

INSPECTION REPORT

BURMAN INFANT SCHOOL

Shirley, Solihull

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104040

Headteacher: Mrs C Toon

Reporting inspector: Ms A Coyle
20603

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th January 2000

Inspection number: 193400

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Infants |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 to 7 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Velsheda Road Shirley Solihull West Midlands |
| Postcode: | B90 2JW |
| Telephone number: | (0121) 7441843 |
| Fax number: | (0121) 7440609 |
| Appropriate authority: | Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs R Wheeler |
| Date of previous inspection: | November 1996 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------------|----------------------|--|---|
| Angela Coyle | Registered inspector | Art Music Under-fives English as an additional language | How high are the standards? What should the school do to improve further? |
| Margaret Morrissey | Lay inspector | Equal opportunities | 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? |
| Peter Thrussell | Team inspector | English Geography History Religious education | How well is the school led and managed? Efficiency |
| Susan Russam | Team inspector | Science Physical education Special educational needs | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
| Jack Haslam | Team inspector | Mathematics Information technology Design and technology | How well are pupils taught? |

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
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London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Burman Infant School is situated in Shirley, Solihull. It serves the surrounding catchment area, which mainly consists of privately owned properties. The number of pupils on roll is lower than it was in 1996; there are currently 202 girls and boys in the school. The school also has a 60-place nursery for children under five who are admitted on a part-time basis in the year of their fourth birthday. Attainment on entry varies, but is above average overall. Only three per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds and a very small number learn English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than the national average, at three per cent. The school has 35 pupils on the register of special educational needs, which is lower than the national figure, and no pupils have statements for their needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Burman Infant School is a very good school indeed. It provides a happy, friendly and joyful environment for its pupils in which they are taught and cared for by a hard-working team of highly dedicated staff and an excellent headteacher. The school very effectively promotes high standards in all that it does and has a very close relationship with its enthusiastic and conscientious governors who help to ensure that good value for money is maintained.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve very good standards in English, mathematics, science, art, music and physical education. The youngest children in the nursery and reception classes make very good progress in their personal and social development and continue to build on their skills well at Key Stage 1. By Year 2, pupils achieve excellent standards in personal and social education.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and behave very well during lessons and at play.
- The quality of teaching is very good with some excellent teaching. Teachers and teaching-team members work together in excellent partnership to ensure that pupils have a good start to their education.
- The school provides a good curriculum for its pupils and there are very good procedures for promoting good attendance and assessing pupils' work. Excellent displays of pupils' work help to create a very rich, stimulating environment.
- The school is very well led and managed by an excellent headteacher and an enthusiastic governing body who are highly committed and dedicated to the school. The administrative, caretaking, cleaning and catering staff all make a significant contribution to the life of the school and provide cheerful support to staff and pupils.
- The provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good indeed and there is good spiritual and cultural development. Provision for personal and social development is outstanding.
- The school's partnership with parents is very good.

What could be improved

- No significant areas for improvement.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1996. Since then, it has fully addressed the key issues identified and continued to flourish. The staff have developed their subject knowledge well in science and art, and the procedures for assessing pupils' work have been improved and are now very good. The provision for extending the most able pupils has been increased by the introduction of focused group activities and targeted teaching, and governors have improved their procedures for monitoring the work of the school. Since the last inspection, the school has made very good improvements to the accommodation by building two permanent classrooms for pupils in Year 1.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

| Performance in: | compared with | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | all schools | | | similar schools |
| | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 1999 |
| Reading | A | A | B | C |
| Writing | A | A | B | C |
| Mathematics | A | A | A | B |

| Key | |
|--------------------|---|
| Well above average | A |
| Above average | B |
| Average | C |
| Below average | D |
| Well below average | E |

Pupils at Burman Infant School have consistently attained well above average standards in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 over the last three years when compared to the national results and those of similar schools. The results of the 1999 tests are slightly lower due to the higher number of pupils taking the tests who had special educational needs. Currently, pupils make good progress and achieve very good standards in English, mathematics, science, art, music and physical education. They achieve good standards in design and technology and the standards expected for their age in all other subjects.¹ The school has set sufficiently challenging targets for the future, which it is on line to achieve, and is maintaining the high standards reported at the last inspection. In particular, clear targets have been devised to help the most able pupils achieve high standards in writing. Children under five in the nursery and reception classes achieve good standards in most areas of learning and particularly high standards in personal and social development.²

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Very good. Pupils are keen to do well and show great interest in their work. They have sensible, mature attitudes to learning and take good pride in their finished work. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Very good. Pupils are very well behaved in lessons and at play. |
| Personal development and relationships | Excellent. Pupils show outstanding personal development and relate exceedingly well to each other and to adults. |
| Attendance | Very good. Pupils are keen to attend school and arrive punctually. |

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and values are strengths of the school. They are very well behaved children and keen to attend school. Their personal development is outstanding.

¹ ON LEVELS

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels.

² ON DESIRABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES

In 1996, QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority), formerly SCAA (School Curriculum and Assessment Authority), produced a set of 'Desirable Learning Outcomes for children's learning on entering compulsory education'. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of five in six areas of learning: language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development and personal and social development.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is very good. In the lessons observed, 100 per cent of teaching was satisfactory, or better; 52 per cent was good, 27 per cent was very good and two per cent was excellent. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is notably strong because literacy and numeracy skills are particularly well taught. This enables all pupils to make good progress in their learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and includes all of the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. Pupils are identified early and given specific targets relating to their needs. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | Sound. There are very few pupils in the school who learn English as an additional language, but they are effectively supported by teachers and teaching-team members. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good moral and social development. Good spiritual and cultural development. The provision for pupils' personal and social development is outstanding. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Very good. The school values its pupils and adults highly and provides a very warm, welcoming environment in which the pastoral care of pupils is very good indeed. |

The school's partnership with parents and the way in which it cares for pupils are very good indeed. A good curriculum is offered that fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education and there are good opportunities for pupils to become involved in extra-curricular musical productions and annual events.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher provides excellent leadership to her colleagues and is very well supported by the governing body, senior management team and subject co-ordinators. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | The governors fulfil their roles very well. They are keen to be actively involved in the life of the school and have excellent understanding of future developments. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Excellent. The school evaluates its work systematically and uses the information exceedingly well to identify further developments. |
| The strategic use of resources | Very good. The teaching and support staff are deployed very effectively and the school makes very good use of its resources. |

The school is staffed by a very good team of teachers and teaching-team members who are conscientious and dedicated to the education of the pupils. They make very good use of the accommodation and learning resources. In addition, the caretaking, cleaning and catering staff make considerable contributions to the life of the school and are very highly valued. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher enables the school to fully apply the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is a very caring environment in which parents and carers are welcomed by an approachable headteacher and staff. There is very good communication provided. There are very good links with parents. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant areas specified. |

The inspectors agree with all of the above comments made by parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Overall, the school has maintained the standards achieved by pupils since the previous inspection in 1996. Pupils currently achieve very good standards in English, mathematics, science, art and music, and excellent standards in personal and social education. They achieve the levels expected for their age in all other subjects.³
2. Children under five enter the nursery on a part-time basis when they are three years old and move into the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they are five. The entry assessments conducted within the first few weeks of the autumn term indicate that children's competency and confidence with language and mathematics are above that expected for their age. They make good progress overall and exceed the expected outcomes in all areas of learning by the time they are five.
3. The overall results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests in English at the end of Key Stage 1, in both reading and writing, were above the national average, and broadly in line with the average for similar schools. Eighty-eight per cent of pupils attained the national expectation of Level 2 in reading, with a well above average number attaining the higher Level 3. In writing, although 95 per cent attained Level 2, which is well above national expectations, only 3 per cent attained Level 3, which is below. The school has recognised this lower attainment and set appropriate targets to improve the standards of the more able pupils in writing. Over the last four years, the school has consistently achieved standards above the national average, although there was a slight drop in writing standards in 1999 due to the number of pupils with special educational needs who took the tests. There is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls. The inspection shows that the standards of pupils approaching the end of Key Stage 1 are well above average. The school has set sufficiently challenging targets for the future, which it is on line to achieve, and is maintaining the high standards reported at the last inspection. Literacy skills are well developed across the curriculum.
4. The results of the 1999 standardised tests in mathematics were well above the national average and above average when compared with similar schools. The results indicate improvement and the school reached its target for pupils at, or above, the national average. The inspection findings concur and show that seven year-olds attain standards that are well above the expected levels and pupils develop their numeracy skills well. This is due to improvements in the quality of teaching, the advice and support provided by the subject co-ordinator, together with the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the staff development that has accompanied it. The good management and organisation of the subject has ensured that the strategy has had a full impact on the curriculum.
5. In science, the results of the teacher assessments in 1999 show that at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils attained well above the national average at Level 2 and Level 3. Pupils' attainments are above average when compared with those of pupils in similar schools. Evidence from the inspection indicates teachers' assessments as being accurate. Pupils make good progress throughout the key stage.
6. Standards in information technology are sound. Pupils have sound knowledge and understanding of computers. They are able to enter, amend, save and retrieve information without help, and know how to change the style, colour and size of text and print. They can program a floor turtle using sets of simple commands so that it negotiates a pathway. Pupils

³ ON LEVELS

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels.

develop good skills in using the equipment and when using the mouse to give instructions to the computer.

7. In religious education, the pupils in Year 2 achieve standards that are in line with the expectations of the local agreed syllabus. By the age of seven, pupils know about some of the major religions of the world, such as Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. For example, they look at how people celebrate festivals such as Christmas, Easter, Hannukah and Diwali. They are familiar with well known Bible stories, such as Jonah and Noah's ark, and have learnt about Jesus, his life and teachings.
8. Standards in art, physical education and music are very good. The school works hard to promote pupils' learning in art and music and the subjects are used well to link other subjects in cross-curricular themes. Standards in design and technology are good; in geography and history are in line with those expected for pupils' age.
9. Progress is good overall. From the time children enter the nursery, they are taught to build well on their skills. Pupils' academic progress is maintained as they move through Key Stage 1. It is notably good in English, mathematics, science, art and music. Pupils make sound progress in all other subjects of the curriculum. There is no significant variation in attainment or progress between pupils of different gender or background, and the few who learn English as an additional language are effectively supported to do well.
10. Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress. Pupils with individual education plans often make very good progress in relation to their individual targets, especially when they are being taught individually or in small groups by specialist staff. Clearly defined targets, which are reviewed regularly, ensure pupils systematically develop skills, knowledge and understanding during these lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning. They are eager to come to school and are very well behaved. Parents confirm their children are happy to come to school: they enjoy the school and their confidence improves quickly after joining. This was evident in all years from nursery to Year 2. For example, in Years 1 and 2, pupils were particularly interested, animated and willing to contribute their own opinions in literacy hour activities. In music, pupils displayed excellent attitudes to learning, working well together to compose and also in performing rhythm. Pupils pay very good attention to their teachers and follow instructions exceedingly well. This helps them to achieve above average standards, as seen in the nursery in physical development where children exceeded the desirable learning outcomes. Pupils are keen to show their work to the class and to visitors and, during lessons, are keen to listen to the teachers' and other pupils' views.
12. Children under five make very good progress in the development of personal skills. They are secure in their environment and enter school confidently. They work and play alongside one another and take turns using equipment. They respect the environment, books and other resources provided for them. Children in the reception classes are very sophisticated in their use of the school library, caring for the books and understanding the difference between fiction and non-fiction. Their behaviour is very good. They have warm relationships with their teachers and try hard to please their teachers and other adults. All teaching staff provide excellent role models both in work and in promoting good relationships; children are very attentive to this and follow the teachers' examples.
13. There is a consistent approach to discipline across the school and pupils respond very well to this. Behaviour is generally very good and, in some lessons, excellent. Pupils co-operate with their teachers in establishing conditions in which they, and others, can work productively without fear of interruption or distraction. For example, one pupil in Year 1 was very proud to show his sticker for good work and was clearly motivated by the reward. Pupils are particularly well behaved in the dining hall; the lunchtime assistants are kind, but firm, and pupils respond very well. There have been no instances of bullying and no exclusions.

14. Relationships within the school are very good. Teachers and pupils relate very well to one another and the friendly, relaxed and caring ethos is built on a basis of mutual respect that nursery children pick up very quickly after joining the school. Parental comments on this are very positive and supportive, applauding the beneficial effect it has on their children's feelings and values. Pupils are very supportive of one another and in all lessons are prepared to listen to others' views but this is especially well developed by Year 2. There are many opportunities throughout their time in school when pupils' opinions and, on occasions, their votes are sought on aspects of personal development. All pupils have small tasks and responsibilities to develop their independence and to learn to value and care for others. In Year 2, this is extended and pupils are school helpers, particularly in the playground putting out equipment and caring for the younger children and those with special educational needs; all tasks are undertaken with great enthusiasm and real commitment. Pupils show strong respect for other traditions and cultures. A good example of this is in religious education where pupils are taught to wash their hands before picking up the Koran.
15. Attendance is good and well above the national average. Pupils respond very politely during registration periods by answering to their names being called. All registers are completed correctly and fully comply with the legal requirements for registration. Pupils are very punctual arriving in school. The very good attendance helps promote attainment and progress and the school asks parents not to take pupils on holidays during term-time to ensure continuity of learning. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to improve on its attendance and to build on the positive attitudes to learning and the high self-esteem and motivation it encourages in pupils.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Since the previous inspection, the school has improved the quality of teaching and extended teachers' knowledge in science and art. The quality of teaching is now very good. In the lessons observed 100 per cent of teaching was satisfactory, or better; 52 per cent was good, 27 per cent was very good and two per cent was excellent. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is notably strong because literacy and numeracy skills are particularly well taught. The teaching of music is also very good. This enables all pupils to make rapid progress in their learning. They are keen to do well, show very good attitudes to their work and are eager to take responsibility during lessons.
17. All teachers plan in detail and identify clearly what they expect pupils to learn. The thorough planning includes realistic strategies to help the pupils: for example, when working with real-life multiplication problems using money in mathematics, the teacher gave pupils a series of useful questions to help organise their thoughts. Members of staff plan together very well in year groups to ensure a common experience and to share expertise. In the best lessons, teachers use the opportunities that arise extremely well to teach and emphasise new ideas. They have very high expectations and challenge the pupils to think and to extend their knowledge. Very good use is made of questioning to check that pupils both understand what they have been taught and to make them use their knowledge to solve problems.
18. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. The planning teachers do together, the effective work of subject co-ordinators and training that is targeted well all contribute to teachers' expertise. They know how to teach the subjects well using a variety of methods, including whole-class, group and individual teaching. Specific subject vocabulary is used well and activities motivate pupils very effectively.
19. Lessons are structured very well. They start with an interesting introduction or by recapping of what pupils know and then set clear time-constrained targets, with regular checks on understanding and progress. Teachers are very good at directly teaching new information, facts and ideas. They often do this to the whole class and then set several different pieces of work to suit pupils of different abilities. This has a significant impact upon the good progress that pupils make in their learning. For example, they respond well and are keen to use their initiative in extension activities that provide challenging work and extend their knowledge. Some teachers talk or read to their pupils in quiet and lively voices. They do this very well to ensure that pupils listen to them closely. Teachers are very good at ensuring that lessons are completed at a brisk

pace and that pupils' work is used well to demonstrate and clarify points for others during lessons.

20. Lessons are well organised and managed skilfully. Good classroom control techniques are used consistently and pupils are given good praise to acknowledge success with their work. This has a very positive effect on standards of behaviour and attainment, as pupils try hard to gain their teacher's approval. In all classes, teachers make the work very interesting to the pupils and relationships are friendly, positive and focused on learning. Many teachers use humour effectively to engage and interest their pupils. Teaching-team members are very well briefed and deployed carefully to make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Homework, in the form of spellings, reading and an occasional piece of topic work, is set for pupils to enable them to extend their learning. The accommodation is used well; classrooms are tidy, very well-organised environments, with resources clearly accessible. A few minor issues were identified during the inspection, concerning the more efficient use of time in mathematics and physical education in the reception classes and Year 1 respectively.
21. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good and often very good. Expectations are high and pupils are given skilful support to help them learn. Specialist staff have a very good level of knowledge and understanding about how pupils learn and what help they need to achieve success. There is a good mixture of individual and small group teaching and support within the class. Staff make good use of existing individual education plans to inform their planning and to ensure that tasks and resources are well matched to pupils' abilities, although these plans are not always used sufficiently across the curriculum by class teachers. Good attention is paid to assessing the work of pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language in order to measure progress made towards individual targets. Recording of this information by the teaching-team members is undertaken diligently.

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

22. Since the time of the last inspection, the school has maintained a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, including provision for spiritual, social, moral and cultural education, and has responded well to the key points for action.
23. The curriculum for children under five is planned well to the recommended desirable learning outcomes and covers the six areas of learning for language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, physical development and personal and social development. At Key Stage 1, the quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are good and meet statutory requirements. The school pays due regard to the national strategies for both literacy and numeracy and this has had a positive impact upon standards pupils achieve in English and mathematics by the end of the key stage. The quality of specialist provision throughout the school for pupils with special educational needs is good. When pupils are withdrawn from their mainstream class lessons for additional help, the work they are given to do is well matched to the targets in their individual education plans. Great care is taken to ensure these pupils maintain access to the full curriculum and are not excluded from vital parts of class lessons. Throughout the school, the curricular opportunities in information technology are sound. Pupils benefit from a good quality curriculum provided by specialist music teaching and a good range of extra-curricular activities. Whilst the physical education curriculum for pupils in Year 1 is effectively planned, lessons are constrained by the current allocation of time and use of the school hall.
24. The school makes good arrangements for pupils to take advantage of opportunities to learn outside the classroom environment. Pupils who are particularly interested in music can join the recorder club, which meets regularly at lunchtimes. The pleasant school grounds are used as a good resource for environmental and science investigations, as is the wider locality surrounding the school. Regular visits to places of interest, such as the botanical gardens, Cannon Hill Park and the Victorian School add a valuable dimension to pupils' academic and social experiences.
25. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is outstanding. Pupils have a good

knowledge and understanding of health issues and are aware of how their life style affects their wellbeing. The school has developed policies for sex education and drugs awareness, both of which are taught sensitively during personal and social education and science lessons. In addition, pupils also benefit from regular opportunities during circle time to discuss a wide range of issues which prepare them well for taking personal responsibility for their actions and for developing an understanding of how these may affect others.

26. The school has developed very good relationships with a range of other institutions and the local community. An especially valuable link is that with a local 'beacon school' for pupils with special needs. The partnership staff have developed has had a marked impact upon the quality of provision for pupils with special needs in this school. The local community are welcomed into the school and enjoy being entertained by the pupils at Harvest and Christmas. The senior citizens reciprocate by making items for the Christmas Fair and talking with the pupils about their own experiences of school life. The school is aware of the need to develop opportunities for pupils through the use of information technology in order to provide enriching links with others around the world.
27. The school meets statutory curricular requirements, including provision for religious education. Daily acts of collective worship are incorporated into whole school and class assemblies. They are well planned and encourage pupils to think about their own values and beliefs and those of others. Whilst they are mainly of a Christian character, occasional opportunities are provided for pupils to explore the customs and traditions of other world faiths. Pupils respond well during times of prayer and reflection. They have a good understanding of the significance of prayer and demonstrate reverence and respect. No pupils are withdrawn from collective worship and the parents are advised, in the school's prospectus, of their right to withdraw their child should they so desire.
28. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good. They are given good opportunities to explore the values of others, both in lessons and listening to stories during assembly. Pupils are familiar with well known stories from the Bible, including Daniel in the lions' den. They can relate these to the central theme of caring and can offer suggestions about how they can be helpful to others. Some opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect upon why we are here and our place in the world. The school enhances pupils' cultural awareness throughout many areas of the curriculum. They learn about significant events which have taken place during the last millennium and make resolutions about what they want to achieve in the current millennium. They study their own local culture in science and history lessons when they compare changes in new and old buildings nearby. Visitors to the school help pupils understand the richness and diversity of non-European cultures, including how Chinese people celebrate their new year and why Indian women and girls decorate their hands with Mendhi patterns during times of celebration, such as Diwali. Through the very good links with other local schools, pupils learn that not all people communicate through speech and they are introduced to sign language and so learn about the culture of deaf people.
29. The school is very effective in cultivating the pupils' moral and social development through the very good opportunities it provides for raising their awareness of social and moral issues. Adults who work within the school provide excellent role models for pupils and are consistent in their approach to reinforcing the difference between right and wrong. Discussions in circle times are particularly effective in prompting pupils to reflect upon how their actions may affect others and that they have choices about how to behave. Through their participation in sports activities and games, pupils learn the value of developing a team identity and the need for interdependence in order to be successful.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The school takes very good care of its pupils. Since the last inspection, it has maintained the good provision for monitoring pupils' health, safety and child protection and the teaching of health education and personal safety. There are very good procedures to safeguard pupils' welfare and promote their development through regular assessment and monitoring of attainment and progress. The school has produced a good safety policy with procedures to promote pupils' safety both in school and on school visits. It is well known to staff and is

regularly used for pupils' benefit. This complements the effective health and safety policy monitored by the chair of governors and the headteacher. There are also very good procedures for promoting good attendance.

31. All members of the school staff know the children well and are mindful of their particular needs. Class teachers have a very good knowledge of individual pupils and have daily contact with parents and carers. Parental comments on the questionnaires included, 'my child feels cherished, challenged, motivated and happy at school. Pupils needing support and help from other agencies are well provided for and the parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in partnership with the school. First aid procedures are efficiently carried out and are known well by staff, parents and pupils.
32. The school policy for behaviour and co-operation has one main rule: that everyone behaves with courtesy, respect and consideration to each other, to surroundings, and to all materials and equipment. It is very effective and is implemented rigorously throughout the school day. Pupils understand the meaning of the policy and they strive to fulfil it. Ninety-nine per cent of parents who responded to the questionnaire feel that behaviour is good. The behaviour policy is provided for parents every year within the governors' annual report and parents feel the school implements the policy well and that it is effective in helping to consistently promote good behaviour and eliminate any oppressive behaviour.
33. There are very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment. All teachers keep very careful records of pupils' achievements and work is marked conscientiously. Targets for learning are clear, are continually monitored and are used to assist teachers' planning. Regular parents' information evenings not only inform parents of the subject content, but also ensure that parents are aware of their children's progress and how the school is using the assessment to plan lessons and set targets. An assessment graph is kept for the senior management team and class teachers to monitor pupils' progress and measure the effectiveness of targets set.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

34. The school's partnership with parents is very good. It is very successful in informing and involving parents in all aspects of pupils' education. The quality of written information and the series of meetings provided by the school for parents are very good. The school prospectus is clear, easy to read and provides information on the curriculum, including school routines and procedures. The governors' annual report provides a very good overview of the school's activities during the past year. Regular letters and the Parent's Association newsletter keep parents informed of meetings, fund raising and social events. Parents feel the information they receive in pupils' annual reports, from class teachers at meetings and through daily contact is good and helps them support their children's learning. Parents' written comments and contributions at the parents' meeting before the inspection all testify to very good information overall. Ninety-five per cent of parents returning the questionnaire say they are well informed by the school. Parents are particularly pleased with the information evening on mathematics and the parental survey, which was sent out last year. A number of issues raised by parents are being addressed: this includes providing a meeting after the summer reports to discuss pupils' progress and future targets. Teachers are happy to talk to parents if they want more information about their child's progress. Parents of children under five are provided with good support prior to entry and all parents are given a nursery information booklet, which has very useful information.
35. Parents have very good opportunities for involvement in their children's learning. A number help regularly in the classroom and through the Parents' Association, which raises considerable funds for the school. The school says parents are very supportive in providing pupils with resources when requested and that this has a real impact on the curriculum and the standards pupil attain. Parents are included and given information on all major decisions taken by the headteacher and governors. Since the last report, the school has maintained the very good links with parents and improved on the procedures to consult them on all school issues. The home-school agreement, produced in consultation with parents and pupils, is being used very well to promote strong partnerships for learning.

36. The school has good arrangements to involve parents and outside agencies in all review meetings for pupils with special educational needs. The school involves parents and pupils in setting and reviewing targets in the individual education plans. Parents are given encouragement and guidance about how to be involved in helping their child at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

37. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management of the school. Her vision and direction for the school clearly takes account of its aims, which are to promote a caring environment in which very good personal attitudes are developed, staff and parents are highly valued and pupils are offered a broad and relevant curriculum. High standards in learning are achieved and, where any areas for development have been identified, these form the basis of a very comprehensive school improvement plan. Leadership and management are delegated positively through the senior management team and subject co-ordinators. The senior management team meets regularly to discuss any issues that have arisen, or decisions which need to be made. Subject co-ordinators have been increasingly empowered to lead and manage their subject areas and to take responsibility for monitoring teaching and learning. Their subject reviews and input to the school improvement plan demonstrate their responsibility and accountability. The planned introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has been very effectively led. The role and responsibilities of the co-ordinator for special educational needs are clear and understood by all staff within the school. She provides good support for staff designated with these responsibilities. The headteacher and governors all recognise the importance of this aspect of the school's work.
38. The school is well-staffed by a team of qualified and experienced teachers who are supported exceedingly well by teaching-team members. All adults in the school are highly dedicated and committed to the education of the children in their care. The excellent teamwork evident in their daily activities helps to provide outstanding role models to pupils and enables the school to function as a very effective learning environment. The administrative, caretaking, cleaning and catering staff all make an outstanding contribution to the life of the school and take their responsibilities very seriously; they provide prompt and cheerful help whenever a need arises and help to keep the school running smoothly. The very good accommodation has been substantially developed since the last inspection, with the addition of new classrooms, a quiet garden and environmental areas. Although the outdoor area for the under-fives is not fully developed, this is identified as an area for improvement in the school's development plan. All of the school's accommodation is kept exceptionally clean and tidy and there are excellent displays of pupils' work. This has a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes because they are aware of the need to care for their surroundings and help tidy up willingly. Learning resources are plentiful, particularly for English, mathematics, science, art and music. They are very well managed and used very efficiently.
39. The governors contribute substantially to the effectiveness of the school. They share with the headteacher a clear vision of the direction for its work; they are extremely well informed, often helping out in school and support teachers in the classrooms. Amongst them, there is expertise in special educational needs, teacher training, management and accountancy. They attend Parent Association activities and performances put on by the school. Reports given by the headteacher and staff at governors' meetings keep them well informed about curriculum development and the standards and quality of education the school achieves. School developments are discussed carefully and prioritised very well. The work of the headteacher is appraised regularly and realistic targets are set. The governors are keen to develop their roles even further and are currently undertaking training to increase their understanding of how to monitor the school's provision more efficiently.
40. The school is very effective in its evaluation and development of teaching. The headteacher has observed lessons to monitor the quality of teaching and discussed performance with individual teachers. Any overall strengths and weaknesses are shared with staff at training sessions and any individual areas for development become part of a teacher's personal development through appraisal. Staff work and plan very well together across year groups and throughout the school, recognising and sharing individual teaching strengths. Subject leaders give support to teachers through the help and advice they are able to offer, for example in religious education about how

to introduce topics from the agreed syllabus. The school very effectively promotes and monitors the effectiveness of specialist teaching arrangements for pupils with special educational needs. Only a few minor issues were identified during the inspection, concerning the more efficient use of time in mathematics and physical education in the reception classes and Year 1 respectively, and the use made of individual educational plans by class teachers across the curriculum.

41. The school has an extremely comprehensive improvement plan which reflects shared concerns arising from the monitoring of teaching and learning. It contains a curriculum review, prioritises areas for development in all aspects of the school and sets clear targets for action. The plan outlines development for three years, giving details for the year ahead. It is carefully costed, sets time for the completion of targets and action taken is monitored and evaluated. The plan sets out a realistic and relevant way for the school to develop and improve and is acted upon effectively. For example, when a lower than expected achievement of more able pupils was identified, action was clearly taken when literacy and numeracy target groups in Years 1 and 2 were organised by ability. This action has been very successful.
42. Very careful budgeting and the efficient use of grants, such as those received for the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies, have enabled the school to achieve its priorities and provide good value for money. The principles of best value are applied to all spending decisions. For example, the funding received by the school for special educational needs is used well to provide useful resources for teaching and a pleasant environment in which individual and small group learning activities take place. Further grants have been allocated to develop the more effective use of information technology. Systems for financial administration are very efficient. A recent audit made some minor recommendations which have all been acted upon. The finance and buildings committee of the governing body meets regularly and receive a full update on the budget; co-ordinators have an agreed budget to spend within their areas which has to be carefully accounted.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

43. There are no significant areas for the school to improve further other than those already very clearly identified in the school improvement plan.
44. A few minor areas for development are indicated in paragraphs 20, 21, 23 and 40. These include improving the use of individual education plans by class teachers and managing time more efficiently in physical education and mathematics.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

52

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 2 | 27 | 52 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

| | Nursery | YR – Y2 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 30 | 202 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | 0 | 8 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

| | Nursery | YR – Y2 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 0 | 0 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 2 | 33 |

English as an additional language

| | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 7 |

Pupil mobility in the last school year

| | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 5 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 5 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.8 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.0 |
| 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 |
| | 1999 | 40 | 35 | 75 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 34 | 37 | 40 |
| | Girls | 32 | 34 | 35 |
| | Total | 66 | 71 | 75 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 88 (87) | 95 (92) | 100 (94) |
| | National | 82 (80) | 83 (81) | 87 (84) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 35 | 39 | 39 |
| | Girls | 30 | 31 | 35 |
| | Total | 65 | 70 | 74 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 87 (87) | 93 (93) | 99 (94) |
| | National | 82 (81) | 86 (85) | 87 (96) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 1 |
| Black – other | 0 |
| Indian | 3 |
| Pakistani | 1 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 1 |
| White | 135 |
| 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) | 8.6 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 27 |
| Average class size | 20 |

Education support staff: YR – Y2

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 3 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 80 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

| | |
|--|----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 30 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 2 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 65 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 10 |
|--------------------------------|----|

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|--------|
| Financial year | 1998/9 |
|----------------|--------|

| | £ |
|--|---------|
| Total income | 467,122 |
| Total expenditure | 464,746 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,152 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 11,172 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 13,548 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 232 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 84 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 75 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 58 | 38 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 50 | 49 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 29 | 52 | 8 | 1 | 0 |
| The teaching is good. | 58 | 37 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 44 | 50 | 1 | 4 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 71 | 24 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 54 | 43 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 48 | 48 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 67 | 30 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 62 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 29 | 40 | 14 | 1 | 14 |

Other issues raised by parents

The majority of parents are pleased with the quality of education the school provides. They particularly like the caring, welcoming environment in which staff are very approachable.

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

45. The school makes good provision for children under five in the nursery and reception classes. Since the last inspection, the good quality teaching has been maintained and the children are provided with a good start to their learning. The entry assessments conducted within the first few weeks of the autumn term indicate that children's competency and confidence with language are above that expected for their age. They develop their skills very effectively in all areas of learning and make good progress overall. They make the best progress in personal and social skills, language and literacy and creative development.

Personal and social development

46. All children achieve very good standards in their personal and social development. They are very well behaved, friendly and polite. They are confident and feel secure within the school, quickly making relationships with each other and the staff. They work extremely well as groups and in pairs and are able to work and play independently. Children in the home corner are able to play for long periods of time, saying *'please'*, *'thank you'* and *'excuse me'* to all present. The children are eager to explore new learning. The children are beginning to initiate ideas as they play with construction sets and, in particular, with the outside play equipment. They show that they can solve practical problems on their own when they tackle unzipping their coats, undoing buttons and putting their own coats on hooks after playtime.
47. Teaching is consistently good. All staff have a very good understanding of child development and work with children sensitively. They act as excellent role models and are calm, offering gentle encouragement and positive praise, while setting clear expectations of behaviour. They encourage independent play and yet provide security by always being available for the children to talk to. The curriculum includes quiet times as part of the planning for social and personal development, and all staff work together exceedingly well as a team.

Language and literacy

48. Standards in language and literacy exceed the expected outcomes for age. All children make rapid progress because the quality of teaching is so good and teachers focus very well on promoting this area. Children achieve notably good standards in listening. They pay good attention to adults and listen carefully when being given instructions and guidance in their activities. The children develop a clear understanding of how to handle books by observing their teachers and soon begin to show basic early reading skills because of the carefully chosen texts provided. They enjoy listening to stories, and are able to sit still and listen attentively. Many children like opening books from their class library and enjoy looking at the pictures. They particularly enjoy taking home books to share with their parents. Children in the nursery are beginning to experiment with making their own marks on paper and many make successful attempts to recognise their own names. They enjoy songs and stories and like recounting a story from the pictures in one of their big class books.
49. All of the teachers work very hard to equip the children with the necessary language and listening skills. Teaching is good. The teachers are clear and precise, intervene carefully with perceptive questioning to make teaching points and use expressive story telling skills. They encourage the children to reason and to predict. Books are well displayed, with a very good range of high quality books accessible to the children in the library area.

Mathematical development

50. Most children exceed the expected outcomes by the age of five. Many can count to ten and some of the children can count far beyond. Children recognise circles, squares and rectangles and use the correct vocabulary. They are able to sort objects according to size and some are beginning to recognise patterns, using the computers. Children make good progress during

lessons. Mathematical language is developed by encouraging the children to count when lining up. The majority of the children show an awareness of number operations and understand and record numbers. They learn number rhymes and games and can tell a story using number. Children behave very well during sessions. They are able to share equipment and work together. Concentration is sustained for a very long time for such young children. They are very willing to pack away the equipment at the end of sessions and collaborate well in this aspect.

51. The quality of teaching is good. There is a mathematical focus planned for every day. Activities are play-related and practical and sustain the interest of the children. The activities are chosen to fit in with the theme in the long-term plan and appropriately match the children's abilities. Assessment procedures are very good. Staff make regular observations and record the children's development for future planning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

52. Children exceed the desirable outcomes for learning by the time they are five. They are able to find out about their babyhood and the lives of the adults in the school through looking at old photographs. They cut and make shapes out of playdough and use scissors and other cutting tools safely. Children can fit construction toys together and make the bed for their babies in the home area and in the prams. They are able to pour sand carefully into various sized containers in the sand tray and pour water into funnels. They paint using large paint-brushes and manipulate the keys on the computers confidently. Children make good progress. They quickly learn to dress themselves and turn on taps to wash themselves. They learn how to manipulate a wide variety of toys and learn very quickly how to pack them away. They learn about living things through practical experiences. Children are inquisitive about the world and constantly ask questions. They work well together in making things and playing in role-play situations and with toys. They wait their turn, share resources well and they concentrate on the task in hand. Children show obvious care and concern by the gentle and skilled way they hold and look after their 'babies' in the home area.
53. Teaching is good. Planning is detailed for all areas of knowledge and understanding of the world and is very appropriately matched to the time of the year and to the children's stages of development. Excellent displays enhance children's experiences. Teachers spend time with children and pace themselves to give all children equal share of their attention. They use skilled questioning and use pictures and actual objects to extend the children's vocabulary. The daily use of assessment procedures is very good; adults constantly check the children's previous knowledge and understanding through questions and answers. Resources are good and matched well to the children's abilities.

Physical development

54. Children make good progress and exceed the standards expected for their age. They are able to handle the tricycles well outside, showing good co-ordination; many children can manoeuvre well around objects and people. They enjoy the feel of the playdough as they push, pull, roll and cut it and handle small toys gleefully. Children sustain concentration well during physical activities. They are courteous and well behaved to adults and each other, and show very willing attitudes to learning. Many are able to walk, jump and move around to find a space and can climb up and down confidently. They use construction kits with increasing confidence and tools, such as scissors, paint brushes, crayons and glue brushes, are handled increasingly well.
55. Teaching is good. Teachers plan their lessons well to teach skills progressively with choice provided in activities. A positive learning environment is provided by calm, firm discipline. The school is well equipped with large and small apparatus of a suitable size and type for young children. The good accommodation is used very well. Provision is good for climbing and crawling activities and for using a range of wheeled vehicles to develop other skills. The school plans to develop its outdoor area for the under-fives in the near future.

Creative development

56. Children make good progress, building on their social skills through practice and interaction with teachers and other adults. They achieve good standards in artistic and musical activities. Children find enjoyment in expressing their feelings and ideas through a range of experiences in artistic, musical and imaginative play. For example, they enjoy painting at the easels and making prints, showing great excitement and wonder at the end product. They know the primary colours well and also know a few secondary colours like orange and green. They enjoy the discovery of playdough shapes when using the cutters and work happily with a wide range of media. Children enjoy singing and making music and do so tunefully, using actions enthusiastically in their rhymes and songs. They use the resources well to aid their imaginative play in the home corner and are beginning to show very confident social skills when playing with each other. Resources are good and the role-play areas are easily adaptable to a variety of themes during the year.
57. The quality of teaching is good. All adults support children in their learning and ensure that they gain from the activities through discussion, as they work. There is a good sense of fun encouraged in practical tasks and activities are organised very well. There is always a well-planned choice of materials and the children make good progress in developing their imaginative skills. Excellent displays of children's work help to create a vibrant and colourful environment in which all children are highly valued as individuals.

ENGLISH

58. The overall results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, in both reading and writing, were above the national average, and broadly in line with the average for similar schools. Eighty-eight per cent of pupils attained the national expectation of Level 2 in reading, with a well above average number attaining the higher Level 3. In writing, although 95 per cent attained Level 2, which is well above national expectations, only 3 per cent attained Level 3, which is below. The school has recognised this lower attainment and taken steps to improve the standards of the more able pupils in writing. Over the last four years, standards have remained above the national average, although standards in writing fell slightly in 1999 due to the greater number of pupils with special educational needs who took the tests than in previous years. There is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls. The inspection shows that the standards of pupils approaching the end of Key Stage 1 are currently well above average. The school has set sufficiently challenging targets for the future, which it is on line to achieve, and is maintaining the high standards reported at the last inspection.
59. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are well above average; most of the pupils become quite articulate, speaking clearly and confidently. They are eager to tell their news at length and make relevant contributions during the oral parts of lessons. The introductory and plenary sessions of the literacy hour provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss learning objectives, the shared text and independent tasks. Lesson plans show specific vocabulary which pupils are expected and encouraged to use. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils used and clearly understood the terms rhyme, phoneme and alliteration. They listen carefully to what teachers and others are saying and wait sensibly for their turn to speak.
60. Standards in reading are very good and, at the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils can read with some degree of fluency. Pupils learn to read through structured schemes, building on previous knowledge to increase word recognition and also through using the sounds of letters. Pupils who have limited knowledge of letter sounds make use of picture cues and the meaning of the text to assist them in tackling new words. More confident pupils can express an opinion about a story they have read and say what sort of books they enjoy reading. Some can name their favourite author or book. All pupils have the opportunity to take books home each day to read to parents. Good use is made of the recently relocated school library; pupils have class sessions in this library, where they can choose books and learn how to locate and use non-fiction books by referring to the contents page and index.
61. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieve well above the national expectation in writing. They are able to write in sentences with the correct use of commas, capital letters, full stops and

speech marks. Pupils write for a range of purposes; they write poems, explain how to make and do things, such as preparing a cup of tea, communicate information, write lists and create stories and character profiles. Examples of Year 2 stories show that their writing is imaginative, clear and well sequenced, with correct punctuation and grammar. Spelling is very accurate, with harder words also being correctly spelt. Pupils are taught to use dictionaries to check spellings and to look for the meanings of words. Lower ability Year 2 pupils know the alphabet and can locate words in a dictionary when creating their own glossary. From the time they start school, pupils are taught to form letters correctly and, by Year 2, most pupils are writing very neatly, using a joined script.

62. Pupils make very good use of literacy across the curriculum. Lesson plans show that the introduction and plenary sessions involve pupils in questioning and discussion, and that subject specific vocabulary is introduced. There are good opportunities for the pupils to use their skills in subjects, such as history, where they write about the Victorians, based on their visit to a museum. The use of information technology is being developed; Year 2 pupils with special educational needs are able to sort out a mixed-up set of instructions by dragging text with the mouse. A lesson in Year 2 was based on the big book 'Maps' and linked learning geographical skills well with literacy.
63. The quality of teaching is very good. All lessons are planned effectively by teachers in each year group and demonstrate their sound knowledge and understanding of the subject. Pupils are in target groups for English, formed from within each year group, with the higher attaining pupils from Years 1 and 2 making up a mixed age group. This organisation is proving to be very effective; teaching is matched to the level of each target group, enabling all pupils to make good progress, including those with special educational needs. Lessons have clear learning objectives and work is further matched to pupils' ability within groups. These learning objectives are shared with pupils, often being displayed and referred to in lessons, and assessment is very well used to identify future learning. Work is consistently marked, often with useful comments and teachers have high expectations of pupils. In the introduction to lessons, teachers expect and encourage pupils to make well thought-out responses to questions. Pupils' attitudes are very good. They concentrate well and are able to work independently. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils were using complex words such as enthusiastic, interested and selfish, and were expected to explain clearly what they meant and be able to spell them. This was followed by pupils working in twos, using dictionaries, to check spellings for adjectives which they were using in their character profiles. Teachers demonstrate good management skills and there is a very good rapport between all staff and pupils. Independent tasks are carefully explained to groups who are expected to work at them without interrupting teachers, allowing them to concentrate on a particular group. Excellent use is made of teaching-team members who take groups of pupils within lessons; they fill in literacy assessment sheets for the teacher and make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. This was very evident in a lesson where a teaching-team member worked with a special needs group on instructional writing. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented very effectively and the co-ordinator manages the subject well, having considerable knowledge and expertise. She keeps careful records of pupils' attainments, tracking them and identifying any emerging strengths and weaknesses. The library co-ordinator has been instrumental in re-siting and reorganising the attractive school library. Resources are very good and are extremely well organised in an attractive and exciting way. Written work is exceedingly well displayed throughout the school, along with aids to learning, such as alphabet friezes, word banks, big books and sounds of the week.

MATHEMATICS

64. At the end of Key Stage 1, the overall standards of pupils' attainment in the 1999 National Curriculum tests were well above the national average. Their standards of attainment were above average when compared with similar schools. The results for 1999 indicate improvement and the school reached its target for pupils at or above the national average. The inspection findings show that seven year-olds attain standards that are well above average. This is due to improvements in the quality of teaching, the advice and support provided by the subject co-ordinator, together with the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the staff development that has accompanied it. The good management and organisation of the mathematics curriculum has ensured that the strategy has had a full impact

on the curriculum.

65. In Year 2, pupils know that addition can be done in any order by putting the largest number first and counting on. They can count forwards and backwards to 25, and can count on or back to any given 2 digit numbers. In Year 2, the higher attaining pupils can identify number patterns in addition and can explain strategies for addition and subtraction. They add and subtract tens and units using mental strategies to calculate Pupils divide and multiply whole numbers by 10 and use their knowledge of multiplication tables to solve simple problems. They understand how to reduce numbers by using a fraction. For example, they know that a third of 12 is 4 and half 16 is 8. The majority of seven-year-olds are able to recognise and name different types of shapes from the number of sides, angles and vertices. In Year 1, pupils can describe and name two-dimensional shapes by touch, developing mental imagery. The progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good overall, both over a longer period of time and in lessons. In Year 1, pupils learn how to add the missing numbers up to 20 on a number line and by Year 2 they calculate accurately simple addition and subtraction sums to 20 and measure with a metre ruler. By the end of Year 2, they can identify addition sums using three-digit numbers and use three digits to make the biggest and smallest numbers possible.
66. The quality of teaching is very good. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous report and has a significant effect on pupils' learning. A particular strength is the teachers' subject knowledge and their planning, which is linked carefully to the National Numeracy Strategy. There are very clear learning objectives for each lesson. The pupils are taught appropriately in groups and work is well matched to their prior knowledge. Teaching-team members support pupils very well. Work is marked regularly with constructive comments and corrections, and homework is used effectively to support pupils' class work. Lessons usually begin with mental work associated with number facts and simple calculations. In response, pupils answer confidently, as they know their answers will be received well. They behave sensibly and are keen to learn. Pupils' very good attitudes to learning and their ability to use their initiative has a positive effect on raising standards. Numeracy is used soundly across the curriculum and teachers have high expectations of their pupils.

SCIENCE

67. The results of the National Curriculum assessments made by teachers in 1999 show that at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain standards well above the national average and above those of similar schools. Evidence from the inspection indicates teachers' assessments as being accurate. Pupils make good progress throughout the key stage. For pupils who have special educational needs, progress is not significantly different to that of their classmates. Pupils' skills in planning and carrying out investigations are good. Most pupils are familiar with handling equipment, demonstrate natural curiosity through asking questions and are confident to offer suggestions about what might happen next when preparing to perform an experiment. Many pupils know how to modify an experiment by changing an element of a test, such as by using different forces to make objects move. They have good understanding of a fair test and can draw conclusions from interpreting test results or evaluating scientific evidence. The most able pupils can make simple predictions, such as why heavy objects sink and light objects float. They can relate this to the effect of wearing arm-bands when swimming and that the air in the arm bands keeps them afloat. Throughout the key stage, pupils increase their knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, including the human body. For example, the youngest pupils are able to draw and label parts of themselves. They know some creatures hatch from eggs, including a chicken, and they are aware of the changes brought about by the seasons. Older pupils use reference materials in their literacy lessons to find out about hedgehogs, guinea pigs and slugs. They discover that young pigs are called piglets and young dogs and guinea pigs are both called puppies. Pupils' understanding of materials and their properties is good. They know that some things are magnetic whilst others are not, and that not all metals are attracted by magnets. They are familiar with associated vocabulary, such as repel and attract, and they know that magnets can be of different strengths, depending on their use. They are familiar with grouping materials according to their similarities or differences and sorting materials according to properties such as being waterproof. They know about the changes brought about through heating and cooling materials and how this can affect shape and

consistency through comparing the features of cooked and uncooked dough. Pupils develop a good understanding of how light comes from a variety of sources, including the sun, and that electricity is needed to create some sources of light, such as a bedside lamp. They can describe movements of familiar objects and the forces needed to make them move. They have studied forces used in everyday life, such as pedalling a bicycle and digging the garden.

68. The quality of teaching is good. In the best lessons teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject. Explanations are effective in enabling pupils to develop an understanding of scientific ideas and concepts. Teachers' questions challenge and extend pupils' thinking through their own enthusiasm for the subject. Pupils are managed very well and teachers have high expectations of what they expect pupils to achieve in their lessons. Pupils clearly enjoy very positive relationships with their teachers and show them high levels of respect. They are generally highly motivated, listen attentively and show pleasure in achieving success. Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning are very good indeed and opportunities are included for pupils, especially those who are more able, to extend their scientific vocabulary and use mathematical and graphic skills to record their work. The use made of teaching-team members to support learning is very good and adds a valuable dimension to pupils' experiences. Resources and time are also used very effectively. The policy document and scheme of work for the subject have a positive impact upon raising standards and ensure there is breadth and balance within the curriculum. Resources are good. Since the time of the last inspection, the school has made good progress in addressing areas for development. This has resulted in higher standards achieved by pupils and better progress through improved quality of teaching and a better range of resources.

ART

69. Overall, standards are much higher than those expected for pupils' age at Key Stage 1. Pupils achieve particularly good standards in painting and observational drawing. By the time they reach Year 2, pupils are confident in their use of colour, form and shape. They use their observational skills well to critically analyse the work of famous Impressionist artists, such as Van Gogh, and are able to interpret his techniques in their own work. Pupils produce good designs for their string printing work based on floral themes and are able to apply their knowledge in order to prepare materials for block printing activities. They experiment successfully with colour when painting mini-beasts, fruit and vegetables. They have good observational skills, as shown in their studies of buildings and careful pencil drawings of plant life. Pupils achieve a good standard in drawing self-portraits and observational studies, giving good attention to tone and shade in their representations. They tackle collage work with confidence and are able to complete pieces for class displays to complement their studies of the environment in geographical activities. Pupils make good progress, including those who have special educational needs. Throughout the school, pupils' visual perception is improved through good focus on recording observations. Pupils' understanding of the methods and style of artists is increased steadily throughout the school and good links are forged between art and other curriculum areas which increase their knowledge. Cultural diversity is well represented, with focus from both European society and world-wide multi-cultural themes.
70. No lessons were observed during the inspection due to the organisation of time-tables, but evidence from a scrutiny of work, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils shows that the quality of teaching is good and pupils respond well with enthusiasm and confidence. Teachers are enthusiastic and have good subject knowledge. They plan their lessons well to give pupils a very broad range of experiences. The enthusiastic co-ordinator promotes consistently high standards of displays in classrooms and corridors. As a result, work is well mounted, clearly labelled, imaginative and very colourful. This contributes well to the high standards attained in observational drawing and is an outstanding feature of the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

71. Standards are good. Pupils are accustomed to working from designs, which specify the tools and materials that will be needed for their models. They work safely and most have a good knowledge of a variety of methods to fasten materials together, which includes staples, clips, glue and string. Pupils work confidently with tools, such as saws, drills and scissors. When

making cakes or biscuits, they follow a recipe using a range of basic ingredients. When evaluating different types of biscuit, they use appropriate vocabulary to describe products including their sensory characteristics. They compare biscuits, bread and cakes in terms of appearance, flavour, texture and cost, understand that people have different preferences and that designers need to consider this when designing. As part of a project designing and making playground equipment, they produce drawings to explore ideas and evaluate their proposed designs. When making puppets, they list the different materials needed together with procedures for making and for evaluation. In Year 2, pupils design and make mechanical toys, using wheels and axles to make a winding mechanism. All apply finishing techniques, such as painting carefully, to enhance the quality of their artefacts. They understand the properties of common materials and make good choices when constructing models. Pupils understand the importance of planning, which includes deciding what tools they are going to use. The pupils measure, cut and join a variety of materials accurately and carefully assemble simple mechanical models, introducing movement by using axles for wheels, or split pins for joints in card cut-out figures. They develop knowledge and understanding of mechanisms such as levers and structures and are able to explore the use of different fabrics and clothing design in Victorian projects.

72. The quality of teaching is good. Since the last inspection, the development of literacy has encouraged pupils to use appropriate vocabulary when naming tools and describing what they are doing, with strict observance of hygiene. There is regular assessment of pupils' attainment and outcomes are recorded and used to inform overall assessment at the end of the year. Design and technology is a well managed and organised area of the curriculum. In response, pupils' attitudes are very good. All take a pride in their work. Pupils with special educational needs are equally as successful in making things as other pupils and this helps to raise their self-esteem. Pupils share tools sensibly and help one another willingly, for example, by holding materials that need to be joined. There are some good displays of artefacts in the open spaces around the school.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

73. Only one lesson was observed in history and geography due to the organisation of time-tables. However, pupils' work and classroom displays indicate sound progress in acquiring historical and geographical facts and developing the appropriate subject skills. Pupils become aware of the present and past in their own lives through comparing toys, teddy bears and items such as irons and bicycles. These items are set out in order of age and pupils start to realise how they have developed over time. They study famous people and events from the past, for example Stephenson and the Rocket and Scott's journey to the South Pole. A visit to the Victorian Museum is the focus for studying Victorian life, where pupils experience writing with nib pens and learn how to sew a hem. In geography, pupils become aware of their own locality by looking at buildings and their uses. They develop mapping skills well by drawing maps of imaginary islands, plans of their classrooms and maps of their walk to school with a use of symbols and keys. They visit places further afield, such as the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, and plan the route that they can take around these places. Weather observations are made and carefully recorded on charts or in diaries. Pupils become familiar with the map of Britain and can locate the different countries of the United Kingdom and their capital cities. On world maps they can identify the continents.
74. The quality of teaching is sound, with good features. In the one lesson observed, the work was carefully planned and challenging, introduced well and pupils remembered that a plan was a 'bird's-eye-view'. The subject is led well by a good co-ordinator who has developed the resources since the last inspection, with new atlases and maps, books for early years and computer mapping programmes.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

75. Standards are sound. Pupils are confident in using computers to communicate their ideas in a variety of ways. For example, in Year 1 pupils are able to use a word processor and are good at being able to enter, amend, save and retrieve information without help from the teacher. They can change the style, colour and size of text and print. In Year 2, they can programme a floor

turtle using sets of simple commands so that it negotiates a pathway. They have good opportunities to use paint programs, clip art, logo, a digital camera and scanner. Pupils develop good skills in using the equipment and good skills in using the mouse to give instructions to the computer. For example, pupils are skilful in using the mouse to draw with precision. In Year 2, they are beginning to develop skills in controlling devices, they can recognise that devices can be controlled by a computer and write a sequence to produce a recognisable event. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school, particularly in communicating ideas and information and developing their understanding and knowledge of measurement and control. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to use computers with considerable confidence.

76. The quality of teaching is good overall. Strengths in teaching include teachers having a mostly secure knowledge and understanding of information technology and planning that identifies clearly what pupils are to learn. Teachers' expectations are usually appropriately high and they set tasks that are suitably demanding. In response, pupils have particularly good attitudes to their work. They are well motivated, able to concentrate for suitable lengths of time and respond with enthusiasm. A strong feature is the way pupils are able to access the computer without help from the teachers and work independently. Pupils are very responsible when using computers and can work together on the computer well. Behaviour is always good and this contributes very effectively to the standards pupils attain. The effective way that teachers manage their lessons has a positive impact on pupils' very good attitudes and willingness to use information technology. In their planning and teaching, lesson objectives are clearly identified, the tasks set provide enough challenge and the organisation gives pupils enough time using the computer. The curriculum is well planned. Since the last inspection, the school has developed a new scheme of work to ensure good breadth and balance over time. There are good plans for developing a new computer network to allow pupils access to the full range of activities, including the use of CD-ROM and the Internet.

MUSIC

77. Music is a strength of the school in which standards are higher than expected by the age of seven. Overall, standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 understand the meaning of tempo and melody. They read simple graphic notation confidently when playing descant recorders and are able to follow a steady beat. The standards attained in singing are very good. Pupils are able to follow an ascending and descending tune in melodies, such as the 'Rainbow' song, and they play simple untuned percussion instruments and appraise their compositions effectively to improve their performances. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Throughout the school, pupils develop their musical vocabulary well and most are keen to improve their performances through repeated practice. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They participate well in lessons, showing enjoyment, and listen with interest and sustained concentration. For example, pupils in Year 2 effectively improved their rhythmic skills by responding well to changes in tempo when performing 'Miss Polly Has a Dolly'.
78. Teaching is very good because the co-ordinator who teaches all classes has excellent subject knowledge. Teaching is sometimes outstanding when pupils are particularly well managed and a great sense of fun is promoted within a structured ethos. For example, pupils in Year 2 achieved very high standards in singing 'Look Out For Loneliness' because the lesson was exceedingly well led by the specialist teacher, with good support from the class teachers. Lessons have a good structure and are of brisk pace. Percussion instruments are used imaginatively to improve pupils' performances and the teacher's demonstrations help to motivate pupils. Effective questioning skills are employed to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding of musical terms and tasks match the differing needs of all pupils. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to perform to an audience, such as in assemblies and in small group activities during lessons. The very good assessment procedures are used exceedingly well to target learning and thorough records are kept of pupils' achievements. Resources are good and are used well. The expertise of the co-ordinator has a very positive effect on the high standards attained and good links are made with other subjects, such as English, science and history. In addition, art is used well to encourage pupils' knowledge of musical instruments through painting, and computer technology is being developed to enrich the

curriculum even further. Extra-curricular recorder groups and concerts enable pupils to take part in performances and so extend their skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

79. Since the last inspection, the school has enabled pupils to maintain good standards of achievement in this aspect of the curriculum. Three lessons were observed during the inspection, covering the curriculum area of gymnastics. Over the year, a full programme of activities is planned. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. Pupils develop their skills, competence and level of controlled movements when performing sequences to explore a variety of ways to travel, using rolling as a theme. They can name several types of rolling movements, including stretched, curled and pencil rolls. They are able to combine two of these and talk about the effect they have achieved when working together in pairs. Pupils show a good awareness of space in their gymnastics lesson. They are able to use a range of jumping and climbing movements to negotiate large apparatus. They use mats, hoops and ropes to develop creative floor-based sequences of stretching, bending, rolling and jumping. Through taking turns and watching groups of their classmates demonstrate their efforts, they are able to compare and contrast shape, level, direction and control.
80. The quality of teaching is sound and planning is effective. A feature of the best teaching is the way in which pupils are occupied fully with a good variety of activities that maintain their interest and enthusiasm. Effective use is made of warming up and cooling down and there is good regard to safety. Teachers dress appropriately for the subject and provide pupils with good role models in terms of setting high standards when they demonstrate and perform basic actions for pupils to repeat. In response, pupils participate with enjoyment and enthusiasm and behave well. They perform co-operatively in groups and pairs. Most work with sustained effort. Pupils are suitably dressed for the subject. However, due to the way lessons are time-tabled, dressing and undressing means too little time is left for pupils in the reception classes to actively engage in sufficient physical exercise.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

81. Standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have sound understanding of Christianity and other world religions through looking at their special books, their symbols and how and why their followers pray. They look at how people celebrate festivals such as Christmas, Easter, Hannukah and Diwali; they are familiar with well known Bible stories such as Jonah and the whale and Noah's ark, and have learnt about Jesus, his life and teachings. Pupils' attitudes are good; they show an appreciation of religions other than Christianity and are very interested in the differences they observe between their own knowledge and experience of religion and that being taught. They listen carefully to teachers and are keen to ask and answer questions. Pupils make good progress and are able to write their own accounts of Harvest and Diwali, the story of Moses and their own millennium prayers.
82. The quality of teaching is good. A strong feature of the teaching is the way in which pupils can reflect on their own experiences when trying to understand religious concepts. For example, in a Year 2 lesson on prayer and sacrifice, pupils related their experiences of giving and sharing to making a sacrifice. In Year 1, pupils learn about the precious nature of the Torah scrolls to Jewish people and why care is taken when handling and storing them. To help them understand, they were asked to write about something precious to them, created a class scroll and found a special place to keep it. This reflection is an important part of their spiritual development. Teachers carefully plan lessons together across year groups, and make good use of the artefacts and resources provided. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator who is also studying for a Diploma in Religious Education and has great interest in the subject. She has carefully planned a scheme of work based on the locally Agreed Syllabus, which is soon to be reviewed, and helps teachers with their planning. There are currently few opportunities for using assessment, but this is being planned. The co-ordinator is also looking at the development of the subject year-by-year to ensure progression of learning. A sound range of resources is being built up and stored carefully, categorised by world faiths.