils read with fluency and understanding at above the expected level. Lower attaining pupils at seven read simple texts with satisfactory accuracy and understanding, while the highest attaining pupils read powerfully, with expression and dramatic skill. Pupils develop very good attitudes to books through regular library lessons, and this contributes to their awareness and their ability to read non-fiction. Lower attaining pupils make good progress in response to individual support from classroom assistants and parents. All pupils benefit from the regular and extensive reading they undertake at home.
75. Pupils make good progress in writing, including handwriting and spelling, and are now reaching standards commensurate with their age in their independent work. Most seven-year-olds reach the standard expected nationally, writing short texts in simple sentences. For many their written work is brief. However, the higher attainers are producing sustained stories in which they show their skills with well-chosen adjectives, for example, 'yellow, sparkly sand' and alliteration with 'great Georgia gobbles up goblins'. Pupils are also writing in different styles in their book reviews, introductions, re-telling of stories and writing simple poetry and verse. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels of attainment in writing (level 3) was below average in recent national curriculum tests, but already an increasing number of pupils are achieving better results in writing. Handwriting is being taught effectively and this is ensuring that pupils' letters are legibly formed and correctly joined. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection. Teachers use work sheets very sparingly in other subjects and insist that pupils use the writing skills which they have, and this helps raise standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and reach the targets that are set for them.
76. Pupils have good attitudes to their work. They generally behave well, are keen to learn and mostly get down to their work quickly. They sustain concentration and work hard to complete the tasks. When tasks are stimulating, as when designing their own book covers, they show a real enthusiasm for language work. When pupils have the opportunity to work in groups or pairs they collaborate well and this helps them to develop their independence. Classroom assistants give valuable support to pupils when working in groups during the literacy hour, but are underused during the introductions to these lessons.

77. The overall quality of teaching is good and this is having a positive effect on the quality of learning and of pupils' achievement. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum and of the National Literacy Strategy. Strengths of teaching include well -structured and organised lessons, and good control and management of pupils. This ensures that there is a positive learning environment, a brisk pace to lessons with clear objectives which are shared with pupils and good relationships between teachers, classroom assistants and pupils. The well-structured sessions at the end of lessons, which provide an opportunity for assessment of what has been learned, are productive. The regular on going assessment is used well by the teachers in their planning of future lessons. Teachers keep full records and assessments of pupils' work in English and they are using assessment well to track pupils' progress. Much of the marking is carried out alongside the pupils and helps them to improve their work. Homework is set appropriately, and this includes a good home/school reading system.
78. In other subjects, such as geography, pupils are given good opportunities for independent writing. Teachers all use information and communication technology very effectively in lessons to reinforce various aspects. Good work was seen by pupils with special educational needs, working on a phonics program which linked with their group work. Teachers always try to use the appropriate technical vocabulary in other subjects, which increases pupils' vocabulary. Teachers provide independent reading opportunities effectively, encouraging pupils to use the library. The long term planning of teaching reading is good, and teachers develop pupils' speaking and listening skills very consistently. The teaching of handwriting is sound. Other aspects of writing are taught effectively to younger pupils and, having become aware of the need for more challenging work for the higher attaining older pupils, targets are being introduced to enable pupils to achieve their potential. The school's involvement in local writing initiatives is helping to improve standards.
79. The co-ordinator, who is new to the school, is already having a positive effect on the teaching and on raising expectations. The quality of leadership and management is very good. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and has started to monitor teaching throughout the school. There is a very good range of resources to support teaching, and all staff use information technology well in their lessons. The library is well-stocked with up-to-date and attractive books and it is accessible to all pupils. It provides a cheerful and welcoming atmosphere in which to read and find things out.
80. The subject fully meets the statutory requirements and has shown an improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the quality of the teaching.

## **MATHEMATICS**

81. Since the previous inspection there has been a very good improvement in standards and pupils now attain standards well above the national average and above those of similar schools. In the National Curriculum tests taken in 2000, Year 2 pupils attained standards well above the national average. Similar results were gained in 2001. By the end of Year 2 many pupils achieve the level expected of nine year olds in their National Curriculum tests. Overall, achievement in mathematics is very good, and well above the national average. Pupils show particularly good skills in working with numbers.
82. The quality of teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to very good and was good overall. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and have established a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy, which is used well to produce effective learning. In the best lessons, teachers clearly explain the purpose of tasks, they indicate they have high expectations of what can be achieved, and question to probe and extend pupils' understanding. Teachers consistently help pupils develop the appropriate vocabulary and encourage them to explain their understanding and strategies.
83. The quality of learning in lessons inspected ranged from satisfactory to very good. Where the quality of learning is good or very good, there is a high quality of class organisation and class management, teachers have high expectations and maintain a brisk pace throughout the

lesson. The effective use of classroom assistants makes a positive contribution to the quality of learning for those pupils with special educational needs and this helps them to make satisfactory progress.

84. Pupils tackle problems confidently using number operations appropriately to solve them. They are keen to answer their teachers' questions and enjoy explaining the various strategies they have used. The majority of pupils perform mental calculations accurately and quickly. Pupils in Year 1 can confidently add and subtract numbers to 20, while pupils in Year 2 can add 10 or 11 to a two-digit number up to 100.
85. Computer technology is used effectively to help pupils in their learning. It is particularly helpful in reinforcing what has been learned by giving practice in an exciting manner.
86. The management and control of pupils are good. Teachers consistently set clear expectations of behaviour, and pupils respond well to these expectations. Pupils' attitudes are good; they are enthusiastic and show interest in mathematics. Some children spoken to said mathematics was their favourite subject. Relationships between pupils and staff, and amongst pupils themselves, are very good.
87. Assessment in mathematics is good. Teachers regularly make use of assessment to guide them as to what to teach next. During the course of the lessons, teachers observe pupils and question them to assess their understanding, knowledge and skills. Praise and acknowledgement of pupils' effort and of their positive attitudes and understanding are used to motivate and inspire pupils. National Curriculum and other tests are used consistently to establish the attainment and progress of pupils.
88. Teachers' planning is very good. It identifies clear learning objectives and activities are well selected with opportunities for assessment. Weekly and daily planning promotes learning that builds on what has gone before. The quality of planning for the whole range of pupil ability is good. The grouping of pupils by ability throughout the school helps teachers to match teaching to pupil needs. Lessons have a clear focus and teachers make clear reference to the learning objectives. Homework, where it is regularly set, is used effectively to reinforce recent teaching by asking pupils to practise or revise skills and understanding or as an extension activity.
89. Appropriate use is made of teaching resources, including the use of classroom assistants. The quality of teachers' marking varies. Some consistently write comments which help pupils' learning by describing what has been successful and giving guidance on what could be improved. Others simply mark work and make one to three word statements such as 'well done' or 'a good try'.
90. The co-ordination of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for development for the subject. Her leadership and enthusiasm have resulted in a significant increase in staff confidence in the teaching of all the required aspects of mathematics. However, there is not enough contact with the junior school to ensure that learning is continuous. The school is well equipped with learning resources. The scheme used to support the Numeracy Strategy is popular with staff and pupils. The co-ordinator understands the need for further monitoring of teaching and learning in mathematics as part of the shared commitment that all staff have for improvement.

## **SCIENCE**

91. In 2000 and in 2001, teachers assessed that their pupils achieved standards in line with those gained and expected nationally for seven-year-olds at the end of Year 2. The percentage of pupils who achieved at the higher level (that expected of nine-year-olds) was below the national average.
92. Pupils in the current Year 2 are likely to gain similar results unless action is taken. An analysis of work from last year's Year 2 pupils shows that pupils use language well to express their basic ideas and have a satisfactory knowledge of their own bodies and of simple electrical circuits. Pupils under-use the skills they have in mathematics and data handling, and this limits their

learning. There were not enough experimental or investigative activities, or work set at Level 3. This is a weakness, indicating that pupils are not making sufficient progress or reaching the standards of which they are capable. This also shows a decline in standards from the previous inspection, where science was a strength of the school. The reasons for this are that the recent emphasis on numeracy and literacy has tended to sweep aside the strong developments that had taken place in the teaching of science. Not enough time is given to the teaching of science with too little emphasis being put on learning through experimenting and by observing at first hand, and teachers are not setting work with enough challenge, especially for the higher attainers. The present scheme of work is not sufficiently detailed for Year 2 and does not include enough activities for pupils to attain the higher level. There is very little use of information and communication technology in pupils' learning. The school is aware that standards in science should be improved, and it is a priority in the school development plan.

93. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall. An unsatisfactory lesson in Year 1 on living things included work set that was uninteresting and covered knowledge that most pupils already had. Pupils were required to colour in and cut out, when they should have been learning from direct observation or from well produced visual material. Similarly, in a generally satisfactory but unchallenging Year 2 lesson on materials and waterproofing, pupils were required to watch a television programme, and learning was much too passive. This was the only timetabled science available to them for the week. Teachers under-use assessment and do not have clear guidance as to what performance at Level 2 or Level 3 looks like.
94. In lessons inspected, behaviour was satisfactory, but pupils did not show real enthusiasm and interest in their work because not enough was expected of them. They were not sufficiently involved in learning for themselves. There were no opportunities for joyful discovery or wonder at living things which is a vital part of the learning of science.
95. The curriculum co-ordinator is very experienced, and has analysed what needs to be done and is very capable of leading staff to improve standards. She has good scientific knowledge and is producing a much more detailed scheme of work for Year 2, and re-introducing assessment, providing examples of what is expected at each level. At present she does not check on the quality of teaching and there is very little contact with the junior school curriculum co-ordinator for science; these are weaknesses. Reports are well written, but parents are not given enough information on what their children will be learning, and how they can help them at home. Resources are of a very good standard and are very accessible. However, they are not used enough, and this has a negative effect on the quality of learning.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

96. Standards in art and design are above what is expected of seven-year-olds nationally. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
97. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. It is good overall. Where teaching is good or very good teachers show good subject knowledge and use an enthusiastic approach to motivate pupils. Questioning is open-ended, skilful and encourages participation. There are high expectations of behaviour and pupils show sustained concentration and interest in their own and other pupils' activities. Work is well matched to pupils' ability levels so that those pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The quality of resources is good and effectively used. Information and communication technology is used to very good effect, notably where a digital camera is used to assist pupils in recording their work.
98. The quality of learning is good. Pupils are well motivated, enthusiastic and have high levels of concentration. Pupils are able to choose and use a range of interesting materials and they create a wide range of effects. Pupils work in a very wide range of media, including fabrics, clay, paint, pencil and crayon. Reception pupils can name colours, choose them for a purpose, experiment with texture and use lines to enclose a space. Pupils in Year 1 are able to draw 'self portraits', using a mirror to help reproduce features accurately. Pupils observe closely and demonstrate a good sense of proportion and composition. They are able to appreciate that the choice of hardness of pencils is important when drawing. Pupils in Year 2 can take a 'cropped piece' of a picture and develop it into an extended drawing. Pupils used prediction and

imagination to create work of a very good standard, particularly accurate in the attention to detail and scale. The use of sketchbooks throughout the school, in which pupils develop their ideas, is a development that has recently been introduced and is helping to raise standards.

99. The co-ordination of the subject is good. Planning is good throughout the school and is based on a nationally agreed scheme. Pupils' work is displayed sensitively around the school. It is stimulating and shows the use of a range of materials and techniques. Displays are of a high standard and reflect the values of the school. Displays also reflect links with other subjects. The oldest pupils know about the work of some of the world's great artists and are able to identify works by artists such as Monet and Leonardo da Vinci. They are able to give a critical appreciation of an artist's work, giving reasons for their likes and dislikes. They know how to mix primary colours to make colours such as green, and how colours can be made lighter or darker with the addition of white or black. Pupils use illustration very well in other subjects, some very good examples being noted in religious education and geography. The pupils' work with a visiting artist is reflected in the attractive, high quality murals that decorate the entrance and play area. The co-ordinator plans to put together a portfolio of assessed pupils' work against which standards can be monitored to give teachers greater certainty as to levels achieved.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

100. During the inspection no teaching of design and technology was timetabled, so no judgements could be made about the quality of teaching. However, through a study of a portfolio of pupils' work, it is clear that overall standards are above average in Year 2. The key points for development from the previous inspection of the establishment of a revised scheme of work and the provision for staff of guidance on the assessment of skills have both been achieved.
101. The school has adopted a nationally approved scheme, and guidance on skills development has been provided by the subject co-ordinator. The subject co-ordinator feels that the new scheme has given staff more confidence in their knowledge and a fresh impetus to their teaching. The results shown in the portfolio of work support this view.
102. The portfolio of work showed that pupils in Year 1 had made homes, using card, and had developed their understanding of how hinges work. They had also used fruit and vegetables to make a fruit salad, increasing their awareness of hygiene, and of health and safety when using sharp implements.
103. Pupils in Year 2 had used a computer to design a "Joseph's Coat". They then went on, using fabric, glue and stitching to make a quality finished article. They also investigated the use of winding mechanisms to make a moving spider and this was used in entertaining the reception class in story telling. The quality of designing and making was of a high standard for their age.
104. The curriculum satisfactorily provides for those pupils with special educational needs. The subject is soundly managed, and resources are satisfactory. The school has made good progress in raising the standards of pupils' work since the last inspection.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

105. At the end of Year 2 standards are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. In lessons seen and in pupils' work, basic skills are being developed. Standards have been maintained and a new scheme of work has been written.
106. Younger pupils learn about their immediate surroundings through the use of maps and photographs. They identify and learn about the features and purposes of buildings by looking at those buildings close to the school and at photographs. Pupils reach good standards in studying the Isle of Struay, a fictional Scottish island, and gain good early understanding of the main points of the compass. Pupils understand the purpose and use of maps and atlases, and have a good grasp of details in their study and use of local maps. They are very keen to show their understanding of what the various symbols on maps mean.

107. Pupils' enthusiasm for geography is the direct result of clear and interesting teaching. They make satisfactory progress and develop positive attitudes, which also contribute to their social, moral and cultural development by helping pupils understand the wider community than their family or the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
108. Teaching is satisfactory, with some examples of good teaching where very effective planning ensured that lessons proceeded at a brisk pace with all pupils involved and on task throughout the lesson. The school uses a scheme of work based on the national suggestions, and this is proving very effective. The teachers assess the progress of pupils using the guidelines set down by the scheme and an assessment at the end of each topic enables teachers to monitor the progress being made by pupils. This also ensures that the scheme of work is covered and that there is continuity of learning. The curriculum is well organised, developing pupils' geographical skills systematically.
109. The school has an adequate range of learning resources. At present the headteacher is overseeing the co-ordination of geography throughout the school, as there is no teacher appointed to do so. This is unsatisfactory in that it limits developments and does not involve the checking on the quality of teaching and learning.

## **HISTORY**

110. At the time of the inspection, the school was not teaching history because the subject is linked with geography, and is planned for the second half of the autumn term. From the limited evidence, which was mainly discussion with pupils, inspectors are unable to judge standards achieved. Evidence from previous work shows that pupils learn about the differences between seaside holidays in the past and now, and compare toys from bygone ages with their own. Famous people and events from the past, including Florence Nightingale, Guy Fawkes and the Fire of London, are studied. The school has a scheme of work based on national recommendations, which covers the National Curriculum. The teachers assess the progress that pupils are making using 'Key Questions', which are part of the scheme of work. An assessment is made at the end of each topic, enabling the teachers to monitor the progress that pupils make as well as ensuring adequate coverage of the history curriculum.
111. There are sufficient book resources within the school and there are plans to improve the level of historical objects available for pupils to handle. Information and communication technology, although not completely incorporated in the scheme of work, is used effectively for research and word processing.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

112. At the end of Year 2, pupils achieve standards above those expected nationally. While this was also true at the time of the last inspection, the range of pupils' skills has been effectively extended, and computers are integrated into many aspects of learning throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs make effective use of computers to build up their skills in mathematics and English.
113. Learning for pupils aged five to seven builds effectively on the good basic skills they bring from the reception classes. By the time they are seven, most pupils use a wide range of programs with confidence. Pupils understand the use of information and communication technology (ICT) outside the school, explaining how computers are used in shops and offices. They can load the CD-ROM and explain how to find information using the computer. Pupils understand control technology and use programmable floor robots with skill. They also make use of digital cameras in subjects such as art and geography.
114. Pupils use word processing independently, printing and saving their documents. Although pupils' typing skills are slow, they begin to develop familiarity with the keyboard from five onwards. Pupils understand the directional keys, know that words have to be separated by the space bar, and can use the shift key to produce capital letters, particularly when typing their name. Although each class is on the Internet and pupils are familiar with email, it is not fully in use in the school.

115. The quality of teaching and learning is good. All teachers and classroom assistants operate and use computers confidently, so that learning is very consistent from class to class. The school has benefited from the government-sponsored initiative in the development of ICT. Teachers' use of computers to support learning in other subjects is particularly effective in mathematics and English with the digital camera being well used in art. Pupils enjoy using the computer and confidently talk about their previous experiences, commenting that when they use the computer it makes their work more interesting. Pupils treat equipment with respect and work sensibly without direct supervision.
116. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the future development of the use of ICT in all subjects, and gives good leadership. The school has good resources and the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met.

## **MUSIC**

117. Owing to time-tabling arrangements it was not possible to see any music teaching during the inspection, so no judgements can be made about standards, quality of teaching or of pupils' progress.
118. Music is adequately resourced, and this is recognised in a recent audit of resources, carried out by a music consultant from the local authority.
119. The local authority music consultant has also assisted the school in drawing up a policy and a scheme of work to aid staff in their long, medium and short-term planning. The scheme gives clear learning objectives and suggested activities. It also encourages staff to plan for more able pupils and those with special learning difficulties so that all pupils have access to the curriculum. Suggested uses of resources and opportunities for assessment give staff comprehensive guidance.
120. The new policy and scheme addresses one of the key points for action raised during the previous inspection. In the absence of any other music specialist on the staff, the headteacher co-ordinates the subject.
121. There is not enough use of music in other lessons or events. Listening in assembly to a variety of musical examples to include opportunities for appraising, which is an ongoing activity in the new scheme for pupils in Key Stage 1, does not take place, and this has a negative effect on pupils' progress. Singing in assembly is satisfactory.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

122. Standards are in line with those expected nationally, as they were in the last inspection. There is no significant difference in the physical performance of boys and girls. Boys and girls take part naturally in group work, and this helps their learning. All pupils are included in activities and this ensures that they all make sound progress.
123. The quality of teaching is good overall. In Year 1 it is satisfactory and it is very good in Year 2. Where teaching is very good, teachers set challenging tasks and plan the learning in small steps. A good example of this was in a Year 2 class where skills in ball control were gradually increased from simple rolling to doing this from varied positions, and with increased speed. Pupils were challenged to compete against themselves and the egg timer to complete their tasks in a minute. The structure of all lessons is good, with warm up activities carefully planned. Pupils recognise the need for these, and can explain why their pulses are accelerating. All teachers are careful to ensure that pupils understand the need for safety in their movements. Teachers use individual pupils to demonstrate good movements, sequences, or particular skills and this helps pupils to learn. However, teachers do not always follow this up with opportunities for further immediate practice, and this limits the quality of learning.
124. Pupils have good attitudes and are eager to take part in physical activities. They are all changed into appropriate clothing and almost all work in bare feet in the hall, which greatly

improves the quality of learning. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can use their bodies well to change direction, move in a variety of ways and at different speeds. They can put their movements together into pleasing sequences and can see what is good in the performances of others. They use space well and co-operate with others well in small groups. Pupils set out and return any apparatus needed efficiently and safely.

125. All classes are allocated sufficient hall time and outdoor playing space is used to good effect. Music was not used to improve the quality of movement or dance, and this was not planned for in teachers' planning. The school has taken part in the 'top play' initiative and is awaiting the arrival of additional games equipment. Pupils are encouraged to use games apparatus including skipping ropes, balls and stilts, during lunchtimes, and this helps their physical development. A parent runs an after-school tennis club, which helps with ball and co-ordination skills.
126. Although standards are satisfactory, the school rightly recognises that there is need for improvement. The headteacher is acting as the co-ordinator as there is no specialist on the staff, which means that there has not been enough monitoring of teaching or suggestions on how to raise standards further. There is very little liaison with the junior school other than negotiation to use the playing field. The headteacher has now allocated money from the small school's curriculum allowance to buy in support from the local authority adviser. It is intended that the school's scheme of work will be brought up to date from when it was written (1999), with clearer statements as to what is to be taught and in what order in all of the aspects of physical education. Further focused training for teachers is to be provided, demonstrating the expected levels of performance. Resources for learning are very good and have a very positive effect on standards.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

127. At the end of Year 2, pupils have skills and knowledge in line with those required in the Havering Agreed Syllabus. This was also the situation in the last inspection. However, there have been improvements, especially in the much better use of pictures and objects in teaching. When they transfer to the junior school pupils know about major Christian, Jewish and Hindu festivals, and show respect for the views and customs of others. They can write their own prayers and know about special places of worship. All pupils take part in lessons, with none withdrawn by their parents. Adequate time is given to the teaching of religion, meeting that suggested in the agreed syllabus.
128. A very positive feature of pupils' work is the very good quality of writing, especially in Year 2. Pupils are encouraged to use their own words and to express their feelings. A good example of this was noted in a letter written by a pupil having been in the crowd at the feeding of the five thousand, when he wrote, " Well, you will never believe what I have just seen happen...." Written work is also brought alive in the use of very detailed and lively illustration. These factors not only help pupils' literacy skills but also their religious understanding, and have a very positive effect on learning. From the written work seen, and the evidence of joint displays made following a visit to a local church, pupils use religious vocabulary well, are interested in their work and enjoy learning. They also use the digital camera to good effect.
129. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was generally satisfactory, but there were weaknesses in that the religious content in the unit on 'the family' was insufficient, and pupils were confused as to what was expected of them. Lessons are evaluated, and this helps teachers to plan the next stage of learning, but no assessment of religious development is made. However, reports for parents are written each year, and these are helpful. Where pictures, objects and visits are used, the quality of learning is notably better. Although a visit is made to a local church there is not enough use made of visits or visitors, particularly members of other faith communities, coming into the school. Parents are not given details of what their children are to be taught and how they can help them at home. Teachers' planning is sound, but they do not provide enough opportunities for stillness and reflection as required in the agreed syllabus.
130. The co-ordinator has been in post for two years, gives good leadership and is working well with other teachers to improve the quality of teaching and learning. She has rewritten the scheme of

work, giving detailed guidance on what is to be taught when. This also contains very good suggestions for lessons and will be used fully from the start of next term. She does not visit other classes to check on the quality of teaching, which is a weakness, but she does look at pupils' work throughout the school to check on standards, which is a strength. There is no contact with the junior school to make sure that what pupils are taught is brought together, or in the sharing of resources, and this is an area for further development. The school has recently spent a considerable sum of money on modern and carefully chosen pictures, books, and religious objects. These are of very good quality and are having a very positive effect on the quality of learning, and on standards achieved.