

INSPECTION REPORT

HART PLAIN INFANT SCHOOL

Waterlooville

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 115966

Headteacher: Mrs Beverley Cooper

Reporting inspector: Dr Colin Lee
21854

Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th May 2001

Inspection number: 193557

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hart Plain Avenue Cowplain Waterlooville Hampshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A R Coley
Date of previous inspection:	27 th January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21854	Dr C Lee	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
19693	Mrs S Hall	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils The school's partnership with parents
22856	Mrs K Campbell	Team inspector	English Geography Music Religious education English as an additional language	The quality of the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils Equal opportunities
19302	Mrs C Perrett	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology History Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hart Plain Infant School is about the same size as an average infant school. There are 246 pupils on roll, 128 boys and 118 girls who are taught in nine single-age classes, three for each year group. At the time of the last inspection there were 230 pupils at the school. Closure of a nearby primary school increased the numbers during the last school year when 50 pupils joined the school during that year and only six left. Pupils are from a very broad range of socio-economic backgrounds that are average overall. The percentage of pupils who have English as an additional language, at 1.2 per cent, is slightly higher than in most schools and the main languages spoken by these pupils are either Cantonese or Arabic. Twenty per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and this is broadly in line with the national average. However, the percentage with Statements of special educational needs is one per cent, which is below average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, currently 8.5 per cent, is below average. Children start school in the September before their fifth birthday, and their attainment on entry to the reception year is assessed to be generally average. The school has experienced a significant turnover of teaching staff during the last two years, due mainly to departing staff moving to more senior posts. Seven staff have been replaced in this period.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Hart Plain is a good infant school, where pupils are achieving well and making good progress. By the age of seven, pupils achieve above-average standards in reading, mathematics and science. These standards, together with the very positive attitudes that pupils develop, are the result of very effective teaching and very good leadership and management. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, much of which has occurred since the appointment of the headteacher one year ago. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the age of seven, standards in reading, mathematics, and science are above average.
- Pupils have good attitudes to the school, to their work and to one another.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and is supported very well by the very good management skills of the deputy headteacher and the three year-group leaders.
- The overall quality of both teaching and learning is good.
- Parents hold very good views of the school and they make a very good contribution to the life of the school and to pupils' learning.
- In a very short time, all staff at the school have developed a strong, cohesive unity that is very committed to school improvement.

What could be improved

- In writing, the more able pupils do not achieve high enough standards by the age of seven.
- The time allocated to different areas of the curriculum could be organised more efficiently in order to be more relevant to pupils' needs.
- The role of subject co-ordinators requires development in order that they can manage subjects more effectively.
- All staff need a greater awareness of procedures for child protection.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents and carers of pupils in the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has achieved good improvement since the last inspection in January 1997. The key issues arising from that inspection have been rectified successfully. The school's behaviour policy is now applied consistently. There are good systems for monitoring and tracking the progress of all pupils and pupils' independent learning skills are now developed successfully. Good strategic planning ensures that the staffing structure is affordable. Beyond the key issues from the last inspection, other aspects of the school's work show improvement. By the age of seven, pupils' standards in reading, mathematics and information and communication technology have improved. Pupils' attitudes and the general quality of teaching have also improved. There is better provision of learning opportunities for pupils' personal development. The governing body has increased its effectiveness, and the school's partnership with parents has developed still further. These wide-ranging improvements in the school's performance are the result of the governing body ensuring that the school did not stand still during the period of staff instability, and of the rapid progress that has been

achieved under the present headteacher's leadership. The latter is ensuring that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	A	B	B	B
Writing	B	C	C	D
Mathematics	A	B	B	B

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

Pupils have performed consistently well in the reading and mathematics tests over the past five years, with results staying above the national averages. Teachers' assessments of science match these results. In 2000, the percentages of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in these three subjects were well above the average found nationally and when compared with similar schools¹. Writing has been a comparative weakness, as is found nationally, and the school's test results show a gradual decline that has been caused by falling standards amongst boys. Having identified this trend and implemented strategies to improve standards of writing generally, and those of boys in particular, the school is starting to show success. The overall standards seen in the inspection show that, by the age of seven, pupils are above average in reading, mathematics and science. The standards achieved by the more able pupils are well above average in all but writing, where they could do better. Early indications are that pupils' performance in the 2001 National Curriculum tests, which have been recently completed, is an improvement on the results in 2000, and that pupils should reach the challenging targets that have been set for them. In all other subjects in the curriculum, seven-year-olds are achieving standards that are in line with expectations for their age. This is a picture of the good overall progress made by pupils, which is helped by the good learning that occurs in reception, where children start school with average attainment and exceed all the Early Learning Goals² by the time they leave reception.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are very eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Pupils conduct themselves well in class and behave very well at playtimes and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very positive relationships exist between pupils and between pupils and staff, which contributes to pupils' good overall personal development. Pupils carry out their responsibilities very conscientiously.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance matches national rates and the amount of unauthorised absence is less than in most schools.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

¹ 'Similar schools' are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment normally found in schools nationally.

² The Early Learning Goals set out what children should achieve by the time they reach the end of the reception year in primary school.

During the inspection, 13 per cent of lessons seen were very good, 47 per cent were good, 36 per cent were satisfactory and four per cent unsatisfactory. Teaching is consistently good in Year 1, which results in the particularly good learning and progress that occurs in this year. All teachers work well with support staff and use a wide range of resources that stimulate pupils' learning very successfully. English and mathematics are taught well, overall, and the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are consolidated successfully across the whole curriculum. Teaching is generally matched appropriately to the needs of pupils of all abilities, with particularly good provision for more able pupils that enables them to achieve very good standards. Behaviour management is generally good. However, during the occasional unsatisfactory lesson, when the pace is too slow, or activities fail to meet pupils' needs, the resultant misbehaviour by a minority of pupils is not managed successfully. The good teaching of basic skills, in most subjects, prepares pupils well for their future learning. Pupils maintain good levels of concentration and interest in their work at all times, including occasions when they are required to work independently.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A good curriculum is provided for the Foundation Stage ³ . The curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory but the amount of time allocated to different subjects needs reviewing.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall. There is early identification of pupils with special needs, close liaison with parents, and regular review of pupils' progress towards the relevant and specific targets that are set for them.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The provision addresses pupils' individual needs well, with well-planned and expert support from teachers and classroom assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall, with good provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development and satisfactory provision for their spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good procedures are in place for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development and for assessing pupils' learning. The school has sound procedures in place to ensure the welfare of its pupils.

The school has a very good partnership with parents, working hard to develop links and involving them very well in their children's education.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good overall. The headteacher leads the school very well, with very good support from the deputy headteacher and year-group leaders. Many subject co-ordinators are new to their responsibilities and have yet to develop their roles.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors fulfil their responsibilities very well, by providing constructive guidance and a very clear vision of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good self-evaluation procedures enable the school to identify priorities, set itself appropriate targets, and pursue effective courses of action for future improvement.
The strategic use of resources	There is good use of physical and human resources and very efficient management of the finances available.

Staffing levels are good, learning resources are satisfactory overall, and the school has good accommodation. The school applies the principles of best value well, challenging itself and securing good value for money in the services and resources that it acquires.

³ The Foundation Stage applies to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school.• Their children's good progress.• The good behaviour of pupils.• The good standard of teaching.• The information received about their children's progress.• How the school deals with parents' questions or problems.• The high expectations the school has of its pupils.• The good leadership and management.• How their children are helped to become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework.• The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors endorse the many positive views of the parents and, in the inspection team's judgement, the parents' concerns are unfounded. The type and amount of homework set are suitable for pupils of this age. It is unusual for there to be many extra-curricular activities in an infant school and, as in all schools, organisation of such activities is dependent on teachers having time to volunteer to run them.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children start school in the September before they are five. They enter the reception classes with a wide range of abilities, which, when tested, using the county's assessment of children's attainment when they start school shows them to be average overall for this age. The quality of education children receive in the Foundation Stage gives them a good start to school life, as it did at the time of the last inspection. Children make good progress. By the end of the reception year, standards are above average, with the vast majority of children attaining the Early Learning Goals in all the recommended areas of learning. A considerable number of children are working within the early stages of the National Curriculum, particularly in the development of their literacy and numeracy skills.
2. The school's results in the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds, over the past five years, show that pupils have generally maintained the good progress that starts in the reception classes. When the results in reading, writing and mathematics are combined, the school is seen to have maintained standards that are above national averages. However, there are different trends in the individual tests. Performance in the reading and mathematics tests has been consistent since the last inspection in 1997 and results have always been above the national averages, whereas, results in writing have gradually fallen, due to a decline in the standards achieved by boys. When compared nationally, pupils' results in 2000 were above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in science showed standards to be above average. Compared with similar schools, standards in reading, mathematics and science were above average, but writing was below average. The percentage of pupils who reached the higher Level 3 was well above average in science, above average in reading and mathematics, and average in writing. Compared with similar schools, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was well above average in reading, mathematics and science, and average in writing. Early indications are that the results in the 2001 tests, which have been recently completed, show an improvement on the results in 2000.
3. The school sets its own targets each year for the tests, predicting the level that each pupil should achieve, after thorough analysis of pupils' earlier attainment. These targets are generally challenging for the pupils concerned. Overall, the targets were achieved in 2000 and are likely to be achieved in 2001. The school expects a third of the pupils to achieve the higher Level 3 in reading and mathematics, but only 11 per cent in writing.
4. The pupils currently in Year 2, who are now approaching the end of the key stage, are achieving above the standards expected for their age in reading, mathematics and science. All these areas show an improvement on the standards achieved at the last inspection. Standards in writing are average, as was found at the last inspection. The strategies adopted by the school to improve standards in writing are starting to have an impact on pupils in the year group, as a whole, but the more able pupils can still do better. Particular strengths are in pupils' speaking, listening, reading and basic numeracy skills, and the quality of pupils' investigative work in science.
5. In the other subjects of the curriculum, all pupils are maintaining satisfactory, and sometimes good, levels of achievement and, by the age of seven, pupils' standards are generally in line with the expectations in each subject. This is a maintenance of standards found at the time of the last inspection, except in information and communications technology where levels of achievement in the subject have improved. The good work of the new subject co-ordinator in developing the planning of what is taught, the good teaching and, in particular, the very good ability of pupils to work independently have brought about these improvements.

6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their abilities. They approach their work with confidence, due to the good levels of support they receive within the school. They progress well towards achieving the targets set in their individual educational plans. These targets are clear, appropriate to pupils' needs, and are reviewed regularly. The few pupils with English as an additional language also achieve well. Very good support is provided by visiting specialist staff and there is good liaison between these staff and class teachers. The teachers themselves ensure that there is clear communication with the pupils about the work to be done in class lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The good attitudes shown by pupils at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained. Parents say that the vast majority of pupils enjoy school. Most pupils are enthusiastic about their work and this has a positive impact on their learning. Pupils listen carefully to the teacher's instructions and are keen to answer questions. They usually settle quickly to their work and concentrate well on the tasks they have been given. This was seen in a Year 1 science lesson on the function of roots. The pupils picked up the teacher's enthusiasm for the subject and, through her careful questioning, they were eager to observe, explain and predict. Pupils moved quickly from one task to another and were justly proud of their labelled diagrams.
8. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' behaviour in a few lessons was inappropriate. It has now improved and is generally good. Pupils understand that the vast majority of adults working in the school have high expectations of good behaviour and pupils respond well to the system of rewards. Sanctions are rarely needed. Behaviour in lessons is generally good, but some pupils have not learnt to put up their hands during class discussions and they call out. In one Year 2 lesson, the behaviour was unsatisfactory. A few boys were disruptive and this hindered their own and others' learning. During assemblies, pupils' behaviour is very good and this helps to create a suitable atmosphere for worship. Pupils behave sensibly during lunch and behave very well in the playground. Incidents of anti-social behaviour are rare and there have been no exclusions. The pupils are trustworthy and show respect for the property and the environment.
9. Pupils' personal development and relationships are good. At the time of the last inspection, there were limited opportunities for pupils to show independence. This has improved and is now good. In lessons, pupils move from one activity to another without fuss and tidy up quickly. They enjoy being monitors and they clear away their own plates after lunch. In Year 2, pupils are proud to be special helpers in the playground and take their duties very seriously. One pupil independently organised the collection of postage stamps for a charity appeal. Relationships are good and pupils generally collaborate with each other and work well in groups. They take turns and support each other when working on computers. Pupils enjoy socialising at lunchtime and during break. They have good relationships with teachers and other adults working in the school. Pupils with special educational needs have the same attitudes and values as their classmates.
10. The attendance of the pupils is satisfactory but has deteriorated since the last inspection when it was judged to be good. The attendance rate of 94.4 per cent is broadly in line with the national average. There were no recorded unauthorised absences. The vast majority of parents bring their children to school on time and the school day starts promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

11. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. During the inspection, 13 per cent of lessons seen were very good, 47 per cent were good, 36 per cent were satisfactory and four per cent (two lessons) were unsatisfactory. Overall, this is an improvement when compared with the last inspection, with more very good and slightly less unsatisfactory teaching.

12. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The teaching and non-teaching staff work as a cohesive team, planning relevant and interesting activities for the children. The contributions of the learning assistants are particularly valued, and their experience and expertise has a positive impact on the learning in the reception classes. The teachers generally have a very sound knowledge and understanding of this age group, and use every opportunity to enhance children's learning. This enables the children to make good progress during their time in reception. Thorough planning results in the provision of activities that ensure the children learn through lively, practical experiences, wherever possible. Support staff and volunteers are used well. They are thoroughly briefed on each activity's purpose and their very effective interaction with the children has good impact on the children's learning. Children are carefully assessed and activities are matched well to the individual child's needs. Relationships are good and the children benefit from very well-established routines.
13. Teaching is good overall at Key Stage 1 and is particularly strong in Year 1, where all the lessons seen were good or better and 36 per cent were very good. This corresponds with the good quality of learning achieved by pupils in Year 1. Across the key stage, there is very good teaching of music by the part-time specialist teacher and good teaching of English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, art and religious education. The consistently good quality of teaching is contributing well to the progress that pupils make in their learning in these subjects.
14. All teachers create a purposeful, working atmosphere in their classroom. Pupils respond very well to teachers and other adults and work conscientiously and co-operatively. All pupils, from reception onwards, are expected to work without direct supervision and they respond well to the independence that they have at these times. Pupils maintain high levels of interest in their work and show commendable maturity in their attitudes. They settle to work quickly, work at a brisk pace, and achieve high productivity in most lessons. The relationships between teachers, other adults, and pupils are very positive and teachers make good use of support staff to provide additional instruction and guidance for pupils. Support staff are briefed thoroughly and the quality of their guidance to pupils is good. These staff and volunteers have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, making them keen to get started on their work and providing useful feedback to keep them motivated. Teachers' marking is also a satisfactory form of feedback that informs pupils of their successes and how their future work may be improved.
15. In the best lessons seen, teachers prepared carefully and used resources very well to aid pupils' learning. Teachers question their pupils in a purposeful manner to consolidate pupils' understanding and extend their learning. There is a brisk pace to very good lessons and work is matched carefully to pupils' individual needs and abilities. All these characteristics were evident in the very good teaching of a Year 1 science lesson in which pupils learned about the function of a plant's roots. The teacher communicated her own enthusiasm for the topic and this created an atmosphere in which pupils wanted to learn. Very good organisation of each phase of the lesson enabled pupils to develop their learning in smooth transitions from one activity to the next. Pupils were totally fascinated when observing the root system that had just started to grow from seeds that they had sown. This fascination grew to exclamations of wonder at the roots which had developed in a houseplant that had become pot-bound. From these observations, the teacher skilfully focused pupils' attention on the important learning points and, incidentally, on the development of literacy skills by asking pupils to think of all the adjectives they could to describe the different roots that they had observed. Drawings with labels consolidated pupils' learning very effectively. All pupils were challenged sufficiently by their work and made good progress in their learning. By the end of the lesson, all pupils had acquired levels of knowledge and understanding well in excess of what is expected of this age group.
16. There are no common factors in the, occasionally, unsatisfactory teaching other than pupils' deteriorating behaviour. This is a result of the lesson's pace being too slow, or activities

failing to meet pupils' needs. In these situations, the resultant misbehaviour by a minority of pupils is not managed successfully.

17. Teachers' subject knowledge is good at the Foundation Stage and satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1. The teaching of basic literacy skills is good. Teachers are implementing the National Literacy Strategy very effectively by generally providing a good range of activities that are matched well to the needs of groups of pupils of different abilities. Teachers are successful at using lessons in subjects other than English to develop pupils' speaking, reading and writing skills. The National Numeracy Strategy is also implemented well. Teachers are confident and promote number work strongly. This is having a positive effect on standards. There are occasions when literacy and numeracy lessons are very long and the pace slackens in order to ensure that the activities planned will last the allotted time. This time allocation requires review.
18. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from learning support assistants and the special needs co-ordinator in class, and in small groups withdrawn from class. This support enables them to understand and complete the tasks set, and make good progress towards their identified targets. Teachers know the needs of their pupils well and match work to their abilities in lessons. Any necessary teaching aids are supplied to ensure that there are no additional barriers to learning. There is good liaison between the teachers, learning support assistants, and the special educational needs co-ordinator. Support assistants interact well with pupils with special educational needs and give good levels of guidance in order to support pupils' learning across the school. Teachers manage those pupils who have behavioural targets well and use support assistants effectively to monitor pupils' progress against their behavioural targets. Similarly, good levels of support are provided for pupils with English as an additional language, by visiting specialist staff, teachers and classroom learning assistants. Teachers' provision for the more able pupils is good overall and reflects the high expectations that teachers have of these pupils. There are, however, weaknesses in the provision of writing opportunities for these pupils that are limiting their levels of achievement. The good quality of provision overall, for these different groups, is indicative of the careful planning of learning activities that ensures an accurate match of learning activities to individual needs, including those pupils of average ability whose needs were not catered for sufficiently at the time of the last inspection. Day-to-day use of assessment is not yet as well developed, or used consistently by all teachers. Apart from mathematics, teachers do not use information from lessons sufficiently to identify whether a topic needs to be revisited, whether individual pupils who have grasped the concept can move on, or whether further supplementary work is required.
19. Pupils' generally good levels of interest and concentration help them to make good progress in lessons, as well as over time. They have positive attitudes to the work that they are expected to do at home. Teachers ensure that reading books are taken home frequently, and set short numeracy tasks and occasional topic-related 'finding out' tasks. These are not too time-consuming but help to establish the habit of working at home.

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

20. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good. It is broad, balanced and relevant for this age group, and planned appropriately, according to the recommended areas of learning. A wide range of quality activities is provided to enable children to meet the Early Learning Goals. Overall, curricular provision for Key Stage 1 is satisfactory.
21. At the time of the last inspection the school provided a rich curriculum for children under five. The planning of the curriculum was a strength of the school. Schemes of work were detailed and mapped out the systematic development of skills in a wide range of subjects. There was a well-organised monitoring programme for subject co-ordinators and governors. However, information and communication technology was not used sufficiently as a tool for learning,

older pupils had little opportunity to develop independent learning skills, and provision for pupils' personal and social development was not systematically planned.

22. Many changes have taken place during the intervening years and the school has experienced a period of high staff turnover. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage remains strong, and governors have strengthened their role in curriculum development and monitoring. The role of co-ordinators has not been as clearly developed because of the high staff turnover. A programme for pupils' personal and social development is now in place and provision for information and communication technology has improved greatly. There is good evidence of pupils' independent learning skills being developed well in group work, and subjects such as geography. However, curriculum planning is not as strong. Policies and schemes of work that have been updated, such as the one for religious education, are of good quality. Most, however, remain unchanged since the last inspection. Some are still relevant and have served the school well during a period of instability, but many are outdated and do not accommodate new curriculum or government initiatives.
23. The current curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. It fully meets statutory requirements, and religious education conforms to the locally agreed syllabus. The governors have maintained their policy to provide no formal sex education but the school recognises the need for review if its bid to be part of the 'Healthy Schools' project is accepted. A local education authority programme, 'Getting It Right', provides education in drugs' awareness. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and the school makes every effort to ensure its Brethren pupils are offered the opportunity to partake fully in school life whilst, at the same time, respecting parents' wishes to withdraw their children from a small number of activities.
24. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has provided an effective framework for the systematic development of pupils' skills during a period of instability. Both strategies are being used well in the teaching of literacy and numeracy and pupils have opportunities to develop these skills further across the curriculum. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good with effective input from the visiting teacher service. Information and communication technology is also being used well across the curriculum. English and mathematics receive justifiably high amounts of teaching time and time allocations for other subjects are adequate to ensure pupils receive a worthwhile learning experience. However, the overall organisation of the curriculum does not always ensure best provision. Although the grouping of pupils by ability for writing activities has gone some way towards addressing the needs of individual pupils, lessons timetabled for lengthy sessions do not always benefit all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, who find sustained concentration difficult. Other short time slots for subjects, such as art, are frequently ineffective, particularly when other lessons start late or overrun, or the time allocation is too small to be purposeful. In addition, the organisation of teaching time for subjects such as history and geography, with long gaps between topics, does not ensure pupils remember what they have learnt sufficiently well.
25. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. A sound policy is in place and the newly-appointed co-ordinator is in the process of checking where various aspects of the subject are being taught. Issues, such as relationships, are discussed appropriately in 'circle time'⁴ and a visit by fire-fighters visit enhances pupils' understanding of keeping safe. The school is keen to review aspects of personal, social and health education through the 'Healthy Schools' initiative, and is working on a new programme of study.

Links with the community

26. The school's partnership with the community is good. These links have a positive impact on pupils' attainment and personal development. Visitors, such as a dog trainer, enrich the

⁴ Circle time is an activity where pupils are able to discuss certain matters as a class, following strict rules about listening to others and taking turns to speak.

curriculum and the school arranges a good range of visits, for example, to an historic dockyard, and a zoo. Members of the local community help in school and others refurbished the school hall. The school has developed links with a residential home and the pupils are given good opportunities to meet senior citizens. The school is a member of a local environmental project and has taken part in the Woodland Festival. The school has improved its links with local employers. There are established links with a supermarket and visits are made to local shops. A local company has donated a considerable amount of computer equipment. The local vicar visits school assemblies and this provides good opportunities for the pupils to learn more about the Christian faith. The school encourages the pupils to think of those less fortunate than themselves and the pupils raise money for charities.

Links with partner institutions

27. The school has developed very good links with its partner institutions. The school works closely with local pre-school groups to share good practice and to ensure that children make a smooth transition into the reception classes. The school continues to develop beneficial links with the adjacent junior school and staff meet regularly to discuss aspects of the curriculum. Staff meet with teachers from other local schools and pupils take part in a joint music workshop.

Extra-curricular activities

28. Whilst the inspection team agrees with the parents that there is not a good range of extra-curricular activities, their judgement is that the school provides satisfactory opportunities for these. The choir is open to pupils of all abilities and there are visits to local places of interest.

Personal development

29. The provision for pupils' personal development is good, which is an improvement since the last inspection.
30. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Daily acts of worship meet statutory requirements, and provide opportunities for prayer, but moments of reflection are often rushed, giving little time for pupils to reflect on the messages given during assemblies. There are some opportunities for pupils to appreciate the wonder of nature in lessons. For example, children were wide-eyed when the teacher took a seedling from the pot to reveal its small roots. In another lesson, there was a real sense of wonder when the teacher revealed Hindu artefacts from under a cover. However, these opportunities are not planned, and are often missed.
31. The provision for pupils' moral and social development has improved since the last inspection and they are now both good. There is a consistently applied behaviour code throughout the school, where pupils are expected to behave well. Pupils draw up their own class rules and abide by them. There is a well-established moral code, where pupils from the youngest to the oldest have a very clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively, from an early age, and opportunities are given for pupils to develop their independence. Good use is made of Special Helpers from Year 2, who ensure that pupils are happy at playtimes, and who help to sort out any problems that might arise. The school encourages personal initiative. For example, a pupil organised a collection of stamps for a Blue Peter appeal. He ran the whole operation with no help from adults. Good use is made of monitors in the class who do jobs to help the smooth running of the class.
32. Opportunities for pupils' cultural development have improved and are now good. Pupils learn about their own culture through the curriculum in subjects such as art, English, music and history. They take part in visits to such places as museums, and the local church. Good use is made of visitors, such as the visit of 'Samuel Pepys' who helped the pupils in Year 2 to have a clearer understanding of what life was like at the time of the Fire of London. Pupils'

awareness of diverse cultures has increased through the use of instruments and music from different parts of the world. Assembly themes help to make pupils aware of the varying lifestyles of children in different parts of the world. In accordance with county guidelines, pupils learn about a different faith in religious education, which helps them to appreciate the cultural diversity in the world.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school provides good educational and personal support for its pupils. The school is a caring community and pupils are well known and valued by adults working in the school. The procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are good and teachers make comments in pupils' twice-yearly reports. The learning support staff provide good support and make valuable contributions in caring for the pupils. A committed team of lunchtime assistants encourages pupils to play traditional games and helps them to develop social table manners. Supervision at playtime is good and there are secure arrangements for pupils to be collected at the end of the day.
34. The support for a group of Brethren pupils is good. The school works closely with the families to ensure that their children are fully integrated into the school community, whilst being sensitive to the need to make alternative curriculum arrangements where appropriate.
35. The school provides good support for pupils with special educational needs. Statements of special educational needs are reviewed annually, and parents and outside agencies are fully involved. Pupils' individual learning targets are appropriate and their progress towards these targets is monitored regularly. These targets are regularly reviewed, and new targets set. Detailed records are kept which give a clear picture of the progress made. Similarly, the school attends well to supporting the needs of the few pupils with English as an additional language. There is good liaison with support agencies.
36. The school has generally sound procedures to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. The school's arrangements for child protection are satisfactory and a clear child protection policy is in place. The headteacher is the designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection and carries out her duties appropriately. Adults working in the school have not recently received basic awareness training.
37. The arrangements for first-aid are good and two members of staff are qualified in first-aid. Some other staff have received basic training. Appropriate procedures are in place to treat pupils who are ill or injured. Detailed and up-to-date records are kept when staff need to give medication to pupils.
38. The school pays due attention to health and safety on a day-to-day basis. Any potential hazards are recorded and the governors make termly checks of the premises. The health and safety policy is not always specific to the school and does not contain details of risk assessment. Various health and safety issues were discussed with the school during the inspection and in some cases immediate action was taken to rectify minor concerns. The school should ensure that the testing of portable electrical equipment is kept up-to-date. All pupils receive adequate protection from the mid-day sun, during physical education and playtime. Risk assessments meet local education authority requirements.
39. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. Registers are marked correctly and the school has improved its monitoring procedures which were criticised in the last report. Unexplained absences are followed up by the school and there are satisfactory links with the educational welfare office.
40. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good and have improved since the last inspection. The school has successfully addressed the key issue regarding the behaviour policy and its implementation. The school operates as an orderly and harmonious community. The ethos of good behaviour is reinforced in lessons, assemblies and by the examples of adults working in the school. The clear behaviour policy emphasises the rewarding of good behaviour. Rewards and sanctions are generally applied consistently throughout the school. The procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are satisfactory. Rare incidents of anti-social behaviour are dealt with effectively, but the school has not yet drawn up an anti-bullying policy.

Assessment

41. Apart from the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds, the school has introduced a good range of assessment procedures since the last inspection. Assessment now extends to all subjects and data is effectively analysed. The underachievement of boys was identified from recent analyses and strategies for addressing this issue are in place. Priorities for development are well focused. Good systems for identifying more able pupils and tracking progress have been implemented. Monitoring pupils' performance is now regarded as an essential part of raising standards. The strong emphasis on recording pupils' acquisition of basic skills in literacy and numeracy, highlighted positively in the last report, has been developed further. Mid-year reviews give good insight into pupils' levels of understanding and identify areas for development.
42. The assessment of children on entry to the reception classes is used well by teaching and support staff to ensure work is matched well to the children's ability, but is not yet formally used to predict their expected levels of achievement by the end of Key Stage 1. Class teachers also set targets for pupils that are reviewed termly and they look at examples of pupils' work within year groups to ensure standards are consistent in parallel classes. Portfolios of work samples have not yet been developed in any systematic way. Assessment opportunities are built into all subjects and these have continued to be carried out during a period of instability, thus ensuring progress has been maintained. Day-to-day use of assessment is not yet as well developed. Although teachers use formal assessment opportunities, they do not, apart from in mathematics, use information from lessons sufficiently to identify whether a topic needs to be revisited, whether individual pupils who have grasped the concept can move on, or whether further supplementary work is required.
43. Assessment is beginning to become an integral part of all subjects and is starting to be used more effectively to match work to ability. Recent initiatives, combined with a secure system for monitoring performance, give a clear indication that the school recognises the importance of assessment in its commitment to raising standards.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The parents' views of the school are very positive. Parents say that teaching is good and that their children like school. They feel that their children are expected to work hard and are making good progress. They value the ways in which the school keeps them informed about how their children are getting on and the parents feel welcome in school. They say that behaviour is good and the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. Nearly a third of the parents who returned the questionnaires said that there was not a good range of out-of-school activities.
45. The school has very good links with its parents and carers. This reflects the judgements found at the time of the last inspection. There are very good links with parents in the Foundation Stage. There is a well-planned induction programme, including home visits, which the parents are asked to evaluate, and then procedures are changed if necessary. Parents are well informed about the work their children carry out in the reception classes and the expectations set by the school. Many parents help in the reception classes and this forges further links, and cements the good relationships between the school and parents. This very good parental involvement in the children's learning, at this early stage, creates positive attitudes in the children. The school has an 'open door' policy and staff are available to talk with parents at the end of the school day. The home-school contact books are an effective means of communication between teachers and parents. The school surveyed new parents on the arrangements for children starting in reception and has made alterations as a result of the parents' suggestions.
46. The impact of the parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good. Parent-governors are very supportive of the school and are involved in new developments, for

example, the information and communication technology steering committee. All parents have signed the home-school agreement and events, such as concerts, are very well supported. The active Friends of Hart Plain group organise fundraising and social events and a group of parents have refurbished the school hall.

47. The quality of information which the school provides for parents is very good. New parents receive very good information through visits, meetings with staff and an informative prospectus. The comprehensive annual governors' report includes a good explanation of the National curriculum test results. Regular newsletters give details of future events and celebrate the school's successes. Parents value the half-termly newsletters, which inform them of the topics their children will be studying and suggest ways in which parents can help their children. In addition, the school has run useful sessions on the statutory tests for seven year olds and has invited parents to watch the numeracy hour. The mid-term and end-of-year reports provide parents with helpful information about how their children are getting on. They include details of what children can do and how they can improve their work. The school offers parents valuable opportunities to meet with the class teacher each term to discuss their children's progress.
48. The parents make very good contributions to their children's learning at school and at home. The school values the help offered by the parents and grandparents who assist in the classroom. Parents also listen to children read, change reading books and help groups of children with work on the computers. Parents provide valuable assistance on school visits. The vast majority of parents want to help their children learn and attendance at parent/teacher consultations is very high. Most parents share books with their children each day and support their children with homework, such as spellings. They write helpful comments in the home/school contact book. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved at all stages of the Code of Practice. They are invited to attend reviews, and there is a good partnership between the parents and class teachers, and parents and the special needs co-ordinator.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The school's management has undergone several changes since the last inspection. The departure of the senior management in post at that inspection was followed by a period when the school was led by an acting headteacher and an acting deputy headteacher. The present headteacher has been at the school for 12 months and the deputy headteacher for nine months. They have quickly formed a very strong team that, together with Year leaders, constitutes a senior management team that has a very clear vision of the school's future. Leadership and management was very good at the time of the last inspection and this high standard is maintained under the present leadership. The clarity of the headteacher's priorities for school improvement is the driving force behind this very good, purposeful leadership, which has quickly moulded a very new group of teaching and non-teaching staff into a well-integrated team with a strong sense of purpose and very good working relationships.
50. The deputy headteacher has brought a wide range of strengths to the school. In a short time, she has made a very good impact on the work of non-teaching staff by providing well-targeted training to raise their awareness, not only of the importance of the role that they play but, also, by developing the knowledge and skills that enable them to fulfil that role more effectively. As a consequence, these staff make a major contribution to pupils' learning and personal development by the support that they provide in the classroom, dining hall and playground.
51. Many teaching staff are in their first year of taking responsibility for subject leadership. The priority for these staff has been to audit present provision in their subjects by monitoring existing planning. In most subjects, staff have inherited subject policies that have not been reviewed for at least five years and they are slowly starting to update these policies to take account of new curriculum requirements. Some have started to monitor the standards of

pupils' work, but only the co-ordinators of English and mathematics, as members of the senior management team, have carried out any monitoring of teaching by direct observation. There is, at present, no clear policy on subject management and co-ordinators lack guidance on strategies to guide the fulfilment of responsibilities. Similarly, there is no schedule for co-ordinators to be released from their classroom duties in order that they can carry out their other responsibilities. As part of school development planning, each co-ordinator produces an action plan for the year that states the priorities for the subject. However, the format for these plans is vague and, with the exception of the science and design and technology action plans, there is a lack of detail regarding the timescales by which these priorities should be achieved and the success criteria that are being applied. The headteacher is aware of these weaknesses and recognises the need for subject leadership to be developed in terms of the skills of co-ordination itself and a structured approach to applying those skills.

52. The school's aims and values are integrated well in all its work and, following the example set by the headteacher, all staff show high levels of concern for pupils' welfare. There is, thus, a very positive ethos that reflects the school's commitment to creating a caring environment for all pupils in which they are helped to achieve improving standards in their academic and personal development.
53. The school implements its equal opportunities policy very thoroughly. All pupils have the same opportunities for each area of learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are catered for well in terms of staff support, and are totally integrated into all aspects of school life.
54. The school has good systems for monitoring and evaluating its own performance. This is as a result of the headteacher's successful introduction of a range of procedures for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum, the quality of teaching, and the standards of pupils' work. As a consequence of the number of teachers new to the school, much of the responsibility for this has fallen to the senior management team. These key staff fulfil this role well. Teaching of literacy and numeracy is monitored very effectively, resulting in refinements of teachers' skills that, in turn, have had a good impact on standards of pupils' work. The standards of pupils' work are also monitored very effectively through thorough analysis of National Curriculum assessment test papers each year. This highlights strengths, weaknesses and trends and, when the data indicates areas for concern, such as the drop in writing standards amongst boys, the school is quick to act to secure improvement. Whole-school discussion, input from external advisors, and changes to the curriculum to provide a stronger focus on skills and opportunities for writing, have had a good impact and are raising boys' standards. This prompt response is indicative of the shared commitment to improvement that permeates the work of the school. The monitoring of pupils' work is also a regular feature of the planning and evaluation meetings that staff hold in each year group. These meetings make good use of the expertise of individual teachers and provide an ongoing check on the standards that pupils are achieving, indicate the sort of standards that new teachers should be expecting and ensure that planning builds on what has been learned before. Performance monitoring and evaluation is, thus, a very practical tool that teachers use to ensure that learning is tailored to pupils' needs.
55. The management of special educational needs provision within the school is good. The school has a comprehensive special needs policy which is clear and accessible to parents, and all procedures follow the Code of Practice. The co-ordinator, although new, has a good overview of the specific needs of pupils on the special needs register, and keeps detailed records of all of them. She liaises frequently with parents and the class teachers. The register is kept up-to-date, and all paperwork is well ordered. Targets set in pupils' individual education plans are monitored well to give a clear picture of pupils' progress. The co-ordinator meets with the special needs governor regularly, and reports to the governing body on the success of the special needs provision within the school.

56. The deputy headteacher provides good management of the Foundation Stage and has a very clear picture of all aspects of this stage of learning. She engenders a team approach, where all adults' views are valued, and, thereby, all make good contributions to the children's learning. There is a very supportive ethos within the Foundation Stage, and very good liaison between the classes to ensure that all pupils have the same learning opportunities.

The Governing Body

57. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. It is led very well by a chairperson with a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Chairs of committees have high levels of expertise and provide knowledgeable, purposeful leadership of each committee's work. The school's overall management is strengthened by the very good working relationship that has quickly developed between the headteacher and the governing body. The governing body provides very good support for the work of the school and individual members visit the school to assist in a variety of ways. Through their visits, and liaison with co-ordinators, governors are very familiar with the school's working methods. There is constructive monitoring of the school's developments by the governing body, through visits and the reports received from teaching staff. The headteacher consults widely about proposed improvements, seeking the contributions of all staff and governors and developments proceed with the commitment of all concerned. As a result, the school development plan provides a good framework for school improvement and combines a review of what has been achieved in the previous year with appropriate detail of prioritised targets for the current year. The financial and resource implications, including the demands on personnel, are identified and detailed costings and success criteria are included. The governing body has carefully monitored the action plan that followed the last inspection and parents have been regularly informed of its progress.
58. The governing body's finance committee has a clearly defined role. Governors are meeting their responsibilities fully in relation to budget setting and expenditure is carefully monitored. The governing body thoughtfully evaluates the cost-effectiveness of major spending decisions, through the reports of the headteacher and financial administrator and, if thought necessary, by seeking the advice of local authority finance officers. Governors are very aware of the need to ensure that money is spent carefully. Competing quotations are obtained before contracts are issued although governors are mindful that the cheapest price does not always represent the best value. Governors compare the school's results with national averages and with those achieved by similar schools. A desire for high standards and improvement is central to the school's approach. The action taken by the governors enable them to have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The diligence of financial management, together with the qualities of teaching, leadership and management and pupils' good standards means that, overall, the school is providing good value for money.
59. Financial control and office administration are very good as a result of the very good work and strong commitment of the administrative officer and clerical support staff. The school makes good use of computer analysis. The funds made available to the school through specific grants, such as those to support literacy and the development of information and communication technology skills, have been targeted appropriately. Overall, the school uses all its resources shrewdly and productively.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

60. The school has a good number of suitably qualified teachers with a range of experience to enable them to teach the curriculum. Staff feel valued and appreciate the regular meetings and improved communications organised by the senior management. Staff turnover has been high and six teachers are in their first year at the school. New staff have quickly felt part of the team and have worked hard in their allotted roles. Well-qualified, experienced support staff work effectively alongside the teachers. The lunchtime assistants maintain a happy and orderly atmosphere at lunchtime. The office staff are very welcoming and efficient.
61. The school's arrangements for professional development are good. Training is related both to the priorities of the school development plan and to the needs of individual staff. Non-teaching staff are also offered a good range of training opportunities. The school has a good induction programme for newly-qualified teachers.

62. The accommodation is good and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. The building is welcoming and is enhanced by colourful displays. It is in good decorative order and is well maintained. The caretaker and cleaners work hard to achieve good standards of cleanliness. The classrooms are of adequate size to accommodate the number of pupils. Open areas in the corridors provide good opportunities for staff to work with groups of pupils, for example, on computers, or by listening to pupils read. The school makes good use of the specialist areas for language support, music and drama. The spacious hall provides good accommodation for collective worship, physical education and social interaction at lunchtime.
63. The range and quality of equipment and materials to support teaching is generally satisfactory. Resources for the reception classes are good and equipment for physical education is also good. The imminent installation of a computer suite will rectify the current shortage of computers.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. In order to improve the standards of work and the quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- θ Raise the level of achievement of more able pupils in writing, by providing more opportunities for writing across the curriculum and improving pupils' skills in planning and drafting written work. (*Paragraphs 4, 72, 77, 78*)
 - θ Review the organisation of the curriculum, with the objectives of:
 - ensuring that the time allocated to different subjects is of maximum benefit to pupils' learning;
 - achieving an appropriate time allocation to different lessons;
 - improving the promptness of the start of lessons. (*Paragraphs 17, 24, 78, 89, 100, 105, 110*)
 - θ Develop the role of subject co-ordinators by:
 - producing and implementing guidelines for the fulfilment of their responsibilities;
 - prioritising the subjects for intensive focus. (*Paragraphs 22, 57, 93, 110, 122, 126*)

In addition to the issues identified above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan:

- to ensure regular testing of all portable electrical equipment, (*paragraph 38*);
- to provide awareness training in child protection procedures for all staff, (*paragraph 38*).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

57

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

31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13	44	37	6	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

	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	246
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	49

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	50
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.4

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	48	40	88

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	38	35	47
	Girls	38	37	38
	Total	76	72	85
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (89)	82 (92)	97 (92)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	38	46	45
	Girls	38	38	38
	Total	76	84	83
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (92)	95 (93)	94 (93)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	155
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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 YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.4
Average class size	27.3

Education support staff: YR - Y2

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	180

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	499,304
Total expenditure	491,340
Expenditure per pupil	2,022
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,406
Balance carried forward to next year	31,370

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	240
Number of questionnaires returned	70
Percentage of questionnaires returned	29

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	36	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	36	1	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	50	3	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	49	13	0	3
The teaching is good.	57	37	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	34	4	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	19	7	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	34	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	57	30	10	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	54	34	4	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	43	1	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	21	29	3	26

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

65. Children start school in the September before their fifth birthday. There is an appropriate planned entry into three parallel reception classes, where the youngest children are given a longer period of part-time experience, to thoroughly prepare them for school life, but the majority of children are attending full-time by the end of the first term. A very good induction programme takes place, involving home visits, and visits to the school, to ensure children transfer smoothly to school from home or from pre-school groups. Parents are given good information, before the children start, about the curriculum in reception, and the expectations of the school. The vast majority of children have had pre-school experience and enter the reception classes with a wide range of abilities, which when tested, using the county's baseline assessments, shows them to be average for this age overall. The education provided in the Foundation Stage gives the children a good start to school life, as it did at the time of the last inspection. Children make good progress and, by the end of the reception year, their attainment is above average, with the vast majority of children attaining the Early Learning Goals in all the recommended areas of learning, and with a considerable number working within the early stages of the National Curriculum, particularly in the development of their literacy and numeracy skills. Progress is particularly good for the children of lower ability. This progress is as a result of the generally good teaching in all the classes, the high expectations set, and the successful teamwork of all the adults in the reception classes, who plan and evaluate activities together.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. Children enter the reception with generally well-developed social skills. Good opportunities are given for children to co-operate in small groups and develop their independence, and they achieve well. The majority work hard concentrating well in unsupervised groups. For example, in group activities children work unaided on their chosen tasks for lengthy periods of time without flitting from one activity to another. They behave well, and benefit from the positive role models set by the adults in the reception classes and the caring ethos of the classes. Teaching and non-teaching staff use every opportunity to develop children's personal and social skills, and the emphasis placed on the children's own class rules ensures children have a well-developed sense of right and wrong. Children know the routines of the classes well and clear away after activities efficiently. Relationships are good, and this means that children feel secure and confident to seek help when required. By the end of the year, children will have attained at least the expected standards for this area of learning.

Communication, language and literacy

67. All the children are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area by the time they leave reception, and about a third of the children will be working at the early levels of the National Curriculum. Children enter school with a wide range of speaking, listening and literacy skills, but all are integrated well into the school's literacy strategy, which has been adapted appropriately for this age group. Children join in shortened, whole-class, discussions and then engage in appropriate activities to enhance their language abilities. Children generally speak confidently and good opportunities are given to develop speaking and listening skills through the use of role-play when, for example, children re-enact the story of Little Red Riding Hood. During discussions, teachers use questioning well to encourage children to talk and share their ideas. Children know their letter sounds well, and use this phonic knowledge to help them with their reading and writing. They recognise words that rhyme from their Big Book, and know when capital letters and full stops are used. A few more able children write freely, and they are encouraged to use these skills when writing letters to the teacher and posting them in the special message box. However, there are occasions when the more able children are insufficiently challenged. For example, in one lesson, a child

quickly wrote her letter and was not given another challenge to develop her writing skills further. The majority of children form their letters confidently, and all children can write their own names. They place words in the correct sequence to make a sentence, and the more able children use full stops and capital letters with ease. Other children use their letter sounds effectively to help write 'scary' stories, and to match words with pictures accurately. Teachers have a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting skills, providing the children with good role models, so children learn to form their letters in a cursive hand very early. Generally, handwriting skills are well developed. All children enjoy books, handle them correctly, and know that print carries meaning. A sound grasp of phonics helps children with their reading, and the majority of children recognise all their letter sounds and read simple words. They all have a reading book, which they take home and share with their parents. This good parental link enhances the children's reading abilities well. The more able children read simple texts fluently, and talk knowledgeably about the stories they have read. Teaching is good overall, with teachers showing good expertise, and a variety of appropriate activities are set to enhance all areas of literacy. As a result of this quality of teaching, and the children's positive attitudes to learning, progress is good and all children are in line to attain the required standard, with many children exceeding the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year.

Mathematical development

68. Good use is made of the school's numeracy strategy to develop children's awareness and understanding of number. The work is planned well to meet the needs of the child, and appropriate practical activities are set during group work. The mental numeracy session is used well to develop children's counting skills, and they are beginning to count in tens and do simple calculations in their heads. All the children are familiar with numbers to at least ten, and can add and subtract simple numbers. The more able children carry out simple calculations mentally, while others use counting apparatus to get the right answer. They can put the times of the day in the correct sequence and tell the time on the hour. They recognise the difference between short and long, and calculate up to three less than, and more than, a given number. Teaching is good overall, but in one lesson observed the pace of the lesson was too slow and insufficient challenge was given to the most able group. A group of children in the outside play area were engaged in activities that lacked structure so limiting learning. Good use was made of day-to-day evaluation for these activities, and activities were changed, and new ones set in a subsequent lesson, to provide challenge for an able group who were engaged in estimating and timing physical activities such as skipping. Children then made good gains in their mathematical knowledge and understanding alongside their personal skills and physical skills. Children's achievement is good, and by the time they leave the reception, they all have a very secure grasp of number. All children are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year, and the majority have already exceeded the expected standards, and are working at the early levels of the National Curriculum.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69. Children enter the reception with mixed experiences of the world, and some of the children have good general knowledge. Good opportunities are given for children to develop their understanding of the world around them, and they all achieve well. They know the different parts of the body, and recognise how individuals change as they grow. They develop their early mapping skills well by following a trail around the school and identifying given landmarks. They draw representations of the route from Class 1 to Class 9, and know how to care for seeds, and that they need water to grow. They visit the local church and recognise special things. They know that the cross is special for Christians, and this is shown by the meticulous way pictures of crosses were decorated. Children are given opportunities to use listening centres, which they do with ease. When working on the computer, the majority of children control the mouse well, and can click on and drag icons about the screen. They use a paint

program to draw pictures and change brush size and colour. Teaching in this area of learning is good overall, and children are in line achieve the expected standard by the end of the year, with many exceeding it.

Physical development

70. Children are generally well co-ordinated, demonstrate good control of their bodies and have a well-developed sense of space. They have weekly physical education lessons, either in the school hall or outside. These lessons are planned well, but there are missed opportunities to develop physical skills further, during outdoor activity times. This is due to a lack of challenging equipment. Children ride bikes, run and skip, but there are limited opportunities in the play area for children to climb and jump. All children change independently for physical education lessons where they develop their games skills of throwing and aiming. Teaching in one lesson was good. In this lesson, very clear guidance was given on basic techniques and very skilful use was made of demonstrations to help children improve their practice; children showed levels of control that exceeded expectations. Children handle small tools such as scissors, glue sticks with precision, and have good hand control when writing and drawing. Children achieve well and the majority of children are in line to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year.

Creative development

71. Children have a wide range of opportunities to develop their creative skills. Good use is made of a music specialist for music lessons, and children know the difference between long and short sounds and interpret a pattern of symbols well using their voices or body percussion. They know a range of songs and rhymes. Artistic skills are developed well when children are given opportunities to experiment with primary coloured paint, which they mix sensibly to make a range of different shades. Children explore colour, texture and shape through the use of collage, paint and modelling materials, and create pleasing results such as their pictures of sunflowers. Role play is used well to stimulate the children's imagination when dressing up as the characters in Little Red Riding Hood. Insufficient actual teaching of creative activities was seen during the inspection to comment on the quality of teaching, but good learning opportunities are provided, and the standards of children's work seen suggest that teaching is good overall. Children progress well in this area and are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year.

ENGLISH

72. Results in the 2000 National Curriculum tests showed that standards in reading were above average. Standards in writing were not as high. Although writing results were average in comparison with all schools nationally, standards were below those of similar schools. Inspection findings reflect these test results and note that standards in writing, unlike reading, have not improved since the last inspection. Although there is evidence of improvement in the 2001 National Curriculum tests, more able pupils do not demonstrate writing skills in line with their ability and this group underachieves.
73. At the time of the last inspection, although the National Curriculum test results were well above average, inspection findings indicated that pupils of average ability were achieving less well in their day-to-day work. There has been improvement in this area. Currently, there is no evidence of any discrepancy between standards of day-to-day work and test results. Following considerable fluctuation in 1998 and 1999, results have also started to stabilise.
74. On entry to school, most pupils have secure speaking and listening skills. Heavy emphasis is placed on developing confident speakers and listeners. Pupils in Year 1, for example, displayed increasing confidence as they read their own versions of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' to the rest of the class. Others listened with respect and were not afraid to ask questions. Pupils listen particularly attentively during assemblies and to visiting speakers. Following a talk by 'Samuel Pepys', pupils of all abilities in Year 2 asked interesting questions, and many recalled information orally with impressive detail. In lessons, pupils are always keen to talk about their work and some are knowledgeable, confident speakers who display a well above average level of maturity and understanding. Pupils with English as an additional language

are given good support and quickly acquire sufficient speaking and listening skills to enable them to participate fully in the life of the school.

75. By the age of seven, pupils have made good progress in their reading and standards are above average. Pupils of all abilities read with confidence and display a real enthusiasm for books. They have access to an interesting selection of good quality literature. They talk simply about their likes and dislikes and respond well to humour. Many pupils read with fluency and expression; they convey meaning well. Some pupils display outstanding individual knowledge. The school's consistent approach towards teaching strategies for reading unfamiliar words is very successful. Reading books are taken home and detailed records are maintained. However, although teachers' records evaluate pupils' progress in reading well, they do not contain enough comments for further development. Pupils are heard to read regularly in school and at home. The school provides good quality information for parents about reading and literacy work. In return, parents offer strong support for pupils' learning and contribute well to the good standards achieved.
76. Library provision is in the process of development. The school has received good support from the county library service. Outdated books have been removed and pupils currently in Year 2 have access to a small range of good quality books for lending and research. They understand the language of reference books and talk about the contents and index with confidence. Funding through the National Literacy Strategy has been used well to supplement book provision, and classrooms have attractive books corners that stimulate pupils' interest. However, the school recognises the need to enhance provision further. It is aware that, because the library is currently located in the main corridor, it is impossible for pupils to use the library in large groups to develop research skills in any systematic way.
77. Pupils' progress in writing throughout the school is satisfactory overall, although more able pupils in Year 2 do not produce work in line with ability. Their writing frequently lacks richness of vocabulary, imagination and maturity. Basic spelling and punctuation mistakes are common. This group is under-confident, particularly when trying to produce an extended piece of writing, and group-writing activities in the literacy hour do not focus sufficiently well on helping individual pupils improve their skills.
78. The introduction of a designated writing lesson has gone some way towards addressing the problem, although sessions are too long for many pupils to sustain concentration. More able boys and girls in Year 2 were, however, very interested in their topic on the Great Fire of London. They had received many exciting stimuli to encourage them to write well. They were aware of the purpose of their writing and started to produce a newspaper article. However, they did not have sufficient skills to plan, draft or organise their work efficiently. Even when well supported by teaching staff, they produced only a small amount of work in the allocated time. Pupils of average ability produced work of a similar standard.
79. By contrast, pupils of all abilities in Year 1 worked with or without support to produce lengthy stories during an extended writing session. They maintained a good balance between trying to write by themselves and acquiring skills that would improve their written work across the curriculum. The work of the more able pupils was detailed, and that of pupils of average and below average ability was more simply organised. The overall quality of work was good.
80. Standards of handwriting are good. The school's approach is consistent and systematic. Handwriting is fluent and legible. Presentation is generally of a good standard. The school's approach towards teaching spelling is not totally effective. Although pupils learn spellings for homework and have regular tests, there are some inconsistencies in the teaching of spelling. Some pupils use dictionaries whilst others hardly use them at all; some spell difficult words correctly but get simple spellings wrong. In addition, because pupils do not have their own wordbooks or attempt spellings of unfamiliar words in any consistent way, they are not confident when using new words and will sometimes substitute an easier word they know how to spell.

81. The overall quality of teaching is good, with some very good and a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching also being observed. Teaching is of a consistently higher standard in Year 1 than Year 2. Pupils make the best progress in lessons where teaching is very good and they have a real enjoyment of their work. In a high quality Year 1 lesson, for instance, pupils were attempting to write the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' in their own words. Work was matched very well to the needs of all pupils. The quality of support was very good; ensuring everyone concentrated on the task, and pupils with special educational needs succeeded equally well. Every minute was purposeful, time targets were set for pupils to finish work and there was a sense of urgency about the whole lesson. Consequently, pupils were rightly proud of the impressive amount of good quality work they produced.
82. In lessons where teaching is less effective, questioning is not sufficiently focused and time is not always put to best use when lessons start late or activities expand to fit the allocated time. In the unsatisfactory lesson seen, the pupils' pace of learning was too slow and the teacher's management of pupils' behaviour was not always satisfactory. Some pupils became bored and lost interest and a small minority became disruptive.
83. Teachers are very confident in their delivery of the National Literacy Strategy. They use language and promote literacy skills effectively, across the whole curriculum, and support learning well by using information and communication technology. The steady development of pupils' independent learning skills is most evident in group work and in subjects such as geography, when individual pupils display good research skills. Every opportunity is taken to promote literacy. In a very good science lesson pupils had a valuable brainstorming session on adjectives connected with plant growth. Texts chosen for whole class work are interesting and activities are well organised. Planning is consistent across year groups and teaching and support staff work well together. Sessions at the end of lessons are frequently used effectively to share good practice. For example, in a Year 2 lesson based on 'Why Jumpers are Woolly', the last part of the lesson was used particularly well to look at work produced by different groups and to go over definitions of words pupils did not understand.
84. Despite considerable staffing changes, the subject has remained well co-ordinated. The school has an accurate perception of its strengths and weaknesses in English and a clear focus for future development. Priorities for improvement are precise and all staff have a shared commitment towards raising standards. Monitoring of teaching and learning is being used effectively and data from test results is analysed in detail. The worrying pattern of boys' underachievement in writing has been identified and appropriate action taken which is starting to raise the standards that boys now achieve. An impressive range of purposeful assessment procedures has been introduced to monitor and track progress. Appropriate target setting is in place and samples of pupils' work are assessed within year group meetings to ensure consistency in parallel classes. Mid-year progress reviews are helpful and informative to staff, pupils and parents. They show progress and areas for development. However, day-to-day assessment is not yet as secure and is not always an integral part of class lessons. In addition, some marking tends to concentrate solely on neatness and punctuation, not the quality of content.
85. Many new initiatives have been effectively introduced in a very short period of time and formal assessment procedures have been firmly established. Results in writing have improved this year and the school is well placed to succeed in the future.

MATHEMATICS

86. The school's results in the 2000 National Curriculum tests were above average nationally and when compared with similar schools. This has maintained a level of performance that has been consistent since 1998. Early indications of the 2001 results are of a slight improvement, although these await confirmation. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in 2000 was above the average nationally and well above the average when compared with

similar schools. The overall standards of pupils in Year 2 seen during the inspection are above average and around a third of pupils are well above average. This consistency in standards is the result of good teaching and, in particular, good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. These standards are an improvement on those at the time of the last inspection.

87. By the age of seven, pupils confidently work with numbers to 100, know multiples of ten and count in fives, twos and threes. Most have a good understanding of place value and can add and subtract two-digit numbers by splitting into tens and units. This good understanding of number is developed very successfully by the many opportunities for practising mental calculation and also by the frequent experience of problem-solving. When working out money or time problems, pupils are very competent at identifying whether they need to perform addition or subtraction operations. The more able pupils are fascinated by the challenge of mathematical investigations. During the inspection, the challenge of arranging dominoes in a square, so that the dots on each side of the square totalled fifteen, became so engrossing for the more able pupils in two classes that playtimes were regarded as annoying interruptions. All pupils have a good knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shapes, such as pentagon, hexagon, cuboid and prism and they record the numbers of sides, edges and right angles that each shape has correctly. Many pupils are able to select whether to use centimetres or metres to measure objects of different lengths. These levels of pupils' knowledge and understanding of shape and space are well above average for their age. Pupils' attainment in Year 1 is also good, with most pupils working at levels higher than expected for their ages. Pupils are very confident with numbers to 20, being able to add and subtract, and most can recognise numbers to 100. Their knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shapes is also very good.
88. The teaching of mathematics is consistently good and occasionally very good. This is an improvement on the quality of teaching seen at the last inspection. The clear identification of the main learning to be achieved in each lesson, and the sharing of these objectives with pupils, gives pupils clear expectations and a means of assessing their own learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and, as a result, they are able to challenge pupils well, using questioning effectively to assess pupils' progress. Oral and mental starter sessions are brisk in pace and provide pupils with the opportunity to use their numerical skills and language with growing confidence. These sessions engage pupils well and pupils respond to this with keenness and enthusiasm. In very good lessons, teachers constantly encourage pupils to explain the reasons for answers or how they carried out calculations. This good practice develops, successfully, pupils' ability to think mathematically, which prepares them well for the various tasks they are to undertake in the lesson.
89. Weekly planning meetings in year group teams ensure that the planning of numeracy lessons carefully takes into account what has been achieved in previous lessons. This provides a good framework for pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding to be developed systematically. The work planned is matched carefully to the needs of pupils of different abilities. There is a strong emphasis on practical experience in the tasks that pupils complete during group work. In several classes there are lessons with a long time allocation and insufficient work is planned to engage pupils fully throughout.
90. Pupils with special educational needs relating to learning difficulties in mathematics receive good support. The classroom assistants are briefed well by class teachers on the pupils' needs and the specific intentions of the tasks that they will be teaching. As a result of the suitability of the learning activities and the good support given, these pupils make good progress in their learning, achieving well in relation to their ability. There is similarly good achievement by pupils with English as an additional language. Their work is explained carefully to them and teachers ensure that these pupils understand fully what they are to do. The more able and gifted pupils are challenged well by their work. For the latter, additional resources suitable to their ability are provided. Pupils who work independently do so very well, maintaining very good levels of concentration and interest.

91. Whether working individually, in small groups, or as a class, pupils consistently work very well together. They listen carefully and are very willing to share both ideas and equipment. In every lesson seen, an atmosphere was created in which teachers were able to work with small groups or individuals, whilst others concentrated and worked hard independently. These good practices result in high quality work and a good quality of learning by all pupils. Teachers make very good use of resources available. For example, they use individual number cards for pupils to record their answers during quick-fire mental activities. This ensures all are involved and the teacher can make quick assessment of accuracy. All lessons end with a quick review of what the pupils have learnt during the lesson and this provides good reinforcement of the main learning objectives, as well as preparing pupils for the next stage.
92. Teachers implement the National Numeracy Strategy well and this is having a positive impact on standards. There is thorough assessment of pupils' learning, through observation and good marking of work completed in lessons and also in the longer term by regular review and recording of pupils' acquisition of basic skills and knowledge. Teachers' periodic annotation in pupils' books provides further evidence of pupils' progress. This records relevant information about each pupil's knowledge and understanding, noting, for example, if a pupil worked with support or independently, if specific difficulties were evident or what the pupil needs to do next. This is a very good source of detailed information about each pupil's progress that is used very well in the planning of the next stage in learning. Additional checks on pupils' progress and the effectiveness of assessment are provided by the bi-monthly moderation meetings that year group teams hold, during which teachers moderate the work of pupils in their colleagues' classes. Teachers also make good use of opportunities in other lessons to develop pupils' numeracy and other mathematical skills, such as graph work in science, measuring in design and technology. Information and communication technology is used frequently for number work and for recording data that is presented in different types of chart and graph. A good example of links between numeracy and literacy is work in Year 1 in which pupils have to match a sentence in words with a sum written in numbers.
93. The subject is led and managed well by a co-ordinator who has had this responsibility for less than a year. In that time she has, through very effective monitoring of teaching and standards of pupils' work, gained a thorough understanding of priorities for the subject's development. A generalised action plan summarises how these priorities are to be addressed although, like most other subject development plans, it lacks sufficient detail of the timescale or success criteria.

SCIENCE

94. The high standards reported in the last report have been maintained and remain above average. Pupils are given good opportunities to carry out practical investigations, which have helped to improve standards in the scientific enquiry element of the subject. The good opportunities given for practical work ensure that pupils achieve well, as scientific skills are progressively developed. Teachers' assessments in 2000 were above the national average, with a high proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3. Inspection evidence suggests attainment this year will be similar. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language do the same tasks as their classmates, but often receive additional help in class to enable them to make good progress.
95. Pupils in Year 2 sort materials, very effectively, according to whether they are natural or man-made, living or non-living, and classify creatures into correct groups. They know the life cycle of the butterfly and frog, and understand that different animals are found in different habitats. They investigate the properties of materials, and are beginning to appreciate that the properties are taken into account when materials are used for specific purposes. For example, they carry out experiments to find the best material to be used to make 'Bear' a waterproof shelter. They make a shelter and test different materials to discover how

waterproof they are. Pupils know that materials such as polythene and foil are the most waterproof. Pupils predict results sensibly, based on their prior knowledge, and record their results well using tables and graphs. However, they have no clear understanding of what constitutes a fair test, and this means that experiments are not always carried out in a scientific manner. In Year 1, pupils examine plants, and know that different parts of plants are often eaten. They know that cabbages are the plants' leaves, and carrots are roots. They look at the difference between new roots, and the roots of a plant that has become pot-bound. They learn the functions of roots. They know that they anchor the plant, and that they are the part of the plant that enables water to get from the soil to the plant.

96. The quality of teaching is good overall, being never less than satisfactory, with some good and some very good practice. Lessons are planned well, providing the pupils with exciting tasks which motivate them to want to learn. They are well organised, which enables pupils to move quickly to their group tasks. In the best lesson seen, the teacher's enthusiasm was infectious inspiring the pupils, and a real sense of wonder was experienced as seedlings were removed from the pot to show the small roots. Good subject knowledge ensures that the pupils are well informed and make good gains in their learning. There is an appropriate emphasis on the use of correct scientific language, and teachers constantly extend pupils' vocabulary generally. Learning is constantly reinforced by the use of focused questioning, and good opportunities are given for pupils to work co-operatively, enhancing their independence. In lessons that were only satisfactory, weaker subject knowledge resulted in too many variables being changed when the pupils were testing materials. This meant that pupils had muddled understanding of what a fair test is.
97. The subject is managed well. Although the co-ordinator has only been in post for a short period she has a clear overview of the subject. She has good subject knowledge, and ensures that teachers are confident to teach the subject, and that lessons are planned well to ensure there is sufficient coverage of all the elements of the subject. Pupils' knowledge and understanding are assessed regularly, and this gives a clear picture of the progress they make. Levels of attainment are predicted, and progress towards these targets is closely tracked to ensure that all pupils reach their potential. However, there are insufficient procedures to assess the skills of scientific enquiry. The co-ordinator is aware of this, and has plans to address this weakness. Some use is made of information and communication technology to support the work done in science, but a lack of suitable software prevents its use being extended.

ART AND DESIGN

98. By the age of seven pupils' attainment is as expected for their age, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Pupils use a variety of media to develop their artistic skills in a systematic way. In reception, children learn to mix primary colours effectively to produce new colours, and this skill is refined throughout the school. By the age of seven, pupils mix colours well, and obtain a close match to the required shade. They examine the work of famous artists, such as Monet, and discuss the different styles used and how artists apply paint. After experimenting with different methods, the pupils apply carefully mixed paint, using a dabbing style to create realistic representations of the view from the classroom window. Pupils in both year groups use clay well to make tiles and coil pots. They explore pattern and texture, when decorating their tiles, and use their observational skills well to paint pictures of themselves, ensuring the correct positioning of the features. Pupils use pastels, pens and pencils to create pictures of pineapples, flowers and musical instruments. The most able pupils show a good degree of detail, and are beginning to achieve a sense of perspective in their drawings. All pupils achieve well, including those pupils who have special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.

99. The quality of teaching is good overall. Good use is made of the considerable expertise of a classroom assistant, who clearly explains techniques, enabling the pupils to learn new skills. Her good demonstrations ensure that the pupils know exactly what they are trying to achieve. Teachers plan activities well to develop skills, and to engender in pupils a love of art. Pupils are proud of their work, and are beginning to critically evaluate their achievements and the work of others. They have good attitudes to art, and this has a positive effect on the progress that they make. Pupils with special educational needs carry out the same tasks as their classmates and make similar progress, but there are limited opportunities available for talented pupils to further enhance their skills. The headteacher is aware of this, and is endeavouring to find a local artist who might offer some additional tuition.
100. The subject is being managed by the headteacher until the new co-ordinator takes over next term. The curriculum has clear guidelines to help teachers with their planning, but there are, at present, no assessment procedures in place. Curriculum time is shared with design and technology, which limits opportunities for pupils to further develop their skills. The current small allocation of time for pupils to evaluate their artwork is not an effective use of time and little is achieved in these sessions.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

101. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, but evidence from these, from scrutiny of pupils' work and examination of teachers' planning, shows that pupils' attainment is average, as it was at the time of the last report. Pupils learn a range of skills to enable them to join a variety of materials to make a pleasing product. In Year 1, pupils use glue and sticky tape to join different types of paper to a stem to make a model of a potted plant. Joining skills are further developed in Year 2, when pupils use sewing and lacing skills to join fabric when making wildlife pictures. These pictures have a high degree of finish. Overall, achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, is satisfactory.
102. In the two lessons observed, design and technology activities were planned and delivered alongside art activities. Both subjects were covered in the same lessons, with half the class doing art, while the remainder carried out design and technology. This arrangement works satisfactorily. The teaching seen in these two Year 1 lessons was good. The teachers have sound subject knowledge, and plan activities to develop pupils' skills systematically through appropriate learning tasks. The teachers set high expectations and this encourages pupils to do their best and show a pride in their work. Resources are organised well to give pupils a range of working materials. Activities offer sufficient challenge for all abilities, enabling all pupils to make satisfactory progress. However, there are no opportunities given for very able and talented pupils to develop their skills further, through the use of specialist tools and wood. Pupils enjoy their practical tasks and work hard to produce pleasing products. Opportunities are given for pupils to plan their designs, and teachers encourage them to evaluate the finished articles and suggest how they could be improved.
103. The subject is managed well and the co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject. She monitors planning to ensure coverage of the subject, but has had no opportunities to evaluate the quality of teaching. There is a comprehensive action plan for further development of the subject. There is an appropriate emphasis on the development of skills, and procedures are in place to assess how well pupils' skills are developing. This gives a clear picture of pupils' progress. The lack of learning opportunities to develop pupils' skills, beyond the Key Stage 1 programme of study, limits opportunities for the more able pupils to reach higher standards.

GEOGRAPHY

104. No lessons were observed during the inspection. However, evidence taken from teachers' planning, discussion with pupils and samples of previous work indicate that standards are similar to those found in other schools and pupils' rate of learning is satisfactory. Despite a

reduction in time devoted to the teaching of geography, since the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, the school still provides pupils with a worthwhile learning experience. Standards in line with expectations have been maintained since the last inspection with all pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, achieving satisfactory progress in their learning.

105. In recent years, not much progress has been made on updating the geography policy and scheme of work. Some of the documentation is still relevant but much is very outdated. Nevertheless, it has served the school well and provided clear guidelines for teachers during a period of high staff turnover. Evidence taken from samples of previous work indicates that pupils' independent learning skills are still being developed well in pupils of all abilities. However, the current organisation of the geography curriculum means pupils often forget what they have learnt when there are excessively long gaps between topics. Pupils' recall of previous work is not good and their basic skills of enquiry are not developed in any systematic way. The school is already aware of these issues and has identified a comprehensive review of current provision.
106. By the end of the key stage, pupils talk on a simple level about their route to school and they display good knowledge of the locality. They are aware of recent flooding in a nearby village and the effect of changes in the weather. Most understand the word pollution and suggest cars without exhausts and horses as alternative non-polluting forms of transport. They are less certain about map work and have little experience of using globes, atlases or computer programs to support their learning. Previous work highlights a visit to Hambleton and indicates a developing understanding of similarities and differences between contrasting locations. The school makes good use of educational visits to support class work but does not use its school grounds extensively. There is evidence of independent research skills being developed well in work on the rainforest. Individual letters of complaint display a high level of understanding about the effects of tree cutting and the near extinction of some breeds of animals. Pupils' literacy skills are promoted well and topics are linked to other subjects, such as music, whenever appropriate.
107. The deputy headteacher has provided good subject leadership in the interim. She is aware of the need for greater consistency and more systematic development of enquiry and mapwork skills. The school has a very clear picture of the current level of provision and a strong sense of direction for the future. Resources are well organised into topic boxes, although there is a shortage of maps, globes, atlases and support materials. Assessment opportunities are built into teachers' planning and provide valuable information about pupils' achievement. Monitoring of what is taught takes place on an informal basis and ensures the co-ordinator has a basic knowledge about the level of provision and standards achieved.

HISTORY

108. At the age of seven pupil's attainment remains as it was at the last inspection, and is as expected for their age. Throughout the school pupils are given good opportunities to develop their historical skills systematically, through examining a variety of sources of evidence. For example, pupils in Year 2 looked at books, pictures and listened to a visitor acting out the role of Samuel Pepys, to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the Fire of London. They were then able to place the events of the fire in the correct sequence. They knew the causes of the fire, and why it spread so quickly. Good opportunities are provided to enhance literacy skills through this work, when pupils write a newspaper report about the fire. Pupils in Year 1 examine old and new toys, and recognise the differences. They are able to identify the oldest toys from the materials they are made of, using their knowledge of modern toys. Good use is made of a visit to the local dolls' museum, and visits to school by a grandmother who talked to the pupils about the stick doll she had as a child. These experiences help to bring the past alive, and make the pupils want to learn. All the pupils in the school are developing a sense of chronology well, and are beginning to understand the difference between things that happen today and those that happened a long time ago. They are gaining knowledge of

important historical events. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily.

109. No lessons were seen in Year 1, as history was not the focus for this part of the term. The quality of teaching in Year 2 is overall satisfactory. Teachers plan a variety of activities to stimulate the pupils and arouse their interest. Their knowledge of the subject is sound, and the varied resources are well organised, and appropriate to motivate the pupils. However, the pace of two out of the three lessons was rather slow during the whole-class part of the lesson. This resulted in pupils losing interest and becoming fidgety. Generally, however, pupils enjoy their lessons and have positive attitudes to their learning, which ensure that progress is made.
110. The co-ordinator is new, but has established structured guidelines to help teachers with their planning. She has had no opportunities, as yet, to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Assessment opportunities are identified in teachers' planning, but these are new and are not yet consistently used. Curriculum time is shared with geography, so there are long periods of time when pupils do not experience any history. This lack of continual exposure to the subject means that some pupils forget the skills they have learned, and this prevents standards being any higher than average.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

111. At the time of the last inspection, although standards were judged to be satisfactory, various weaknesses in provision were evident. Pupils experienced a narrow range of learning activities that limited the development of their skills, particularly in word-processing and data handling. As a consequence, pupils' progress was unsatisfactory. These weaknesses have now been rectified successfully. Present teaching staff have very sound subject knowledge. They make maximum use of the subject to enhance pupils' learning in other subjects, and the subject is led and managed well.
112. By the age of seven, pupils' standards are in line with expectations. This is a successful achievement of the specific target set by the school, as a key priority, in its school improvement plan. As a result of the broad range of experience that they receive, pupils' competencies are developing well in all aspects of the subject. This is good achievement in circumstances where the actual time that they are able to spend on their work is limited by the present siting of computers in the corridor and the reduced access that this entails. Although most work is integrated with pupils' learning in other subjects, the co-ordinator has ensured that this work is related to the gaining of key skills. Thus, word-processing is practised in a variety of contexts. In Year 2, pupils' writing in religious education shows that they can successfully use the computer to change colour, font and size of letters, to arrange text and to save and print their work. They use a variety of functions successfully, such as highlighting text that they wish to alter. They access information effectively from CD-ROMs, as was evident in history research on The Fire of London, and work in science on materials. Good control of the mouse is evident in the accuracy with which many pupils 'drag and drop' to move information around the computer screen. Data-processing is used regularly and pupils have good knowledge of the programs that can be used for recording information, and presenting it in the form of a graph, such as the number of pets that pupils in one Year 2 class have.
113. The standards being achieved by pupils at the age of seven are the result of careful planning of learning activities that build on what has been learned before. A good knowledge of computers and hardware, such as programmable toy robots is gained during the Foundation Stage. In Year 1, pupils' knowledge and understanding progresses well and they demonstrate good use of graphics programs to produce pictures of mini beasts that require careful control of the mouse to draw outlines that are then filled with selected colours. This work is also used successfully to consolidate their mathematical understanding of symmetry. Word-processing is used successfully to produce labels for pictures. In other work, pupils use listening centres completely independently and are fully competent with the technology.

114. Pupils' good attitudes are a significant influence on their progress. The work of the week is introduced in whole-class sessions that establish the program being used, its key features and the task to be completed. Thereafter, pupils work either independently, or with support staff, or parent volunteers. When working without support, pairs of pupils work very conscientiously. In conversation, they speak positively and with enthusiasm about the programs they are using and what they discovered. Behaviour is very good and pupils treat the equipment sensibly and with care. In their pairs, pupils share both physical control and ideas. They do this very well, without argument and fairly.
115. The quality of teaching is good. The whole-class introductions to topics are planned well; questioning is used very purposefully to establish levels of knowledge and understanding, and tasks are described clearly. Such explanations indicate the very good subject knowledge that all teachers have. They also have high expectations of the quality of work for which pupils should aim, and the behaviour and attitudes that pupils should display when working unsupervised. Pupils' good responses to these expectations contribute to the good quality of learning that is achieved by all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Teachers make good use of pupils' work in attractive, informative classroom displays that celebrate the quality of the finished product and also indicate the purpose of the work to the viewer. There is strong emphasis on what is learned from the activities and large labels that state the key learning objective being worked on are displayed prominently by the computers.
116. The co-ordinator, in addition to being an invaluable source of support and advice for colleagues, has developed the subject well and contributed much to its good improvement since the last inspection. This has been achieved in a short period of time. In less than a year, the good leadership and management has resulted in a review of all planning with the production of curriculum guidelines that identify key skills to be learned in each aspect of the subject. Additionally, the co-ordinator has addressed successfully the previous absence of procedures for assessment of pupils' learning by producing a manageable system of recording the skills that pupils' acquire. At present, this does not occur, and is a weakness, but the new procedures are a good foundation for teachers to develop their assessment of pupils' progress more precisely. With good support from local education authority advisory staff, a comprehensive development plan for the subject has been produced which will guide the subject's progress when the new computer suite comes into operation. This facility is the result of close collaboration between staff, parents and governors and good financial management that has released the required funding. The computer suite will also rectify the current shortage of computers in the school.

MUSIC

117. The last time music was inspected it was regarded as a strength of the school with pupils achieving average standards overall and above-average standards in singing and responding to rhythm. The part-time specialist worked closely with class teachers and planning for pupils' progression was thorough.
118. Despite a reduction in teaching time, the school manages to give its current pupils a worthwhile learning experience. Music is still an important part of school life. Although standards are not as high as they were overall, the vast majority of seven-year-olds achieve standards similar to those found in other infant schools. The part-time music specialist continues to take class lessons and transmits an enthusiasm and love of music to all pupils.
119. By the age of seven, pupils repeat simple melodies and tackle tongue twisters and basic vocal exercises with enjoyment and varying degrees of success. They discriminate well between loud and soft when singing 'London's Burning' and they begin to convey different feelings, such as anger or sadness in their singing. In percussion work, they interpret feelings sensitively with appropriate choices of instruments.

120. The part-time music specialist is a very skilled practitioner whose expertise is much valued by the school. The overall quality of her teaching is very good and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make rapid progress through a very well structured range of interesting and exciting activities. There is good coverage of all elements of the music curriculum. Teachers' expectations are high. Pupils are encouraged to play musical instruments correctly and all abilities are challenged and motivated. During one lesson, pupils were encouraged to interpret 'A Symphony of Moods' in their own way. They were happy to make suggestions because they knew their ideas would be valued and respected. By the end of the lesson they had completed eight purposeful activities and tape-recorded their work in preparation for the following week's lesson. Whenever appropriate, activities are linked well to topics in other subjects, such as history and geography.
121. The school makes effective use of its time allocation for music by splitting classes into two groups for lessons. Pupils benefit by having more individual attention, but class teachers miss the opportunity to develop their own expertise by observing such a good practitioner when they are involved in teaching the other half of the class. The co-ordinator provides a very good level of informal support and helpful packs of guidance materials for teachers in the classroom. Simple assessment sheets indicate levels of understanding very effectively and class teachers are kept well informed of pupils' individual progress or special achievements.
122. The current policy and scheme of work are outdated and do not reflect practice accurately or include new curriculum initiatives. For example, medium term planning still makes reference to old attainment targets and previous programmes of study. There is an adequate range of familiar and more unusual instruments including some interesting multi-cultural instruments. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in school productions, harvest festival celebrations and summer concerts. The school choir sings with good tone and diction. They visit an Old People's Home, and were recently invited to sing at a local hypermarket.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be good in dance and satisfactory in gymnastics. Games was not observed. During this inspection, dance has not been observed but, by the age of seven, standards are now above expectations in gymnastics and matching expectations in games. This improvement in gymnastics, together with the substantial work carried out on the curriculum by the co-ordinator, has resulted in a good improvement in the subject overall since the last inspection.
124. In Year 2, pupils' floor and apparatus work in gymnastics is of good quality. They show good control when balancing on different parts of the body and very good co-ordination when changing from one balanced position to another. When performing in twos and threes, the levels of co-operation and ways in which pupils select actions that complement or contrast one another's, are evidence of good planning and performing. Pupils move apparatus successfully in groups, using the teacher's plan of their apparatus and arranging it quickly but safely. They adapt their floor-work ideas successfully to work on apparatus of varying heights and surfaces. They warm up and cool down conscientiously and have a good understanding of why these aspects of the lesson are important. Basic games skills, such as throwing and striking a ball, are performed with satisfactory control and accuracy, and pupils co-operate successfully with a partner and use space sensibly. These standards in gymnastics and games are achieved by all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. There is no evidence of any pupils achieving significantly higher standards than others.
125. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning. Lessons are planned thoroughly and teachers pay good attention to health and safety factors. Good teaching incorporates use of carefully selected pupils to demonstrate

specific actions that reinforce key features of what is to be learned. The pupils observing these demonstrations are encouraged to look out for particular features or evaluate what is particularly good about what they are watching. Games teaching incorporates a suitable range of learning activities in lessons but does not always ensure that each activity builds on the preceding one, leading to situations where pupils occasionally experience a difficult activity before they are ready for it.

126. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and management based on her high level of subject expertise. This has been used to produce excellent guidelines for teaching and learning in games and gymnastics with similar guidance on dance in preparation. These comprehensive plans for half-term units of work are accompanied by very useful procedures for assessment of pupils' learning. The school's involvement in the Healthy Schools Initiative is in very early stages but the co-ordinator is ready to make a major contribution to this. Here, as in all aspects of physical education, she is an invaluable source of advice and support for colleagues. Present arrangements for subject co-ordination mean that the co-ordinator has had no time for monitoring the teaching of the subject.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

127. At the time of the last inspection, standards were similar to those found in other schools and pupils' progress was satisfactory. The quality of teaching was always at least satisfactory and collective worship supported pupils' work in religious education through a comprehensive programme of themes. Planning adhered to the locally agreed syllabus, 'Visions of Life', and Christianity and Sikhism were identified as the two world religions for study. Inspection findings indicated that pupils had insufficient understanding of other cultures.
128. Steady progress has been made and pupils now have a greater awareness and understanding of other cultures. Average standards have been maintained and the locally agreed syllabus still provides a well-structured programme of study, with the study of Hinduism recently replacing Sikhism on the timetable.
129. Whole-school acts of collective worship follow well-organised themes and encourage a sense of community, as well as supporting the religious education curriculum. In one assembly, pupils had to guess what teachers had wanted to be when they grew up. All pupils were totally involved as one teacher took her ballet shoes from a small case. They displayed excitement, enthusiasm and respect for each other as they enjoyed trying to guess correctly. Behaviour is particularly good on these occasions and pupils listen attentively. Although music is used well to set the atmosphere as pupils enter the hall, an opportunity is missed to give pupils further information about the title or composer. The school respects the wishes of its Brethren families to withdraw their children from collective worship.
130. By the end of the key stage, pupils display satisfactory knowledge of the Bible, they know the names associated with Christian places of worship and are aware of the importance of the church in certain people's lives. Younger pupils show genuine respect and appreciation of the church as a special place. In discussion, pupils in Year 1 talked about babies being christened and recalled information about hymnbooks and cushions for kneeling during prayer. Samples of pupils' previous work revealed some very interesting and appropriate ideas about God, ranging from God being king of the world to God being an angel. However, pupils' knowledge of Hinduism is less assured. Although pupils are developing understanding of the main characters in the Hindu religion and identify similarities and differences between Christianity and Hinduism on a simple level, their knowledge is superficial and some pupils in Year 2 have little recall of previous work.
131. Only a small sample of lessons was observed during the inspection. Overall, the quality of teaching was very good in half the lessons and satisfactory in the other half. Teachers have sound subject knowledge about Christianity but are sometimes less confident about Hinduism. They relate information well to pupils' own experiences, use correct vocabulary, and introduce artefacts effectively to stimulate pupils' interest. In a very good Year 1 lesson, pupils were intrigued to know what was under the sheet on the table and there was an atmosphere of calm and anticipation as familiar and more unusual Hindu artefacts were revealed. Pupils were encouraged to express opinions, explore for themselves and sing the Hindu chant they had learnt previously. In lessons where teachers do not always successfully manage pupils' behaviour, pupils are not always given adequate opportunity to express opinions, reflect or develop ideas through discussion.
132. The subject is managed well by a recently appointed co-ordinator. Policies and schemes of work have been updated and guidelines to aid teachers' planning are of very good quality. There is a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses of the subject and accurate targets have been identified for future development. The locally agreed syllabus provides continuity and progression and pupils are offered a variety of experiences to aid progress. Resources are well organised and easily accessible. There is a small range of good quality multi-cultural artefacts and literature. Religious education makes an effective contribution towards pupils' personal development.