

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **NORTHILL C of E VA LOWER SCHOOL**

Biggleswade

Bedford

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109621

Headteacher: Mrs E A Simpson

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Sinclair  
19824

Dates of inspection: 30 April – 2 May 01

Inspection number: 193788

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Lower school
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Northhill C of E Lower School Bedford Road Northhill Biggleswade Beds
Postcode:	SG18 9AH
Telephone number:	01767 627215
Fax number:	None
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Kate Walker
Date of previous inspection:	13/01/1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19824	Mrs Janet Sinclair	Registered inspector	English, science, information and communication technology, design and technology, music, special educational needs.	The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9756	Mr Ken Parsons	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes behaviour and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
19302	Mrs Christine Perrett	Team inspector	Foundation stage curriculum, equal opportunities, maths, art and design, geography, history and physical education.	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>12</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>28</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is a Church of England Voluntary Aided First School for boys and girls of four to nine years of age. There are seventy-one pupils on roll, two of whom attend mornings only. (These two children attend from the term after their fourth birthday). This is an increase of fifty per cent since the previous inspection. The school draws most of its pupils from Northhill and surrounding villages and significantly, since January 2000, the school has had a much higher intake of pupils from travelling families than it did previously. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds - both more and less privileged and levels of attainment on entry are generally above average. Pupil mobility is fairly low although some pupils leave the school for private education at varying points in their school career and pupils from travelling families attend intermittently. Twenty per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, including one per cent with a statement of special educational needs, which is average. Currently four per cent of pupils receive free school meals and this is well below the average of nineteen per cent. The school has few pupils from an ethnic minority and they are fully competent in their use of English.

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

The school has recently experienced a time of major turbulence. There have been many staff changes over a two-year period, major building works have taken place, significant changes have taken place in the governing body and cumulatively this has had a negative impact on the work of the school and the standards attained. All staff now in place have been appointed within the last year. The new head teacher was appointed in January 2001 and has effectively calmed the school and given a firm, but sensitive steer to its work. She is providing good leadership through a clear identification of priorities for raising standards. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2 and pupils are given a supportive learning environment. Pupils achieve good standards in mathematics at Key Stage 1. The new head teacher has engendered a strong team spirit and good relationships and this is helping the work of the school. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and the school makes good provision for pupils' moral development. Pupils make satisfactory progress, expenditure per pupil is above average and therefore the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The leadership of the head teacher is good and this is having a positive impact on the work and ethos of the school.
- Standards in mathematics are good at Key Stage 1 and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour contribute positively to their learning.
- Relationships are good throughout the school and this helps pupil achievement.
- There is good provision for pupils' moral development and this enables them to work well together and promotes learning.
- Parents now have positive views of the school after its recent turmoil.

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

- Provision for the foundation stage.
- Standards and provision in information and communication technology (ICT) at both key stages.
- Assessment in science, ICT and the foundation subjects.
- Financial planning and monitoring to ensure available resources are deployed effectively to enhance pupils' learning.
- Standards in art at both key stages.
- Provision for personal social and health education (PSHE).

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

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

The school was last inspected in January 1997 but none of the staff and few of the governors remain from that time, which makes many comparisons invalid. The action plan addressing the issues identified was satisfactory and governors have fulfilled their statutory duties. Current curriculum planning is an improvement and there are now schemes of work for all areas of the curriculum. There is a whole school approach to assessment and presentation of work is good. Standards in scientific investigations are now satisfactory. Good improvements have been made to the size of the building and the accommodation is

now good. The key issues that do not seem to have been addressed as yet, are standards in ICT and the development of a programme for PSHE. In so far as comparisons can be made the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. It is now well placed to improve further.

## 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*	A	B	C
Writing	A*	A*	A	A
Mathematics	B	A*	A	A

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

The information shows that the performance of pupils in 2000 was above average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics when compared to all schools. In comparison with schools with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to a free school meal, results were average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. Given the relatively small number of pupils in each year group, too much emphasis should not be placed on any one year's performance. However, in comparison with the national trend standards are gradually declining in reading and writing and improving in mathematics. Levels of attainment on entry fluctuate but currently attainment on entry is above average. There is a significant intake of pupils from the travelling community who attend school on an erratic basis, which affects the overall level of attainment.

Inspection evidence shows that standards in Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4 are at the expected level in all subjects except in mathematics at Key Stage 1, which are above the expected level, and ICT and art, which are below expectations at both key stages. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on music and physical education. There are several reasons for the differences between inspection evidence and the results of statutory tests. There are more pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 this year, they have experienced eight different teachers in the last two years, and they began school with average levels of attainment. Overall this has had an adverse effect on standards. The standards in the current Year 4 do not reflect the results of the statutory tests undertaken at seven. These pupils have also been affected by the recent turmoil and the year group now includes a number of pupils with special educational needs. Additionally, the higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and this affects their achievement. Overall the school has done well to attain current standards given the level of turmoil.

Children in the foundation stage achieve satisfactorily in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. Their achievement in all other areas of learning is unsatisfactory due to the fact that these areas are not covered in sufficient depth. In Key Stage 1, and by the end of Year 4, pupils achieve satisfactorily in all subjects except mathematics at Key Stage 1, where they achieve well, and art and ICT at both key stages, where achievement is unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and those from the travelling community make satisfactory progress overall due to the support they receive.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school and this helps their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good. Pupils generally behave well in lessons. They behave very well at break and lunch times showing a good level of maturity in their behaviour towards each other.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good across the school. Staff provide good role models and pupils respond well. This creates a positive learning environment. Provision for personal development is satisfactory.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils are punctual and keen to start work.

The procedures for promoting good behaviour are good and as a result pupils work and play happily together. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	unsatisfactory	satisfactory	satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Of the teaching seen thirty per cent was good, sixty one per cent satisfactory and nine per cent unsatisfactory. Although teaching seen in the foundation stage varied between good and unsatisfactory, it is judged to be unsatisfactory overall due to a lack of coverage and provision for all aspects of the areas of learning. Teaching varies between good and unsatisfactory across the rest of the school, but is satisfactory overall.

Teaching is satisfactory in English and mathematics and the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily. Planning is often detailed and clearly identifies activities for pupils of differing prior attainment. Work for pupils is based on guidance from the national strategies and ensures pupils' skills are developed in a progressive manner. Teachers have sound subject knowledge, manage pupils well and generally make good use of resources. As a result pupils make satisfactory, and sometimes good, gains in their learning and generally enjoy their work.

In the good lessons teachers are well prepared, lessons have a brisk pace and activities are purposeful and challenging. In these lessons pupils are enthusiastic, work hard and put a good amount of intellectual and creative effort into their work. In some lessons however, the work is insufficiently challenging, the pace is slow and the work is not clearly targeted at the children's needs. This is linked to weaknesses in assessment. In these lessons children do not make the gains of which they are capable. Through effective use of support staff the school ensures that pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and those from the travelling community are fully integrated and make satisfactory gains in their learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the foundation stage is unsatisfactory. The curricular provision across the rest of the school is unsatisfactory, because provision for ICT does not meet statutory requirements, there is inadequate provision for PSHE and there are few opportunities for curricular enrichment.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils with SEN, including travelling pupils, receive effective support from learning support assistants through the work identified in their individual education plans. Sometimes however, there is not enough support for them within the classroom.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Provision for personal, spiritual and social development is satisfactory and provision for cultural development is unsatisfactory. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to study their own and other cultures in order to increase their awareness of the society in which they live.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is satisfactory provision for pupils' welfare within a caring and emotionally secure environment. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance in English and mathematics are good and are well used, but procedures are not yet in place for other areas of the curriculum.

The curriculum is insufficiently balanced to ensure that all subjects have adequate time in order to develop skills progressively. Partnership with parents is satisfactory and the school is working hard to improve on this.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff	The leadership of the new head teacher is good. She is providing a clear sense of direction and a good level of support to her staff after the school's recent turmoil. Currently there are few other key staff in the school and as a result almost all management responsibilities remain with the head teacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory overall. Governors are supportive and have carried out their duties in a professional manner in order to help the school cope with the many changes. However, they have not managed the budget well and have allowed a large amount of money to remain unspent.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The new headteacher has undertaken an audit of the school and set out a plan to address areas of weakness. The quality of teaching is monitored well and this is leading to improvements in teaching.
The strategic use of resources	The school has adequate resources, which it uses well to promote learning. Financial planning is unsatisfactory, as it has been based on an incomplete knowledge of the school's true financial status. This has led to a massive budget surplus.

The school has sufficient teachers for the number of pupils on roll. However, having two newly qualified teachers on the staff means that there is no opportunity to spread curriculum co-ordination tasks amongst all teachers, and this inevitably has implications for the development of the teaching of some

subjects. Accommodation is good. The recent extension to the school has enhanced the accommodation considerably. Resources are satisfactory, except in physical education. There are an appropriate number of books in the library, however a number of them are old and contain information that is out of date. The school satisfactorily applies the principles of best value.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and behave well.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with problems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework the children get.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed by parents but found that teaching was satisfactory rather than good. In terms of what parents would like to see improved the team found that the amount of homework given to the children was satisfactory. Although we agree with parents that provision for activities outside lessons is unsatisfactory there have been more immediate priorities for the school in the recent past. The school is currently planning for a six-week block of extra-curricular activities for the summer term.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Since the last inspection the school has raised standards in mathematics. Standards in English and art and design have deteriorated. In all other subjects standards have been maintained. However, direct comparisons between the two inspections are unhelpful as the characteristics of the school have changed, there are no staff currently in post who were at the previous inspection and the school has experienced a high level of turbulence due to staff changes in the very recent past.
2. The results of assessments undertaken when children start school show that attainment of the children on entry varies from year to year because of the small number of pupils involved. This year it was above average. Inspection evidence shows that most children will attain the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year; they will exceed them in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. However, with above average attainment on entry, this is unsatisfactory achievement in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development and satisfactory achievement in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. There is a lack of structured play activities to develop all the Early Learning Goals and the curriculum is not sufficiently adapted to suit the needs of the foundation stage children. Provision remains unsatisfactory, as it was at the time of the last report. Provision for personal social and emotional development is unsatisfactory. Although children develop good levels of concentration and are interested in their learning there are too many missed opportunities to develop their skills and independence. Children enjoy books, and understand that text carries meaning. They have a good knowledge of letters and sounds and use this to help them read and write simple sentences. Children count to 10 and add and subtract simple numbers.
3. The significance of comparative test results or teacher assessments, as measures of school performance, depends on the number of pupils in a year group. Given the relatively small numbers of pupils in a year group in the school too much emphasis should not be placed on any one year's test results. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level were above average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments in science show that the proportion of pupils who reached the nationally expected level was very high. The proportion of pupils exceeding the expected level was below average in reading and above in writing, mathematics and science. Standards in reading and writing have shown a gradual decline over time while standards in mathematics have risen. Compared to schools in a similar context, based on the number of pupils entitled to a free school meal, in 2000 attainment was average in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. The work seen in Year 3 during the inspection does not reflect the high standards achieved in last year's test results.
4. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Key Stage 1, standards meet the national expectations in all subjects except mathematics, art and design, and ICT. Standards in mathematics are above expectations. Standards are below expectations in ICT and art and design. There are several reasons for the differences between inspection evidence and the results of statutory tests and teacher assessments. There are more pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 this year, they have experienced eight different teachers in the last two years, and they began school with average levels of attainment. Overall this has adversely affected levels of attainment.
5. Standards are at the expected level in Year 4 in all subjects except art and ICT, which are below expectations.

6. Standards in speaking and listening are good across the school and pupils are achieving satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils are confident to speak in a variety of contexts and listen well both to teachers and each other. However, there are few planned opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills systematically and this inhibits their overall progress. Standards in reading are satisfactory across the school. Most pupils enjoy reading and are keen to talk about the books they have read and their favourite characters. Many are familiar with the use of the contents page and index as an aid to accessing information. There are a small group of pupils, particularly in Year 3, who find reading difficult. These pupils are being targeted for extra support. However, some problems arise because the books are too difficult for their reading ability. Generally, pupils do not achieve as well as they could due to a lack of clear assessment of their reading skills in order to help them improve. Standards in writing are satisfactory across the school. Pupils develop a sense of audience through writing for a variety of purposes such as poetry or story writing. Assessment is now being used well to target learning and this is having a positive impact on achievement. Handwriting is generally good and work is well presented.
7. Standards are above average in mathematics at the end of Year 2. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of place value and are competent in addition and subtraction. They achieve well due to the good use made of assessment to plan the next steps in their learning. By Year 4, pupils add decimals to 1 place and multiply and divide with remainders. High and average attaining pupils are competent with numbers to 1000 and beyond whilst lower attaining pupils are working with numbers to 100. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily, but higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged and do not achieve well enough.
8. Standards in science are at the expected level at both key stages. By the end of Year 2 pupils can identify the conditions needed to grow healthy plants and can classify animals through their significant features. By the end of Year 4 pupils competently make electrical circuits with switches attached. They have a developing understanding of the food chain and its importance for survival. However, there are not enough extension activities planned to ensure all pupils are appropriately challenged.
9. Standards in ICT are below expectations across the school because, although pupils have developed a good level of competency in some aspects of ICT, the curriculum is not fully covered. Pupils have limited experience of controlling devices or using simulations. Pupils do not achieve well enough due to the limitations in provision and a lack of challenge in some of the work.
10. Standards in all other subjects of the curriculum are at the expected level at both key stages except art, which is below expectations. There was not enough evidence to make an overall judgement on standards in music and physical education.
11. Literacy and numeracy skills are not developed well across the curriculum; there are few examples of them being used except in science.
12. Pupils with special educational needs, including a good number of pupils from the traveller community, achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. Individual educational plans are used effectively to set work for them in literacy and numeracy. They make good gains in their learning where they are well supported by support staff.

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

13. The behaviour of pupils is good and they have a good attitude to their education. They are proud of their school, as illustrated for instance by the enthusiasm with which they sang the school hymn in an assembly. They are keen to come to school in the morning, with even the youngest pupils happy to say goodbye to parents in the playground. They go to their classes without wasting time and are ready to start work when the school day commences. All pupils feel secure and valued in school. In their lessons, they want to learn and are attentive and conscientious. They are proud of their achievements. For example, a group of year 4 pupils were very keen to talk about what they

had done in their ICT work, and how in many cases they had followed through aspects of the work on their computers at home. A positive learning attitude has been established through the school's strong ethos, evident in very clear expectations of behaviour. The pupils' enthusiasm for school contributes significantly towards their attainment and progress. It is reflected in the way they sustain interest in their studies and are keen to participate through answering questions. Even in the Reception year, children are confident and well motivated in school. Pupils settle promptly to written work and are able to work in silence when required to do so.

14. Pupils behave well and are aware of the school's expectations of them. This means that teachers do not spend much time in lessons maintaining order and can use the available time productively to further pupils' learning. Pupils behave very well at break times and the playground is an unthreatening environment. Bullying was not raised as an issue by pupils or parents and none was seen during the inspection; it is a rare occurrence in the school. There has been one fixed term exclusion in the past year, for violent behaviour. Pupils are polite to each other and to adults. For example, it is common for a pupil to apologise after being admonished by a teacher. Pupils value each other as individuals and they understand the impact of their actions on others. Parents are very satisfied by the school's standards of behaviour and believe that they are successful in helping their children develop good attitudes and values.
15. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. The school provides some opportunities to take responsibility: for example, putting away games equipment at the end of lunchtimes. Pupils are capable of carrying out such tasks without needing adults to give them direction. For example, when a ball was left at the far end of the playground at the end of lunchtime, a girl took charge of it without being prompted. The children have a personal confidence that makes them pleasant people to meet but also contributes to their learning. One example was the girls playing the piano or violin in a whole school assembly – an impressive display of confidence for year 4 pupils. At the other end of the school, Reception children in a small group were able to work together to share out limited resources to enable each of them to carry out their maths task without needing to call on the teacher. At both Key Stage 1 and 2, pupils take appropriate responsibility for their own learning. However, like most children, they can take advantage – in a year 3 and 4 physical education lesson, for example, they were blatant in cutting across the corners of the circuit they were running.
16. Relationships within the school are good and pupils generally respect their teachers. Pupils work well collaboratively in pairs or small groups when called upon to do so. They listen and give due regard to the views of others, even when they are different from their own, and are supportive of one another. For example, one lunchtime about a dozen pupils of various ages attempted to skip in concert using one rope. Inevitably each attempt was frustrated by at least one pupil getting the timing wrong, but they were very tolerant of each other and there were no cross words. At a football training session pupils also worked together well, and they were very supportive of a pupil with physical difficulties, enabling her to participate fully. They have an easy-going tolerance of the comings and goings of traveller children, with an acceptance of their different lifestyle. They show respect for the school's property, use equipment sensibly and are trusted by teachers to use resources and facilities with minimum levels of supervision. They display the common courtesies, such as holding a door for somebody following them through it. They play well together. Boys and girls work together unselfconsciously.
17. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory, being broadly in line with the national average for a school of this type. There is a significant number of absences for which no reason is recorded in the attendance registers, a point which was raised at the last inspection of the school. The school is now in the process of addressing this issue. Pupils are punctual arriving at school and do not delay the start of the school day. The traveller children inevitably show a disrupted pattern of attendance.
18. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved since the last inspection of the school.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Of the teaching seen thirty per cent was good, sixty one per cent satisfactory and nine per cent unsatisfactory. Although teaching seen in the foundation stage varied between good and unsatisfactory, it is judged to be unsatisfactory overall due to a lack of coverage, inadequate provision for all aspects of the areas of learning and unsatisfactory use of time. Teaching varies between good and unsatisfactory across the rest of the school, but is satisfactory overall. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection except that there is now less unsatisfactory teaching. However, limited real comparisons can be made as none of the original teaching staff remain. The school is aware of the weaknesses in the foundation stage and has identified it as an area of development in the school improvement plan.
20. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall in the foundation stage. It is satisfactory in communication, language and literacy and mathematics, but is unsatisfactory for all other areas of learning. Planning is not detailed enough for all areas of learning and children spend too much of their time in unstructured activity. This means that children do not acquire all the necessary skills to help them reach all the Early Learning Goals and are not sufficiently engaged in productive activity. In most whole class sessions the main input from the teacher is directed at Year 1 pupils and as a result the Year R children lose interest and become fidgety. Additionally, the nursery nurse does the majority of the small group teaching of the reception children so they have limited input from the class teacher throughout the day.
21. Teaching is satisfactory in English and mathematics at both key stages. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily. Planning is often detailed and clearly identifies activities for pupils of differing prior attainment and this ensures work is appropriately challenging. Work for pupils is based on guidance from the national strategies and ensures pupils' skills are developed in a progressive manner. Good use is made of assessment to inform planning in writing and a particularly good example of this was in a Year 2 literacy lesson where pupils were reminded of the targets on their target cards in order to provide a clear focus for improving their work. In some lessons teachers make good use of questioning and this helps pupils develop their knowledge and understanding and encourages them to use their imagination. Teachers have sound subject knowledge, manage pupils well and generally make good use of resources. As a result pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning and generally enjoy the content of the lessons. Pupils' good levels of interest and concentration in almost all literacy and numeracy lessons help with their learning. Sometimes, slow pace and uninteresting activities inhibit pupils' progress and affects their engagement with the tasks. Homework is used satisfactorily to enhance learning.
22. Teaching in science, music and history is satisfactory. There was not enough teaching seen in other foundation subjects to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, the teaching observed in these subjects was satisfactory. Teachers, as yet, make limited use of opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy across the curriculum but there is a growing awareness of the need to do this.
23. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Support staff are well prepared for their work with small groups and through effective interactions help pupils with their learning. Pupils concentrate well in the group activities and are keen to answer questions. Teachers, together with the co-ordinator for SEN and classroom assistants, ensure individual education plans for pupils on the SEN register are clear and easy to follow. These are used well to support pupils in literacy and numeracy. However support across the curriculum is less effective due to a lack of planning and a lack of teacher time to meet their needs.
24. The specialist teaching for traveller pupils is satisfactory. The support given to them by the nursery nurse is good and contributes well to their learning and inclusion. They join in all activities, and are well supported at lunch times by the nursery nurse, who arranges a voluntary programme of fun activities to enhance their basic skills. She has a good rapport with the pupils, which successfully enhances their self-esteem.

25. There are good features in lessons that contribute effectively to learning. Lessons are usually planned at least satisfactorily and give a clear purpose for pupils' learning. This is clearly reflected in lessons where pupils are effectively engaged in the work and as a result acquire new learning. In most science lessons pupils are given opportunities to work together on practical tasks and investigations and this enables them to share ideas and discuss methods. For example, when making their electrical circuits, Year 3 and 4 pupils were keen to discuss how they would construct them and this led to some complex circuitry. All teachers have good relationships with their pupils and as a result pupils respond well with good behaviour and responsible attitudes to their work. In the good lessons, teachers are well prepared, lessons have a brisk pace and activities are purposeful and challenging. In these lessons pupils are enthusiastic, work hard and put a good amount of intellectual and creative effort into their work.
26. In some lessons however, the work is insufficiently challenging, the pace is slow and the work is not clearly targeted at pupils' needs. This is linked to weaknesses in teachers' assessments of pupils' prior learning, which means they are not clear about how far pupils have progressed and therefore cannot plan work for their specific needs. In these lessons children do not make the gains of which they are capable. Where teaching is unsatisfactory time is not used well, subject specific skills are not taught and planning does not clearly identify the intended learning. Occasionally pupil behaviour is an issue and this disrupts the learning of all pupils.

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

27. The quality and range of the curriculum is unsatisfactory across the school. The school has worked hard to provide its pupils with a broad curriculum, covering the subjects of the National Curriculum, and taking account of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. However, the information technology curriculum does not meet statutory requirements, as provision is not made for all the elements of the subject to be taught. Although provision is made for PSHE when pupils learn about a healthy lifestyle and the harmful effects of drugs, this part of the curriculum is not rigorously planned and therefore opportunities are missed to develop this aspect of the curriculum fully. The policy is old and needs updating, and there are no structured guidelines to help teachers with their planning, particularly for developing pupils' ideas of citizenship. PSHE was a key issue in the last report, which has not been sufficiently addressed. The curriculum is reasonably balanced, but time is sometimes taken from the foundation subjects to enable more to be spent on the core subjects. The balance of the school day for Year 2 pupils still needs adjustment, as one day a week pupils spend well over half of the time doing literacy activities. Subjects now all have structured guidelines to help teachers with their planning. This is an improvement since the last inspection, but these schemes of work are new, and have not been adapted to suit the needs of the school. Curriculum planning has improved since the last report. However, there is no secure framework to meet the needs of the mixed-age classes to ensure that pupils' knowledge and understanding in all subjects are progressively developed.
28. The curriculum for the children in the Reception class is unsatisfactory. Children are taught with Year 1 pupils, and the curriculum, although planned to meet the recommended Early Learning Goals, is driven by the subjects of the National Curriculum and insufficiently adapted to meet the needs of the youngest pupils. As the school day is divided strictly into subject areas, there are not enough opportunities for children to learn through structured play, and opportunities to develop children's personal, social and emotional development are not rigorously planned. Times when the children play outside are unfocused and unplanned, as is 'snack time'. So there are missed opportunities to enhance children's development in all areas of the curriculum during these times. Children are given a limited choice of activities, but generally tasks are prescribed by the teacher. The range of choices offered is insufficient, limiting learning opportunities across the curriculum. For example, during the inspection children were not given opportunities for imaginative play, and on one occasion only, during an art lesson, were they able to use paint or collage. The adults in the reception class plan activities together but the teacher spends the majority of her day supervising the Year 1 pupils, so gives little input to the foundation stage pupils. This is unsatisfactory. The



very youngest nursery aged children attend mornings only when numeracy and literacy are taught, so the curriculum they experience is extremely narrow and unsuitable for such young children.

29. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum, and Traveller children are well integrated into the school. They join in all activities, and are well supported at lunch times by the nursery nurse, who arranges a voluntary programme of fun activities to enhance their basic skills. She has a good rapport with the pupils, which successfully enhances their self-esteem. The traveller culture is not, however, celebrated through the curriculum. Some support from the Traveller support service for pupils during literacy and numeracy lessons helps pupils complete the task and make satisfactory progress. However, when support is not available some pupils do not make maximum progress in all lessons.
30. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and statutory requirements are met. Pupils have full access to the curriculum but work is not always sufficiently modified to meet their needs except in literacy and numeracy. The policy, which has been recently reviewed, is appropriate and pupils' individual education plans set clear targets to help them progress. Regular reviews take place and now include comments from parents and pupils. There is good encouragement for parents to be involved through helping at home. A small group of pupils in Year 3 are currently being given additional literacy support to help them improve their reading. Pupils with statements of special educational needs receive the support to which they are entitled.
31. The view of parents, that extra-curricular provision is limited, is supported by inspectors. The provision for extra-curricular activities is unsatisfactory at the moment, but the head teacher and staff have plans to run a number of after-school clubs next term. The school has good links with the church and joins in local village life, such as the Maypole dancing on May Day. There is a limited use of visits and visitors to the school to further enhance curricular opportunities for the pupils. The school liaises well with the its 3 middle schools to ensure a smooth transfer of pupils and pupils enjoy visits to their new schools before transfer.
32. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. Provision for personal, spiritual and social development is satisfactory and provision for cultural development is unsatisfactory. Since the previous inspection, the school's provision for pupils' social and moral development has been maintained, although spiritual and cultural provision has deteriorated.
33. The provision for spiritual development is sound. Assemblies are taken by a variety of teachers during a typical week and there is little overall planning to ensure that there is sufficient spiritual content. For example, in one assembly, a story about Krishna never really developed a spiritual dimension, although conversely in a hymn practice, the words of the hymn being learnt were discussed to make a spiritual point about looking forward to the surprises that each new day can bring us. Opportunities to reflect upon spiritual themes in curriculum subjects are not consistently planned into lessons and as a result are not always developed. For example, the chances to trigger pupils' awe and wonder at the teeming world of small creatures at our feet during a "bug hunt" in the school grounds were not fully taken.
34. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Pupils learn the difference between right and wrong from the earliest age through becoming familiar with the school and class rules. They are encouraged to understand the reasons for having them, and most pupils respond well to them. Responsibility and respect for others is encouraged. Moral development is supported through the values and role models provided by staff and the relationships they promote. A clear message is given to pupils about what is fair and the standard of behaviour that is expected. In the "bug hunt" mentioned above, for instance, great emphasis was placed on the need to look after the creatures captured and that they needed to be returned to their natural environment as soon as possible. In this way these Reception and Year 1 pupils were acquiring a respect for even the lowliest forms of life.
35. The school provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils' social development. Pupils are given some opportunities to take on responsibilities within the school, ranging from carrying attendance registers to the office and helping to tidy classrooms after lessons to keeping place on the right

words on the overhead projector as the school sings a hymn. In the playground, pupils are encouraged to play together. Social development is promoted through school events such as the Christmas party and sports day, although the dearth of school clubs following recent staff changes means this aspect is disappointing. Pupils are given opportunities in lessons to discuss a range of issues together. Circle times, where pupils discuss matters of concern, are held but their use to promote social and moral objectives is underdeveloped. Pupils work well together, in pairs and groups, in lessons. This is true from a young age, with even Reception year pupils encouraged to work together and share resources equitably.

36. The school makes unsatisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. There is not enough advancement of cultural awareness through music or art in the curriculum, for example, by listening to the works of famous composers or studying paintings of worth. There is some work on Christian traditions and beliefs and those of other religions; for example, an assembly was based on a story of Krishna. However, these opportunities are insufficiently planned to provide a rich cultural education. On the positive side, at present Year 3 and 4 pupils are carrying out a worthwhile project on India, giving them a wider view of the world in which they live. Pupils have some awareness of local culture through taking part in local events. The presence of traveller children in the school provides an opportunity to discuss a distinct sub-set of English culture, but this opportunity has not been developed. There has been a very restricted range of visitors to school to extend pupils' understanding of their own and other cultures and there have been few visits out to places of interest in the locality. Overall, pupils' cultural development is insufficiently promoted through learning about either their own cultural heritage or the traditions and lifestyles of people from other countries.

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

37. The school has created a caring and emotionally secure environment for its pupils and provides a satisfactory standard of care for its pupils. The school has appropriate procedures for child protection in place, but has not yet communicated requirements fully to all staff in the school. The new headteacher will be receiving further training and this will help her to address this. The school has the facility to keep appropriate records on pupils where there are particular causes for concern. Appropriate routine health and safety procedures are in place, although no formal risk assessments of the school site have been carried out. No unsafe practice was seen in lessons during the inspection.
38. The lack of a whole school approach to assessment practices was a key issue at the last inspection, and the school has worked hard to establish good procedures for monitoring pupils' academic development in English and mathematics. But assessment in science is only just beginning, and there are no procedures for monitoring pupils' performance in other subjects. So, overall, procedures remain unsatisfactory. There are now effective systems for tracking pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. Data is collected as a result of thorough regular assessments in these subjects, and predictions are made about possible future levels of attainment. Appropriate targets are set and shared with the pupils. The results of national tests are carefully analysed, and weaknesses identified. Work is then tailored to improve those areas. These good procedures are new, and, at present, pupils are not involved in setting their own targets. Portfolios of pupils' work are being developed in English, mathematics and science, but they are not sufficiently annotated to ensure that all teachers are familiar with the criteria for levelling work. Assessment opportunities are not sufficiently identified in teachers' planning to ensure that all learning needs are met.
39. Assessment procedures in the foundation stage are well developed. The nursery nurse keeps detailed records of all the areas of the curriculum, which helps with planning of subsequent learning. These records give a clear picture of each child's academic progress and personal development.
40. Appropriate assessments are made of pupils' special educational needs and information from these is used to prepare individual education plans (EPs) to inform the content of their work. The

progress that pupils make is monitored well by support staff. IEPs are regularly reviewed and the new review process is helping pupils and parents, as well as teachers, to know what needs to be learned next. Most targets in IEPs are clear and specific, but in a few instances they are too general to provide a clear focus for learning.

41. The academic support the school gives its Traveller children is satisfactory overall. Support staff give good help at lunch times to enable pupils to enhance their basic skills. These sessions also give these pupils a chance to talk about their lives and feel valued. Additional academic help is given to enable those with special educational needs to make satisfactory progress, and take an active part in lessons. Unfortunately, when additional help is not forthcoming, teachers cannot give the necessary level of assistance to ensure that these pupils continue to make progress.
42. The school has satisfactory provision for the personal support and guidance of pupils. Teachers are making real efforts to know their pupils well and to treat each as an individual. However the lack of formal monitoring, coupled with the teachers' short length of time in the school, makes it difficult to ensure that all problems are picked up. Teachers are aware of the specific needs of traveller children and provide good support within available resources.
43. Monitoring of pupils' personal development is entirely informal. The comments in the written reports last year, produced by a team of teachers no longer in the school, included some perceptive entries, whilst others were formulaic, highlighting the way that without a system the results depend too much on the individual teacher. All classes have circle times, which provide an opportunity for teachers to pick up pupils' personal problems and there is a sharing assembly, at which pupils' achievements are celebrated, each week.
44. The school now has good procedures to monitor attendance. Until recently there were too many absences for which no reason was recorded, but this problem is now being addressed. The administrative assistant is pro-active in contacting parents when pupils do not attend school and no notification has been received under the "First Response" system. There is insufficient accurate information on the school attendance of traveller children, although the school is doing all it can to maintain its register entries for these pupils.
45. The school's procedures to monitor and promote behaviour are good. The effective and consistent implementation of the school's behaviour policy has been a key factor in improving pupils' behaviour this year. The whole school community is aware of the rewards and sanctions and how they will be applied. Pupils know exactly what is expected of them and what consequences will result from different behaviour. The school has recently adopted a new behaviour policy, which provides some clear guidance. It needs to be more specific as to when particular sanctions, especially exclusion, will be applied. Procedures to deal with bullying or other oppressive behaviour are effective as such behaviour is rare in the school.
46. The school cares well for its pupils from the Traveller community. Staff know the families and situations of the pupils, and work hard to help pupils fit back into their peer group after extended absences, and to catch up with elements of learning they have missed.
47. Overall, the quality of the school's provision for the care of its pupils has been maintained since the last inspection of the school.

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

48. Most parents are pleased with the quality and effectiveness of the education the school provides for their children. They believe that their children like school and behave well. They think the teaching is good. The majority of parents think that the school keeps them well informed and that it works well with parents. A minority of parents believe the school does not set the right amount of homework. A significant number of parents are aware that the school has a very limited extra-curricular provision. Overall parents' views of the school are good.
49. The school provides a satisfactory range of information for parents. Parents throughout the school have regular meetings with teachers and the school arranges a chance for parents to view children's work. There is little information available to parents to inform them of the curriculum being followed to enable them to support their children if they wish to do so. The format of the written reports on pupil progress is satisfactory, but the quality of the entries depends very much on the individual teacher. Last year, most did not provide enough information on how children are actually progressing; they tended to list curriculum coverage. Many parents did not get a clear picture of how their child was performing from these reports and there were insufficient targets for future development. Parents are informed of specific issues and kept in touch with events in the life of the school through useful weekly newsletters. The school prospectus and the Governors' Annual Report to parents are both satisfactory documents. Both are quite factual but do not catch the "flavour" of the school. There is a satisfactory home school agreement in place.
50. Parents support their children's work by helping with homework, particularly by hearing them to read on a regular basis and this has a positive impact on their learning. Most parents do feel that they can contact the school with any problems or suggestions and that they will be listened to. Relatively few parents help in school as most are in full-time employment. The Friends and Parent Teacher Association organises social and fundraising events and provide a useful addition to school funds. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are given an appropriate involvement in the reviews of their progress. The current staff have made good efforts to build relationships with parents of traveller children.
51. The quality of the partnership with parents has been maintained since the last inspection of the school.

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

52. The leadership of the new head teacher is good, which is an improvement on the previous leadership referred to in the last inspection. Currently there are no other key staff in the school as the two full time members of staff are newly qualified teachers and the only other member of staff is part-time. As a result all management responsibilities remain with the head teacher. Since taking over the leadership of the school in January this year she has created a good team spirit within the staff, has gained the confidence of parents after a long period of instability and has clearly targeted important areas for development within the school. Although there are weaknesses in provision in the foundation stage these are being addressed well through the School Improvement Plan (SIP) She is currently managing much of the curriculum, although the newly appointed part-time teacher, who has willingly taken on responsibility for science and ICT, supports her to some extent. She has ensured a whole school commitment to improvement and good relationships. As a result the aims of the school are reflected well in all its work. All staff now have a shared commitment to raising standards and are developing an appropriate understanding of the initiatives required across the curriculum.
53. The leadership and management of SEN provision, by the head teacher, is satisfactory overall. She has ensured good support for traveller pupils, through the effective deployment of the nursery nurse, who also supports in the administration of individual education plans for pupils with SEN. Good use is made of the learning support assistant to give additional literacy support to lower attaining pupils in Year 3 and to give support for literacy and numeracy across the school. The named governor for

SEN is very committed to the work of the school and has recently visited school to monitor the support given to traveller pupils both by the nursery nurse and the Local Education Authority's (LEA) traveller support staff. However, when additional help is not forthcoming, teachers cannot always give the necessary level of assistance to ensure that these pupils continue to make sufficient progress.

54. There are many reasons why the new head teacher is having a positive impact on the work of the school. She has undertaken formal and informal observations of teaching and has engaged all staff in discussions about how to improve teaching and benefit from the expertise of each other. The attached inspector from the LEA and other advisory staff have undertaken formal monitoring of teaching and have reported back to the school. These initiatives have led to improvements in the quality of teaching. The recent work on developing assessment procedures, particularly in English and mathematics, is helping to improve standards in these subjects. Priorities have been clearly identified and support organised in order to ensure they are met. The headteacher and all staff have been pro-active in involving parents in this process.
55. The governing body, which has also undergone major change both to its composition and to its recognised role within the school, is discharging its responsibilities satisfactorily overall. Governors are supportive and are developing a good understanding of their roles and this is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Their role in shaping the direction of the school is satisfactory. They have had to deal with many major issues in the recent past concerning the building extension and constant staff change. They have dealt with these major issues in a professional and successful manner. However, in terms of managing a clear overview of the budget they have been less successful and have allowed a very large underspend to accrue. They have a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have worked well with the new head teacher to improve curricular breadth and allocate sufficient time to each subject. They are starting to monitor the curriculum through their committees and visits to the school, which they are currently putting on a more formal basis. They are working closely with the head teacher on the current SIP implemented after the new head teacher's audit of the school. The plan clearly identifies priorities and sets target times for their completion.
56. The school currently has two newly qualified teachers (NQTs) on its staff, who provide over half the total teaching hours and the only full-time teaching presence in the classrooms. The school has made appropriate arrangements for them to receive support and on-going training. It is impossible for a small school such as this to provide two NQTs with the ideal level of mentoring support – there is only one part time teacher available to do it. Within this limitation, the school has provided satisfactory induction and training for the NQTs.
57. The school's financial planning is unsatisfactory. At the time of the inspection, the governors were in the process of setting a budget for the new financial year. In the past, the school has relied heavily on a bursar to provide financial information and guidance. This arrangement is in the process of being discontinued, but there is a legacy that has combined over-reliance on this individual with a lack of effective communication between him and the governors. This has been compounded by an incomplete understanding by the governors of their responsibilities for the budget. They also do not appear to fully appreciate the significance of the figures with which they are working. These factors have led to a situation where budgeting is not addressing the real financial situation of the school. In fact, they discovered, at the end of this current financial year, that the school has accumulated a massive budget surplus of approximately £40,000, far in excess of the need to retain a prudent reserve. The governors need to ensure as a matter of urgency that they plan effectively how they will use this money to support the school's educational priorities, in particular, those identified in the SIP. This does not mean spending it all at once, but rather planning explicitly how it will best be used to the benefit of pupils. Elements of financial stringency in the past are likely to have been unnecessary and to the detriment of pupils' education. The SIP for 2001-2002 has not been fully costed and hence the link with the budget process is not explicit; putting this in place would help clarify financial priorities. On the plus side, the school has recently achieved a major investment in its new classroom, which involved appropriate planning.

58. Routine financial control and administration are sound. The school is in process of implementing new systems, and despite having been in post only a relatively short length of time, the school's administrative assistant has made good progress in mastering them. The new systems are being set up well to ensure that there is effective day-to-day control and monitoring of expenditure. Although the school's financial systems were audited as far back as March, the resulting written report was not available at the time of the inspection. Based on information fed back verbally at the time of the audit, no major issues are expected to emerge. The lack of other senior staff in the school means that the headteacher is responsible for all aspects of placing orders and authorising payments. Although difficult to achieve in the current circumstances, it would be desirable to provide some separation of responsibilities by involving another individual in parts of the process. The governors need to provide written guidance on the level of delegation allowed to the headteacher in financial matters.
59. The school's use of modern technology is satisfactory. Use of computers is appropriate, but in the office there are two strange omissions; the school does not have either a fax machine or a telephone answering machine, both of which would aid efficiency at a modest cost. Special grants, such as the Standards Fund, Travellers Grant, DfEE Special Grant and National Grid for Learning Grant are used satisfactorily for their designated purposes. The school is aware of best value principles and applies them satisfactorily. Systems for financial administration are unobtrusive and the office staff member keeps the way clear for teaching staff to concentrate on their work.
60. The school has sufficient teachers for the number of pupils on roll, allowing relatively small class sizes. Having two newly qualified teachers on the staff means that there is no opportunity to spread curriculum co-ordination tasks amongst all teachers, and this inevitably has implications for the development of the teaching of some subjects. Support staff make a significant contributions to pupils' learning. In particular, the use of the nursery nurse in reception enables the youngest children to receive targeted work separate from Year 1 pupils.
61. The school accommodation has been significantly improved recently by the addition of an extra classroom. It provides a good learning environment. All classes are now taught in large, bright and airy classrooms, there is a separate library, and there is efficient office space. The displays of pupils' work around the school are limited in scope. The school hall is slightly too small to allow the full physical education curriculum to be delivered effectively. Outside there is a good-sized playground, a field, and a conservation area with a pond that contributes to science lessons, for example, when reception and year 1 pupils went on a "bug hunt" to find small creatures on which to practise their classification skills.
62. The school has sufficient learning resources to deliver the National Curriculum effectively in virtually all subjects. The one exception is physical education, where curriculum delivery is affected by the availability of small apparatus. For example, a year 3 and 4 ball skills lesson suffered because there were insufficient inflated balls for all pairs of pupils to have one. The library has a sound stock of books, although a significant proportion are quite old and do not reflect the needs of the current curriculum in terms of content and balance. Some books are 40 years old, whilst there is a very limited multicultural aspect to the stock. However, the school does augment its own resources by making use of the county library service, with, for example, a set of books on India borrowed to support the work of years 3 and 4 on this topic.

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

In order to raise standards and enable pupils to make further progress, the governing body, head teacher and staff as a whole team need to: -

### **Improve provision for the foundation stage by: -**

- Carrying out improvements identified in the school improvement plan (SIP).
- Ensuring time is provided for structured play activities.
- Ensuring all aspects of areas of learning are covered.
- Ensuring all time is used effectively to develop children's skills and competencies.

Paragraphs: - 2, 19, 20, 63, 64, 65, 67, 69 and 70.

### **Improve standards and provision in ICT at both key stages by: -**

- Ensuring all strands of the ICT curriculum are covered.
- Carrying out improvements as indicated in the SIP.
- Improving teacher expertise in order to challenge pupils more effectively.

Paragraphs: - 9, 81, 85, 96, 97, 98 and 99.

### **Introduce assessment in science, ICT and the foundation subjects by: -**

- Provide consistent procedures so that teachers routinely and accurately record what pupils have learnt.
- Use this information to provide work that is challenging and helps pupils to build on what they already know.

Paragraphs: - 26, 38, 85, 91, 93, 95,99 and 105.

### **Improve financial planning and monitoring by: -**

- Planning effectively how they will use the huge under-spend to support the school's financial priorities.
- Ensuring that the governing body has a clear understanding of the school's budget, fully supported by a clear audit.
- Ensuring there are close links between the budget and the SIP costings to help clarify financial priorities.

Paragraphs: - 55, 57 and 58.

### **Improve standards in art at both key stages by: -**

- Ensuring appropriate subject coverage.
- Improving teacher expertise.
- Planning in greater detail, particularly with reference to the development of skills.

Paragraphs: - 10, 87 and 88.

### **Improve provision for PSHE by: -**

- Developing a whole school policy and structured guidelines in order to plan for the regular inclusion and planned teaching of PSHE.

Paragraphs: - 26 and 43.

### **In addition the school needs to: -**

- Improve provision for cultural development. (Paragraph 37).
- Ensure procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are fully implemented. (paragraph 38).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	23
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	30	61	9	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	71
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	14

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
National comparative data	0.5

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



**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	3	7	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	3	3	3
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	10	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	3	3	3
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	10	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	100
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

**Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.7
Average class size	23

**Education support staff: YR – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	1.2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	40

*FTE means full-time equivalent*

**Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	151246
Total expenditure	143336
Expenditure per pupil	2206
Balance brought forward from previous year	7910
Balance carried forward to next year	7910

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	69
Number of questionnaires returned	39

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	28	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	31	56	10	3	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	54	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	46	18	10	5
The teaching is good.	41	51	3	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	51	10	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	44	8	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	38	41	13	0	8
The school works closely with parents.	51	33	8	0	8
The school is well led and managed.	44	44	0	0	13
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	56	8	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	13	26	38	13	10

## **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**

63. Children generally enter the reception class in the September before their fifth birthday, where they are taught alongside Year 1 pupils. However, there are a few children who attend mornings only from the term after their fourth birthday. This means there is a very wide age range, nursery age children to Year 1 pupils, in the same class. All the children have had pre-school experience in nurseries or playgroups. The attainment of the children on entry varies from year to year because of the small number of pupils involved, but this year it was slightly above average. Although the teacher and nursery nurse plan the work together, the nursery nurse does the majority of the teaching of the reception children. The teacher relies heavily on the detailed records the nursery nurse keeps of the children's progress, as she has insufficient input into their learning, and this is unsatisfactory. The curriculum is not sufficiently adapted to suit the needs of the foundation stage children, and remains unsatisfactory, as it was at the time of the last report. As a result of a lack of structured play activities to develop all the Early Learning Goals, children's achievement is generally unsatisfactory, except in literacy and mathematics where it is satisfactory.

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

64. Children enter the reception class with well-developed personal and social skills, and by the time they leave the reception class they will achieve the Early Learning Goals. However, this area of the curriculum is not rigorously planned for, and there are many missed opportunities, for example during 'snack time' when skills could be further developed. This means that achievement in relation to their prior abilities is unsatisfactory. The children work and play well together, and sit quietly for long periods of time on the carpet. They move between activities sensibly, and clear away efficiently after activities. They develop good levels of concentration, and are interested in their learning. The adults in the class provide good role models, and set high expectations of behaviour. The adults listen well to any problems, and this gives the children confidence to express their feelings. However, the teacher prescribes activities, so there are limited opportunities for the children to make their own choices and begin to take responsibility for their learning, and as a result teaching is unsatisfactory.

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

65. By the time children leave the reception class they will reach the Early Learning Goals in this area, with a good number of children working at the early levels of the National Curriculum. They enter school with above average skills, and are integrated well into the school's literacy strategy, which has been adapted appropriately for this age group. Children join in a shortened carpet-time, and then engage in appropriate activities closely supervised by the nursery nurse. Children enhance their knowledge of initial sounds, and sort objects easily according to whether they start with a J or S. This phonic knowledge helps them with their reading, and the majority of pupils recognise all their sounds and read simple words. They all enjoy books, handle them correctly, and know that print carries meaning. The higher-attaining children read simple texts fluently, and talk knowledgeably about the stories they have read. The majority form their letters confidently, and write their own names. They sequence words correctly to make a sentence, and the higher-attaining children recognise full stops and capital letters. Teaching is overall satisfactory. The nursery nurse has good relationships with the children, and uses every opportunity to engage the children in conversation, but there is often a lack of extra challenge for the most able children when colouring in is the only activity to fill the given time slot. During whole class carpet sessions the needs of the youngest children are not always met, as the teacher concentrates on the older age group, and this results in the reception children losing interest. Overall achievement in this area is satisfactory, but there are few opportunities for children to develop their free writing skills.

### **Mathematical development.**

66. All the children are familiar with numbers to at least ten, and can add and subtract simple numbers. They are beginning to use money to solve simple problems when they 'buy' sweets. Higher-attaining pupils carry out simple calculations mentally, while others use their counting skills to get the right answer. They recognise the difference between short and long, and calculate one less than and one more than a given number. They will achieve the Early Learning Goals with a good number of children working at the early levels of the National Curriculum. Achievement is satisfactory, and by the time they leave the reception class, children all have a good grasp of number. Teaching is satisfactory. Good use is made of the numeracy strategy to develop children's awareness and understanding of number. The work is well planned to meet the needs of the children, and appropriate practical activities are set during group work. However, when the whole class is gathered for the plenary sessions the pace of the lesson slows, and the content is often inappropriate for the reception children. The children then become restless and bored, so limiting learning opportunities.

### **Knowledge and Understanding of the World.**

67. Generally children have a well-developed general knowledge of the world about them, and will achieve the required standard by the end of the reception year. In a science lesson they examine the minibeads they find in the school grounds, and identify common animals such as snails, slugs and spiders. They appreciate that care must be taken of their finds, and that they must be returned to the spot where they were found. Some children know the difference between the past and the present, in particular the different fashions that were worn 'a long time ago'. During the inspection children were not given opportunities to use the computer, although many children have one at home and are familiar with its use. This area of the curriculum is planned according to the subjects of the National Curriculum, which is not appropriate for this age group. Teaching is unsatisfactory. Too many of the activities rely too heavily on the completion of inappropriate work sheets and work is not planned to meet their specific needs. Overall, children's achievement in this area of learning is unsatisfactory.

### **Physical development.**

68. Children in the reception class are well co-ordinated, move with good control of their bodies, and have a well-developed sense of space. Children ride bikes, run and skip, but there are no opportunities in the play area for children to climb and jump. Children handle small tools such as scissors and glue sticks with precision, and generally have sound hand control when writing and drawing. Many opportunities are given for children to handle these tools when they cut work and stick it into their books unaided. The Early Learning Goals will be attained by all children by the end of the reception year but their achievement is unsatisfactory due to unsatisfactory provision for the progressive development of their physical skills.
69. Teaching is unsatisfactory. Children have a weekly physical education lesson in the school hall, which is appropriately planned, but there are missed opportunities to further develop physical skills during outdoor playtimes. These sessions are not sufficiently structured or planned, and any development happens incidentally, rather than as a result of planned activity.

### **Creative development.**

70. Children have opportunities to sing songs and handle percussion instruments correctly. Children explore colour, texture and shape through the use of collage, paint and modelling materials but limited opportunities are given for children to develop their own ideas and use their imagination. For example, little use was made of role-play during the inspection, and the role-play corner was unstimulating, and did not support other areas of learning. No opportunities were given for children to paint freely, mixing their own paint, as colours were given already mixed. By the end of the reception year the majority of children will attain the Early Learning Goals but their overall achievement in this area of learning is unsatisfactory. Teaching is unsatisfactory. There are too few opportunities for children to make their own response to the activities on offer and an overall lack of

stimulus to develop their imagination. Better planning in this area could provide more opportunities for children to develop their creative awareness and improve their level of achievement.

## ENGLISH

71. The results of the national tests in 2000 show pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 to be above average in reading and well above average in writing. However, given the relatively small number of pupils in each year group too much emphasis should not be placed on any one year's performance in National Curriculum tests. Results for the three years 1998 to 2000 show a gradual decline in standards although they remain well above average. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining standards that are in line with national expectations. This is a deterioration since the previous inspection and on previous years' results. There are several reasons for this. The school's population has changed with a much higher number of pupils from the travelling community attending the school. Additionally the pupils currently in Year 2 have experienced eight different teachers in the last two years and began school with average levels of attainment. Overall this has had an adverse effect on standards. In spite of this, pupils are achieving satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. Since January, with the appointment of the new head teacher, there has been a huge focus on improving attainment through a variety of initiatives. A meeting was held for parents to discuss standards and how parents could help to improve them through working with their children at home. Staff assessed samples of pupils' written work and set targets to challenge pupils and raise standards in writing.
72. Pupils in Year 4 have experienced similar turmoil to pupils currently in Year 2 and there is also a slightly higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs in this group. They are working at the expected level and their achievement is satisfactory.
73. Standards in speaking and listening are above expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4. Pupils are given sufficient opportunities to develop their skills through contributions in whole class sessions, in pairs and in small groups. Pupils in Year 1 speak confidently and are keen to contribute their ideas. For example, in a literacy lesson about children trying to fly like sea gulls they were keen to give their ideas for a story ending. For example, 'They get covered in sand and become sand gulls'; 'They fall in the sea'. By Year 2 pupils are confident to use descriptive language such as 'smooth, shining, silvery sand'. Pupils in Year 4 are able to express their points of view on the poems they are reading. They talk about the format of the poem and use technical vocabulary appropriately. The way in which the teachers value what pupils have to say encourages them and gives them confidence to express themselves. However, there is no scheme of work that clearly identifies how pupils will develop their skills as they move through the school, in order to promote greater progress. Opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills through the use of role-play and drama are not used.
74. Standards in reading are broadly at the nationally expected levels by the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4 and pupils are achieving appropriately in spite of the staffing turbulence experienced. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of texts, both fiction and non-fiction, as a result of the implementation of the national literacy strategy. Parents are encouraged to support their children at home and do so regularly. Although guided reading is used in many literacy lessons, the school does not have an effective strategy for ensuring that this is used to develop pupils' skills progressively. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the teaching of phonics in the literacy hour. For example, pupils in Year 1 build up a range of three letter words and in Year 2 find words with the 'ee' or 'ea' sound and are able to discriminate between the two in the words chosen. Most children use these skills effectively when reading. There are wide variations in pupils' reading. Some pupils enjoy reading and are expressive and fluent readers from as early as Year 1 whilst some readers, particularly in Year 3, read with little expression and stumble over many words. This is partly due to the fact that the books are too difficult and also that there are a good number of pupils experiencing difficulty in reading in this year group. These pupils are currently being helped through small group literacy activities and this is leading to improvement. By Year 4 higher attaining pupils are able to discuss the books they have read and the reasons why they enjoy them. They explain why stories are scary - for example, when the author uses vocabulary such as 'hot and muggy' and 'makes his skin feel slimy'. Most pupils know how to use information books effectively to extract information.

Pupils from Year 2 upwards are familiar with terms such as contents, index and glossary and many know how to use them. However, they make limited use of the library or ICT to find information relevant to the topics they are studying.

75. Standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4 meet those expected nationally. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily in relation to their skills on entry to the school. The school has worked hard recently in order to improve pupils' writing skills and the presentation of their work. Assessment is used well in Year 2 to set targets for individual pupils in order to raise standards. However, writing skills are not developed particularly well across the curriculum. There is too much copying and use of work sheets in most subjects. Pupils in Year 1 write simple sentences and, with support, are learning that these need capital letters and full stops. By Year 2 higher attaining pupils write sentences that are correctly punctuated and include descriptive words to add interest. Average and lower attaining pupils write simple sentences with some use of capital letters and full stops. Sentences are generally ordered sequentially. There are a few pupils who are still finding it difficult to construct a sentence correctly. By the end of Year 4, pupils use their ICT skills to word-process poems. Many are able to write interesting poems based on their whole class reading of 'Jetsam', such as "hamsters squeaking, taps leaking, dogs howling, cats meowing". Pupils generally make good use of descriptive vocabulary to enhance their writing. For higher attaining pupils, punctuation to mark sentences is well established and some use is made of punctuation within sentences but this is less consistent. Lower attaining pupils do not always punctuate sentences appropriately, but ideas are developed sequentially. Spelling of common and regular words is good and regular spelling homework helps this. Handwriting is generally clear and well formed and presentation is good. There is an appropriate emphasis placed on the teaching of it through regular whole class practice.
76. The teaching of English ranges between satisfactory and good but is satisfactory overall. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection. Teachers have sound subject knowledge, plan appropriate activities for the different ages within the class, and work is matched to pupils' ability. All teachers manage pupils effectively and consistently, which contributes to their learning and helps them to stay on task. Support staff are well deployed and make an effective contribution to pupils' learning. Good teaching is characterised by effective questioning which helps pupils develop their understanding and gives them opportunities to explain their thinking. For example, 'Why are the birds frightened?' and 'How can you tell what the water is like?' In these lessons, pupils' contributions are valued and this motivates them to contribute their ideas and stimulates them to be imaginative. Occasionally, very good use is made of assessment to ensure pupils' learning is specifically targeted at their needs and this leads to good gains in their learning. Where teaching is satisfactory, there are missed opportunities to challenge pupils, whole class sessions tend to be over-long and activities lack stimulation. Overall, teachers do not make sufficient use of group time to focus on working with a particular group of pupils in order to develop specific skills and competencies. The literacy strategy is well used, but plenary sessions are often brief and not always used to ensure that learning has taken place. Lesson objectives are not shared with the class so that they are clear about what they are expected to learn. Pupils with special educational needs, including pupils from travelling families, are given tasks to match targets on their individual action plans. This ensures good inclusion in the lesson, and pupils achieve well.
77. Opportunities to develop literacy across the curriculum are limited and are mainly used in science at Key Stage 2 where pupils write up their experiments or give a factual account of what they have done.
78. The head teacher is currently the co-ordinator for English and has already made a good contribution to improving assessment procedures to ensure standards are raised. There is now a portfolio of pupils' work to help teachers with their assessments. Through assessment of pupils' writing in Year 2, targets have been set and these are used when planning lessons. However, this is not as yet in use across the school, which would be very effective in helping to raise standards across the school. The co-ordinator is well aware of the need to develop skills in reading systematically and progressively in order to raise standards. The quality of teaching has been monitored, and learning is closely examined through the good assessment procedures that are now in place.

## MATHEMATICS

79. Standards of attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are better than at the time of the last report, and are above average. The present Year 4 pupils are likely to meet national expectations by the age of eleven, as they were at the last inspection. In the Key Stage 1 national tests in 2000, attainment was well above the national average, and well above results in similar schools. Inspection evidence suggests that attainment in the national tests this year will not be so high, but will still be above average. There are more pupils in this present cohort with special educational needs, and generally they entered school with lower attainment levels, so their achievement is good in relation to their prior knowledge. Although attainment varies from year to year, it has remained consistently above national expectations over the past three years, but cohorts are small, and one pupil can have a large impact on the overall figures. Pupils in Year 4 are working at the expected level, but there is a lack of challenge given to the most able pupils to move them to the higher level. This means that, overall, pupils' achievement in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory. The improved coherent approach to assessment and target setting has made teachers more aware of the performance of the pupils and how they can be encouraged to improve. This has helped to improve standards.
80. Pupils in Year 1 calculate one more than, and one less than a given number, are confident when dealing with numbers to twenty, and are beginning to appreciate the meaning of place value. All pupils in Year 2, except those with special educational needs, calculate well with numbers to a hundred. They have a clear understanding of place value, and easily add two digit numbers. The higher-attaining pupils divide by 2, 5, and 10 with remainders, and know the terms 'difference, multiples, odd and even'. They work easily with numbers to a thousand. The majority can estimate the length of a line with reasonable accuracy, and can measure using standard units. Pupils achieve well over the two years, and have a good grasp of numeracy skills by the age of seven. Higher attaining pupils choose appropriate number operations to solve simple problems. By Year 4 pupils add decimals to one place, divide numbers with remainders. Most high and average attaining pupils work comfortably with numbers up to 1000. Most achieve satisfactorily, but high attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged and as a result do not make the progress of which they are capable.
81. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, as it was at the last inspection. Teachers have sound subject knowledge, plan appropriate activities for the different ages within the class, and work is matched to ability within the age ranges. However, there is a lack of additional challenge for the higher-attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 when pupils have finished the set work, and this limits further learning. The numeracy strategy is well used, but plenary sessions are not always used to ensure that learning has taken place. The aims of the lesson are not shared with the class so that they are clear about what they are to learn. Pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate tasks to match targets on their individual action plans. This ensures good inclusion in the lesson, and when these pupils receive sufficient help they achieve as their peers. Unfortunately, additional help is not always available, and on these occasions pupils do not make satisfactory progress. Computers are used well to motivate pupils with special educational needs to enable them to practise their number skills, but there is a lack of use of information technology to support mathematical work by other pupils. Teachers manage the pupils well, and this leads to pupils generally having positive attitudes to their work, helping them to learn, but on occasions unproductive gossip wastes time and restricts the amount of work the pupils cover, particularly by some of the older pupils.
82. The headteacher oversees the subject, along with many other areas of the curriculum. The quality of teaching has been monitored, and learning is closely examined through the good assessment procedures that are in place. Regular assessments are taken for all pupils and good records are kept. Pupils' attainment is tracked and individual targets are set. The national test results are analysed to highlight weaknesses and this information informs lesson planning. There is no portfolio of pupils' work to help teachers with their assessments, but this is being developed. Opportunities to develop numeracy across the curriculum are limited. Homework is regularly set and parents are encouraged to help the pupils at home. This has a very positive impact on the high standards that are achieved.



## SCIENCE

83. In the year 2000 assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment was in the highest 5 per cent nationally, both at the expected level 2 and the higher level 3. Inspection evidence shows that standards for pupils currently in Year 2 are in line with expectations. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection. These pupils have had a turbulent time in terms of the number of teachers they have had since starting their education. This, combined with their lower level of attainment on entry, has adversely affected the standards achieved. Additionally there is limited evidence of science work prior to January 2001 and this also appears to be related to staff changes. Overall, pupils achieve appropriately in relation to their prior attainment.
84. In Year 1, much of the work carried out is practical although there are some examples of simple recording. For example, a diary to show the development of the seed into a plant and work on changing materials. As a result of this approach, it is difficult to monitor individual progress over time or for the teacher to target work at individual need. Pupils in Year 2 carry out experiments such as toasting bread or freezing liquids and record their observations of the changes that occur. They name the different parts of a plant and know that plants need water and sunlight in order to grow. Most draw clear diagrams of the growth of a plant over time. Pupils reinforce their ideas of classification through their work on minibeasts and sort living things into groups using simple features. However, work in pupils' books indicate that recording of work is copied by all pupils. This limits opportunities for pupils to clearly express their own scientific thinking. Current evidence shows that the school is now encouraging pupils to respond individually to experiments. By Year 4 pupils construct electrical circuits of varying complexity and make switches to control the circuits. They investigate habitats using the school grounds as a resource and develop this work through an appropriate focus on food chains. Many are able to carry out an investigation and are learning about the importance of a fair test. For example, they have tested the strength and absorbency of materials. They use tables appropriately to tabulate results
85. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and plan lessons satisfactorily to include all elements of the curriculum thus ensuring pupils receive their entitlement. In the lessons observed during the inspection there was a strong practical element and this ensured the subject was relevant and meaningful to the pupils. Pupils were particularly enthusiastic when looking for mini-beasts in the school grounds and when making their electrical circuits. Teachers explained tasks clearly to pupils and through effective questioning improved pupils' understanding of the topic under discussion. In the Year 3/4 class pupils were given good opportunities to work collaboratively on their tasks. The lesson was well organised enabling pupils to explore and experiment with the creation of their circuits. This effectively led to some complex and interesting circuits, controlled by switches. The main weakness, in this otherwise good lesson, was the limited interactions with the pupils during the group activities to further extend their knowledge and understanding. In all lessons resources are well used to help extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. However there are weaknesses in the teaching, which affect pupil achievement. Very limited use is made of extension activities in order to ensure that the higher attaining pupils are challenged effectively and this is linked to weaknesses in assessment. Marking is not used effectively to help pupils improve and there is little evidence that teachers make use of ICT to support the subject.
86. The co-ordinator for science is newly appointed but is an experienced science co-ordinator. She has already talked to staff about the investigative aspects of science and has shown staff how skills from other subjects can be used effectively in science. The school has recently begun to carry out knowledge based tests at the end of units of work to assess learning, but this has not been used to ensure work is more clearly targeted at pupils' specific learning needs.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

87. Standards have deteriorated since the last inspection when they were described as satisfactory, and now, standards across the school are unsatisfactory. This is because there is no established guidance to help teachers to plan activities to develop artistic skills. The scheme of work is still being trialled, and has not been adapted to meet the needs of the pupils. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, and there were few examples of pupils' work displayed around the school. Examination of teachers' planning shows that artistic skills are not progressively developed, as pupils get older. There is insufficient coverage of the curriculum, and a lack of teacher expertise. Examination of the few examples of pupils' work shows that there are limited opportunities for pupils to experience a wide range of materials and develop the use of colour, pattern and texture. By the age of seven pupils tie-dye fabric linked with their science topic on materials, use weaving techniques with paper and fabric, and draw and colour using pencil crayons, but have insufficient opportunities to use paint, collage and printing. Pupils in years 3 and 4 learn to mix paint to match a given colour, but this is done at an elementary level. There was no evidence to show that pupils examine, and learn from, the work of other artists. There are no opportunities for the oldest pupils to engage in large collaborative work, or to use art to express emotions.
88. No judgement can be made on the quality of teaching or learning, but teachers' planning shows there is some confusion between art and design technology and there is insufficient use of information technology. There are no procedures to assess pupils' work, and a lack of monitoring of the curriculum results in insufficient coverage of the subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

89. No lessons in design and technology were observed during the inspection. Therefore judgements are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with staff, displays and the evidence of past work.
90. As no lessons were observed it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning. The previous inspection report judged standards to be average and the current inspection evidence supports this. Pupils are achieving appropriately. Year 1 pupils make two-dimensional figures with moving arms and legs. By Year 2 pupils make designs for their models which are appropriately labelled. Their models, made from commercial and recyclable materials, closely resemble their designs. Good use is made of a variety of techniques to create moving parts, such as split pins for making arms and legs move and cotton reels for winding mechanisms. Most are developing satisfactory evaluation skills. For example, when evaluating work on Incy Wincy spider models one pupil felt it would have been helpful to make the spider fit first. By Year 4 pupils have had experience of disassembling torches and labelling their component parts. As part of food technology they made sandwiches describing their methodology and listing ingredients. There was no evidence of the use of commercial construction kits or modelling using wooden structures. However, the new staff and the scheme of work have only been in place since September and they have done well to cover the elements of the subject that they have.
91. There is no subject co-ordinator, but the headteacher is maintaining an overview to ensure it is covered appropriately. The school is making satisfactory use of national guidelines to ensure the subject is taught across the school. It has not yet adapted these guidelines to the school's specific needs or carried out any assessments to monitor pupils' progress. As a result pupils do not as yet make the gains in their skills of which they are capable, as teaching is not specifically directed at their needs.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

92. Standards of attainment are satisfactory throughout the school as they were at the time of the last inspection. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection but evidence was obtained from pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils. Pupils' mapping skills are progressively developed through Year 1 and Year 2. In Year 1 pupils are beginning to identify the different countries that make up the United Kingdom, and identify places on a map. They explore different features of a harbour, and are beginning to compare different locations such as Bedford and Struay. By the age of seven pupils use direction, a key, and simple co-ordinates when identifying positions in Barnaby Bear's playground. The achievement of all pupils including those with special educational needs is satisfactory. By the time pupils leave school they have studied different countries of the world such as India and Greece and compared life in these countries with life in Britain today. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 use a variety of secondary resources successfully including books and the Internet to find their information. They know geographical facts such as capital cities.
93. No judgements can be made on the quality of teaching but teachers plan an interesting range of activities to develop geographical skills. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 work co-operatively in groups, and share information well with the rest of the class. Although most pupils use literacy skills such as the use of contents and indexes effectively, the higher-attaining, oldest pupils copy information from books rather than being encouraged to identify the most important facts. The curriculum is planned using a two-year cycle to meet the needs of the mixed-age classes via a newly adopted scheme of work. This is used effectively to help teachers with their planning but it has yet to be sufficiently adapted to the specific needs of the school. Assessment procedures have yet to be developed to enable teachers to monitor the pupils' achievements.

## **HISTORY**

94. Standards of attainment are satisfactory overall, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in relation to their previous attainment. No lessons were observed of year 3 / 4 pupils, but evidence was obtained from scrutiny of pupils' work, examination of teacher planning, and discussion with pupils. By the age of seven, pupils are developing a sense of chronology, and are able to recognise differences when looking at books and pictures, between the past and today. For example, they know that forms of transport have changed, and notice the different styles of fashion. They know about important historical events, such as the Fire of London, and the story of Guy Fawkes. By the time pupils leave school they know about invaders and settlers through their work on the Romans and the Vikings, and know why certain periods of history, such as the Victorians, are so called. They use a variety of resource materials well, including the Internet, to find out information, although opportunities to learn through direct experience of handling artefacts are limited. Pupils with special educational needs do the same tasks as their peers, are fully integrated into lessons, Two lessons were observed during the inspection, and these were both in Key Stage 1. Although overall the quality of teaching in these lessons is satisfactory, there are weaknesses. Historical skills being developed in the lesson are not obvious from the planning. Pupils are given satisfactory opportunities to discuss the differences between seaside holidays today and in the past, but the tasks set are often not appropriate for the age of the pupils. For example, Year 1 pupils were asked to order pictures of swimming costumes from 1900 to the present. Dates were given to help the sorting, but these four figure numbers were beyond some pupils' comprehension, and differences were subtle and not clearly obvious, so learning was limited. When studying the life of Florence Nightingale Year 1 pupils were asked to draw a picture of a hospital ward today, compared with those experienced by Florence Nightingale. Their artistic skills are not sufficiently developed to make this a worthwhile activity. Literacy skills are used well when pupils use a diary format, as Samuel Pepys did, to describe the Fire of London, but other opportunities are missed to develop these skills further, as much of the information pupils record is copied. Similar activities are given for all abilities within an age group with no further challenge for the most able. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning, show interest, concentrate well, and these attitudes ensure that satisfactory learning takes place.

95. A new scheme of work has recently been introduced but this has not been sufficiently adapted to meet the needs of the school, and to ensure that historical skills are progressively developed. There have been no opportunities for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the subject and assessment procedures have yet to be developed to ensure that pupils make the maximum progress possible.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

96. By the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4 standards are below those expected nationally and pupils do not achieve as well as they should. All aspects of the subject are not covered and as a result statutory requirements for the subject are not being met. This is a similar finding to the previous report when standards and coverage of ICT were a key issue. However, none of these staff were in place at the last inspection. ICT is a focus of the current school improvement plan as the school is fully aware of the weaknesses in this area. Key staff are due to have in-depth training in May when a national training initiative is implemented. Staff have already received specialist support in order to help them use National guidelines for the subject effectively and this has helped teachers with teaching the subject
97. By Year 2, pupils are competent in using the mouse and keyboard to access a variety of programs such as Dazzle and Amazing Maths. Some pupils know how to load programs, save their work and print it. In the work seen, pupils reach satisfactory standards in word processing. However, few pupils were seen using the computers during the inspection and discussions with them indicate that their opportunities to use them are limited. This is partly due to the limitations of computers within the classroom and also to their limited accessibility to the computers in the Year 3/4 class. They have few, if any, opportunities to organise and classify information or explore what happens in real and imaginary situations. By the end of Year 4, pupils use CD ROMs for research purposes and are adept at using a variety of text styles and font sizes to create title pages. They move text, and highlight and drag it effectively. They have used a scanner for photographs, calendars and their own drawings. They have accessed web-sites on the Internet for research purposes. These pupils have fairly regular access to computers within the classroom and most have computers at home. As a result many are at or above the expected level in the aspects of the subject that they have covered. However they have had very limited experience of giving instructions in order to program robots or create designs on screen and have not used ICT to solve problems or explore simulations.
98. Only two brief lessons of ICT were observed during the inspection. Therefore it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching. Pupils are taught new programs and skills as a whole class, which means that they are all given instructions on how to use programs and learn basic skills. For example in the Year 1 lesson all pupils were given instruction on how to use the tape recorder. They learnt that machines follow instructions and have to be switched on and off. In the lesson in Year 3 the teacher demonstrated text sizing, colour and moving text using a clip art drawing. The teacher had good subject knowledge, demonstrated the various aspects well and made appropriate use of technical vocabulary. However, as many of the pupils were already familiar with manipulating words and pictures, there was an overall lack of challenge for them in the lesson content. As a result, pupils' interest and gains in knowledge were not significant. Some use is made of ICT across the curriculum, but this is fairly limited overall.
99. The subject co-ordinator is new and is a part-time member of staff. She is already supporting staff well through organising training, discussing areas for development and investigating software needs. She is aware that there is as yet no assessment of what pupils know, understand and can do and this means that work is not clearly targeted at pupils' needs. This will also be addressed as part of developments in the subject. The subject is well placed to improve and develop as a result of staff motivation, the training about to be undertaken and the subject's high priority in the SIP.

## MUSIC

100. Only two lessons were seen in this subject during the inspection therefore it is impossible to make an overall judgement on standards in music. However, in the lessons seen the majority attained at a suitable level for their age and were achieving appropriately. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection. In Year 1, pupils sing songs such as "Pinocchio" and use actions to match the stiff movements of the puppet. They sing appropriately and perform with an awareness of others. Many are familiar with the names of the percussion instruments they use to accompany their singing. For example, they name maracas and cymbals. They are learning how to maintain a steady beat when using them. By Year 4 pupils sing in tune and with expression. They perform rhythmically and use musical instruments effectively to provide sound accompaniment to their singing. They enjoy singing the chant "Bananas Bananas " and enjoy performing it as a two-part round.
101. Teaching is satisfactory. In the lessons seen the teachers made good use of resources and encouraged pupils to use percussion instruments effectively to support their music making. Appropriate emphasis was given to developing pupils' knowledge of beat and rhythm and to playing as part of a group. Planning is satisfactory and skills are developed sequentially. In these lessons the pupils achieved satisfactorily in relation to the lesson objectives.
102. Pupils have opportunities to sing in assemblies and do so with enthusiasm. However, opportunities are missed to use music in assemblies to develop pupils' knowledge of composers and music from around the world. Some pupils benefit from violin lessons and these pupils are developing a good knowledge of musical notation. They follow simple scores and understand rhythm and pitch. They are enthusiastic and keen to improve their performance. All pupils have opportunities to perform for audiences of parents during their Christmas concert.
103. There is currently no co-ordinator for music. However, all staff have recently benefited from the work of a specialist music teacher who taught music to each class, helped staff with their planning and provided them with tapes and music to help with singing. Staff found this extremely helpful and it has increased their confidence and competence in teaching the subject. There are plans to repeat this in order to maintain the momentum given to the subject by this input.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

104. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, and these were both game lessons, so evidence of attainment is limited. Judgements can therefore only be made about the games element of the subject, and here pupils' attainment is satisfactory, both at the end of Key Stage 1, and by the time they leave the school. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 2 learn to throw a variety of different-sized balls over-arm over a distance. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 bounce balls into a hoop with a fair degree of accuracy, and practise their catching skills. In the Year 2 lesson observed there was a good emphasis on the teaching of skills, and the correct positioning of the body to produce the best throw, so enhancing learning. In the other lesson, skills were not so well developed, and activities were not very challenging and as a result some pupils did not make satisfactory gains in their learning. For example there was not enough discussion and demonstration by the teacher to improve accuracy. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
105. Resources for physical education are generally limited with insufficient small apparatus to prevent the sharing of equipment, and balls insufficiently inflated so that bouncing is difficult. Accommodation for the subject is good, with a field and hard playing surfaces, but the hall is small and will be cramped for classes bigger than the current sizes. Teachers plan activities to cover all the elements of the curriculum, and pupils go swimming in the school pool. Currently there are no assessment procedures, and no monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning. There is currently a small after-school football club, which gives further opportunities for those pupils who attend to extend their skills, but at the moment this is the only extra-curricular opportunity open to the pupils. However, there are plans to provide other sporting activities next term.