

INSPECTION REPORT

**GREAT BRADFORDS INFANT AND NURSERY
SCHOOL**

Braintree

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114989

Headteacher: Jacqueline Green

Reporting inspector: Mr Martin Beale
19385

Dates of inspection: 21st to 24th January 2002

Inspection number: 194016

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 7

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Marlborough Road
Braintree
Essex

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Karen Ogan

Date of previous inspection: 28th April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19385	Martin Beale	Registered inspector	Mathematics; information and communication technology; physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9275	Candy Kalms	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school's care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22147	Anne Holland	Team inspector	Geography; history; religious education; under-fives	
23805	Margaret Lygoe	Team inspector	English; music; special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
15236	Morag Thorpe	Team inspector	Science; art; design and technology; equal opportunities	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This above average sized infant school has 235 full-time pupils and a further 104 children who attend part-time in the Nursery. The attainment of children on entry to full-time education is broadly similar to that nationally. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average and no pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Less than 10% of the pupils are identified with special educational needs and one has a statement for complex learning difficulties. The school is popular with parents and as a consequence is oversubscribed.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Strong and effective leadership and management are resulting in all pupils receiving a very good education and in the school providing very good value for money. There is a calm and harmonious atmosphere in the school in which pupils strive hard to do their best. Pupils respond well to the high quality of much of the teaching, making very good progress and achieving standards that are above average by Year 2.

What the school does well

- Pupils make very good progress and achieve above average standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) by Year 2.
- Pupils learn new skills and ideas rapidly because the teaching is very good.
- The high quality of leadership and management has given focus and drive to improve the school and raise standards.
- Children receive a very good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The curriculum is rich and well planned, pupils' progress is rigorously monitored and information gained is used effectively to identify the next steps in their learning.
- Positive attitudes and good behaviour are promoted very successfully by the attention paid to the pupils' personal development.
- The provision and support for pupils with special educational needs is enabling them to make very good progress.
- Art plays a significant part in the life of the school and very high standards are achieved.

What could be improved

- Standards achieved in writing by Year 2.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The strong and effective leadership of the headteacher has been instrumental in the very good progress made by the school since the last inspection in 1997 and places the school in a strong position to secure further improvement. National Curriculum test results have improved and the shortcomings identified have been eliminated. Thorough and rigorous procedures have been successfully introduced to monitor the pupils' attainment and progress. Subject planning has become more consistent and the work of teachers is carefully monitored.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
reading	C	B	A	C
writing	C	B	B	D
mathematics	C	A	B	C

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

National Curriculum test results have improved considerably in recent years, although there was a slight fall in writing and mathematics in 2001. The main reason for the improvement has been that many more pupils now achieve the standard expected by Year 2 and an increased proportion exceed this level; however, because higher-attaining pupils did not do as well in writing in 2001, results were lower than in reading and mathematics. A further factor has been that boys' results have risen at a much faster rate than girls' results, with the consequence that, in contrast to the national picture, boys have become more successful than girls.

Children make very good progress in the Nursery. This is consolidated and developed in Reception so that by entry to Year 1 most children achieve, and in many cases exceed, the standards expected for their age in all areas of their learning. Pupils achieve very well and continue to make very good progress in Years 1 and 2. By the time they leave to go to the junior school, standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. Pupils achieve particularly good standards in reading, but do not make sufficient progress in the development of writing. Standards in art are very high, and because of the good focus placed on the development and application of ICT skills, standards are above average. The school has identified several gifted and talented pupils in Years 1 and 2 and these make very good progress, as do the pupils with special educational needs.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn and to do well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well, and work and play happily together, helping to create a pleasant atmosphere in the school at all times.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils mostly relate very well to each other and to the adults who work with them. They grow in maturity and carry out conscientiously any responsibilities that they are given.
Attendance	Attendance has improved considerably and was very high last year, although it has fallen slightly subsequently. Punctuality to school is very good.

Staff are successful in promoting positive attitudes, good behaviour and an interest in learning amongst the pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good

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

Teaching is very good overall throughout the school and is the main factor in the pupils' learning of new skills and ideas rapidly and making very good progress. English teaching is good. Reading is promoted very well, but there is often insufficient challenge for the pupils in writing. Good attention is given to the development of number skills through very good teaching of mathematics and the support for the fostering of these skills in other subjects. In many lessons, teachers demonstrate a high level of subject expertise and a good understanding of the methods and organisation appropriate for the ages of the pupils. Lessons are carefully planned so that learning moves forward step by step and with pace. Resources are used well to support interesting activities that capture the pupils' interest and imagination, encouraging them to concentrate and work hard. Teachers control their classes well and often use pair and group work very effectively as a means by which pupils can practise skills and consolidate learning. Higher-attaining pupils are challenged and the support provided by classroom assistants is very effective, particularly when working with pupils with special educational needs. A particularly strong feature of teaching is the good use made by teachers of their evaluations of previous lessons when planning the next. The only shortcoming in teaching is that the pace of learning slows at times in a small number of lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is well planned with strong links made between subjects that benefit the pupils' learning. Particularly good arrangements are made for the teaching of reading, art and ICT.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The early identification of pupils with special educational needs and the provision of support, based on high quality individual education plans, ensure that these pupils make very good progress towards the targets set for them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school is successful in meeting its aims and all staff promote very effectively all aspects of the pupils' personal development, making very good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff take considerable care to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all pupils.

The school has established a strong, close and effective partnership with parents through the high quality of the information provided and the innovative way in which home-school diaries are used. The curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is rich, varied and stimulating. It promotes all areas of learning very well. All National Curriculum requirements are met in Years 1 and 2. Procedures for monitoring the attainment and progress of pupils are thorough and the information is used well to plan the next stages in pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by senior staff and subject co-ordinators, has helped to develop a culture in which high standards are the main goal.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are developing their expertise and understanding of the school and are becoming increasingly effective in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Rigorous processes for monitoring the work of staff have improved the quality of teaching and brought greater consistency to the experience of pupils. Very thorough procedures have been adopted for evaluating the effectiveness of the school.
The strategic use of resources	Funding has been used very well to meet the aim of increasing levels of support staff and computer resources.

The headteacher, staff and governors have a clear picture of the strengths of the school, and have made plans for the school's improvement and for raising standards. The school is very well staffed, resources are very good and accommodation is satisfactory. Satisfactory use is made of the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are helped to become mature and responsible. • Teaching is good, expectations are high and their children make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • The school is well led and managed. • Staff are approachable and deal with any problems quickly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just over 20% of parents who returned the questionnaire felt that the school did not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. This view was not shared by the parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting.

The inspection team supports the favourable views expressed by parents about the school, but does not agree with the concerns expressed by some, as the range of activities provided outside lessons is judged to be satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Considerable progress has been made since the last inspection in raising pupil achievement and their standards in National Curriculum tests in Year 2. Test results are higher than at the last inspection because of the thoroughness with which the school has tackled weaknesses in the depth to which pupils were taught and the lack of challenge for more able pupils. A much higher proportion of the pupils now achieves the nationally expected Level 2 in each of the core subjects by Year 2, and a greater number now achieve the higher Level 3. Boys' results have also improved considerably.
2. Attainment in reading has improved significantly in response to the work undertaken by the school to promote high standards. Test results in 2001 were well above average and close to those in similar schools. Standards in writing have not improved at the same rate. Results fell in 2001 from a high point the year before. Although they were above the national average, they were below results in similar schools. Writing results were lower than in the other subjects because more able pupils did not achieve as well as in reading and mathematics. Improving standards in writing has been identified as a priority in the school development plan. Standards in mathematics have been somewhat erratic. They fell in 2001, following a considerable improvement in 2000, and in 2001 were above average and close to results in similar schools.
3. The attainment of children on entry to the Nursery is slightly below average, with weaknesses in the speaking skills and personal development of some children. The curriculum in the Nursery is very well organised and much teaching is of high quality. The next steps in learning for each child are carefully planned and the resources and accommodation used creatively. As a consequence most children make very good progress so that many of the weaknesses in skills and development are eliminated. Further good progress is maintained when children attend full-time in the Reception classes, although one-third only attend full-time for one term. Good use is made of the open plan design of the classrooms to provide a good variety of activities planned carefully to national guidance for children of this age. All staff, teaching and classroom assistants, are deployed well and play a significant part in the development of the children. By the time that they enter Year 1 most children have achieved, or in the case of the present Reception children, are on course to achieve the standards expected nationally. A small proportion exceed, these standards and a small proportion does not achieve them.
4. Improvements in teaching and the organisation of the curriculum in Years 1 and 2 have resulted in further very good progress and enable the pupils to achieve very well in virtually all areas. The improvements in test results are likely to be maintained, if not improved, by the current groups of pupils in Years 1 and 2. This is partly because these groups have benefited longer from the improvements introduced by the school. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are above average overall, with the pattern continuing of relatively few pupils failing to achieve the expected standard and an increasing proportion exceeding it.
5. The school has identified a small group of high-attaining pupils for whom steps are taken to ensure that they are challenged and extended by their teachers. This is generally successful in enabling them to achieve well and make very good progress. The school has also responded rapidly and effectively to changes in the requirements for supporting pupils with special educational needs. The thorough and rigorous identification of their difficulties, supported by appropriate actions to meet them results in these pupils also making very good progress. The contribution of the considerable investment in classroom assistants is particularly effective in supporting pupils with special educational needs and other less able pupils.
6. Standards of numeracy are good in Years 1 and 2. The successful implementation of the daily mathematics lesson has enabled teachers to develop the pupils' number skills systematically and

to give confidence to the pupils, when calculating mentally or when using written methods. The variety of methods used to develop, encourage and sharpen the pupils' mental arithmetic skills is particularly productive. For example, by Year 2 the higher-attaining pupils have begun to develop more than one method for undertaking simple calculations, can check their answers and can explain to others what they are trying to do. Good support for the development and application of the pupils' number skills is provided in other subjects in all classes. Pupils learn to collect, present and interpret data well, often enhancing their work by the use of computers. They are taught how to solve simple mathematical problems, which they also do well, being able to identify the operations to be undertaken and approaching tasks systematically.

7. Standards of literacy are also good overall, but there is a significant difference between the achievement and progress made by pupils in reading and writing. The promotion of reading is very effective from the moment that the children enter the Nursery to the end of Year 2. Basic skills are very well taught and pupils are given plenty of opportunity in which to practise reading. High standards are achieved by Year 2, with many pupils reading at a level of understanding above that expected for their age. The same cannot be said of their writing. The good start in the Nursery and Reception classes is not built on effectively in Years 1 and 2. The activities undertaken do not regularly challenge higher-attaining pupils, insufficient support is provided for the promotion of writing in subjects other than English and the quality of handwriting and the presentation of work are unsatisfactory. As a consequence, many pupils do not achieve as well as they should and do not make the same progress as they do in reading. The staff are aware of these shortcomings and have identified the improvement of writing as a priority in the school's development plan.
8. One area in which considerable improvement has taken place in the last two years is information and communication technology (ICT). The large investment undertaken in resources, accommodation and staffing has been rewarded by standards rising throughout the school. From the Nursery upwards, regular weekly lessons take place in the new computer suite in which ICT skills are taught. Further very effective opportunities are then provided at other times in the suite for pupils to apply and develop the skills learnt to support the work that they are undertaking in other subjects. Other activities are also provided on the computers and other ICT devices available in classrooms. This very good provision, coupled with good teaching and the valuable support of a full-time ICT classroom assistant, is enabling the pupils to become confident in their use of computers, to develop good skills and to achieve standards above those expected by the National Curriculum by Year 2.
9. Art plays an important part in the life of the school. There are many high quality displays of pupils' work in classrooms and around the school. Pupils achieve excellent standards. Pupils also achieve above average standards by Year 2 in geography, history and physical education. Standards in dance are particularly good as a result of the high quality of teaching from a specialist dance teacher. Standards achieved are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Music is the one area where standards have fallen since the last inspection and are close to the national average. This is largely because staff changes have resulted in the loss of musical expertise.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The combination of the very good attitudes and behaviour of pupils and the strong relationships throughout the school produces a calm and harmonious atmosphere in which pupils can learn and gain in confidence.
11. Children settle quickly into the day-to-day routines in the Nursery because of the high expectations of staff. Most children quickly establish good working habits and become happy, confident learners. They play and work well with each other, sharing toys and resources. They show independence when selecting their own activities, enjoying those that have been provided. Children in the Reception classes continue to develop the good working habits they acquired in the Nursery. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 maintain these very good attitudes to their learning. They enjoy school and come wanting to learn. They are well motivated and interested in their lessons. They concentrate well, listen attentively to their teachers and follow instructions carefully. This enabled pupils in a

Year 2 art lesson, for example, to produce effective Batik patterns. Many pupils are keen to participate in their lessons, asking and answering questions and often contributing to discussions, as seen in a Year 1 history lesson.

12. The very good behaviour of pupils is having a positive effect on life in the school and the learning that takes place. Pupils are clear about the standards of behaviour expected. They behave very well in lessons, during assemblies and around the school. They form orderly queues and behave very well when moving about the school, especially Year 2 pupils who frequently move from their outside classrooms to the main building. Teachers and their assistants generally deal effectively with the pupils with identified behavioural difficulties, so that the flow of lessons and the learning of others are not seriously affected. Pupils play well together in the playground. Recently there has been one fixed-term exclusion but the school uses exclusion only when it is essential. Pupils are friendly and polite to one another and to adults, including visitors.
13. Relationships across the school are very good. The high level of mutual respect between adults and pupils ensures that everyone feels valued. This helps pupils to develop confidence. Pupils get on well with each other, supporting the school's aim to include all pupils in all activities. For example, boys and girls work well together in dance lessons. Pupils settle to work quickly and work well independently, in pairs and in small groups. Pupils co-operate and collaborate well together, sharing ideas, equipment and resources sensibly. For example, Year 2 pupils in a mathematics lesson worked well together estimating and counting cubes in small groups. Pupils mostly listen carefully to each other during lessons and show respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. This was illustrated in a Year 2 design and technology lesson when they shared ideas and listened to each other without interruption while designing puppets.
14. Pupils gain an increasing sense of responsibility and confidence as they move through the school. They need little encouragement from staff to clear away quickly and willingly after lessons. Pupils conscientiously carry out their responsibilities as helpers, for example returning registers to the office and organising the reading books. Pupils regularly collect for national and local charities and help the headteacher to distribute food parcels to the elderly in the community at harvest time.
15. The very good levels of attendance have a beneficial effect on the learning of pupils. Attendance has steadily improved over the past three years and was very high compared with the national average last year. Unauthorised absences are low, being below the national average. Most pupils arrive punctually for school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The steps taken to improve the quality of teaching since the last inspection and to produce greater consistency between classes have been successful. Teaching and learning are now very good overall throughout the school. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during this inspection and the proportion of very good and excellent teaching has increased. Planning in year teams to a common format, supported by well-prepared schemes of work and guidance from subject co-ordinators has resulted in pupils in the same year group, but different classes, being taught similar material that builds on well from what they have learnt before.
17. The high quality of teaching reported at the last inspection in the Nursery and Reception classes has been maintained. The young children settle quickly into the routines of the class and learn new ideas rapidly. The next steps in each child's learning are planned carefully and are based on a secure evaluation of what has already been mastered. Sessions are made lively and interesting by teachers who have a high level of expertise and a very good understanding of how young children learn. Resources are interesting and are used imaginatively to capture the children's imagination. As a consequence, the children become absorbed in what they are doing, concentrate well and work very hard. The children are praised and encouraged to give their maximum effort. This was observed to particularly good effect in a Reception class where the children were learning to make repeating patterns from shapes. Skilful questioning from the teacher and support staff prompted

the children to investigate and experiment and to learn from their mistakes. Learning was rapid and benefited from a smooth transition from whole-class to individual activities.

18. English teaching in Years 1 and 2 has benefited considerably from the introduction of the literacy hour. Teachers take every opportunity to develop the pupils' speaking and listening, and reading is promoted very well through additional activities at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. The teaching of writing is less effective and remains an area requiring attention. Mathematics teaching is very good overall and has benefited considerably from the successful implementation of the structure of the daily mathematics lesson. Skills develop rapidly and pupils are gaining confidence and calculating with improving accuracy, particularly in the development of their recall of mental arithmetic facts.
19. The best lessons have many strong features. They are meticulously planned, based on a careful evaluation of the success of pupils in previous lessons. These evaluations are regularly used to adapt subsequent lessons, particularly in English and mathematics. This was seen to particularly good effect in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, where the teacher had adapted the lesson plan to take account of the pupils' slower than expected understanding of even numbers on the previous day. As a result, all pupils could confidently explain why a number was even by the end of the session. Resources are used imaginatively to interest and enthuse the pupils. ICT is being used very effectively to support and promote learning in a wide range of subjects, including during the literacy hour and the daily mathematics lesson. Because of this, maximum use is made of a very valuable resource. The careful planning of each lesson ensures that more able pupils are challenged by the activities undertaken and weaker pupils are given suitable support and adapted materials so that their learning is consolidated and secure. Teaching to whole classes or small groups is based on clear objectives for what is to be learnt and always begins with a careful reference to what has gone before. This helps to focus the pupils on what they are to learn, as in a Year 2 lesson consolidating the pupils' understanding of place value and methods of calculating with whole numbers. Questioning is skilfully used to capture the pupils' attention and to encourage pupils to think carefully about the answers that they give. Teachers communicate their high expectations of work and behaviour to the pupils, who respond by working hard and wanting to be successful. For example, the dynamic introduction to a Year 2 mathematics lesson engaged the pupils immediately. Very good questioning led to a high level of challenge through the use of an investigative approach to developing the pupils' understanding.
20. Many lessons benefit from the high level of subject expertise of the teachers. This is particularly the case in dance where a specialist teacher is employed for one day each week, and in some Year 2 lessons where the staff rotate classes to teach their areas of specialism. An excellent Year 2 dance lesson brought out the best in the pupils because of the varied activities employed, the enthusiasm of the teacher and the excellent structure to the lesson that developed the pupils' skills rapidly. A very good pace to learning was also generated in a Year 2 art lesson where the pupils were being introduced to the technique of 'Batik'. A wide variety of interesting and challenging activities was provided. The teacher adopted a good balance between direct guidance and allowing individual independent experimenting with the technique. This resulted in the pupils taking their work very seriously.
21. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers' planning takes into account individual targets for pupils with individual education plans. Guidance, both from teachers and the learning support staff, is consistently very good. As a result all pupils have full access to the curriculum and their progress matches that of their peers. The school has made a considerable investment in classroom assistants and their training in recent years. This has been particularly valuable and successful. Classroom assistants make a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and learning in all classrooms, particularly for the less able and those with special educational needs. A valuable contribution is also made by the classroom assistant specifically appointed to support learning in ICT. All support staff are involved in lesson planning. They are well briefed so that they are fully aware of the role that they are to undertake. They sit with and support targeted pupils during whole-class teaching sessions, encouraging these pupils to answer questions and helping to clarify their understanding. They also guide the learning of small groups of pupils where they are involved in other activities. As a result, the pupils that they support, including

those with special educational needs, make very good progress and consolidate their learning securely.

22. The only shortcoming noted in otherwise well-taught lessons was that the pace of lessons and pupils' learning slowed at times. This occurred where the teacher spent too long talking to the whole class or where activities being undertaken were not changed or varied. As a consequence, some pupils became restless and distracted from the work that they were undertaking.

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

23. The quality and range of the curriculum is very good, and statutory requirements are met in a way that provides a rich and stimulating experience for pupils. The school has tackled the weaknesses in planning identified in the previous inspection very effectively, and curriculum planning is now very good. Provision for art is excellent, standards are very high and displayed work ensures an exciting and visually stimulating environment. Very strong links between subjects ensure that learning is coherent and relevant.
24. The school's strategy for teaching literacy is satisfactory. Reading is very strongly promoted and standards are high. Pupils develop good reference skills. Spelling and punctuation skills are developed well, but not enough opportunities are given for extended writing. The strategy for teaching numeracy is good and pupils use their number skills well in other subjects.
25. The curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is very rich, and fully meets national guidelines for children of this age. Provision for outdoor activities is excellent. ICT is used particularly well to support teaching and learning. Careful planning ensures that the curriculum is presented in a lively and interesting manner for young children, and all children make good progress.
26. The computer suite is in constant use, and ICT skills are reinforced in the classrooms. Provision is good, and ICT is employed effectively across the curriculum to support and extend learning. The presence of a full-time specialist learning support assistant ensures that pupils have additional guidance during lessons. Provision for design and technology is now very good, and is closely linked with art. Art is a significant strength across the school, and pupils gain a very good understanding of skills and techniques and a developing knowledge of art and artists from many cultures. All Year 2 pupils benefit from having lessons taught by the highly skilled art co-ordinator. Provision for physical education is good, and dance is a particular strength. All classes benefit from lessons with the specialist dance teacher. The school has identified music as an area for development, since staff changes have resulted in fewer staff being fully confident with the subject. A newly acquired commercial scheme of work is giving teachers satisfactory guidance for planning, and recorded music is used successfully to accompany singing.
27. There is very good equality of access and opportunity. Curriculum planning is securely linked with assessment and there is a very good understanding of individual needs. Joint planning between teachers ensures that pupils in the same year group have similar experiences. High-attaining pupils achieve well, and the school has identified some pupils as more able.
28. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. Class teachers and support staff are very aware of individual needs and pupils who need additional support are identified early. The pupils' individual education plans are very well written and progress is closely monitored. Targets are precise and measurable and specifically tailored to each individual. The school has made very good progress in introducing the revised Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs.
29. There is a small number of extra-curricular activities, similar to those usually offered to pupils of this age. The pupils' experience is greatly extended, however, by a wealth of other opportunities. There

is a very good programme of visits and visitors to the school. Links with the local community are good. There are good links with pre-school groups, but curriculum links with the junior school need to be improved to ensure that the pace of pupils' learning is maintained.

30. Provision for the pupils' personal development is very good, building on the good provision found during the previous inspection. Proper attention, appropriate for the age group, is given to aspects of health, sex education and drugs awareness during science lessons and through the good personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme. The provision for promoting the pupils' moral development is very good. The teachers and support staff provide very good role models for pupils, demonstrating respect, calmness and good humour. Consistently high standards are expected, and the staff help the pupils to understand the difference between right and wrong. Good behaviour and attitudes are praised regularly.
31. The pupils' social development is promoted very well. They have many opportunities to help in the classrooms and are beginning to have the chance to express their views about the school during talks with senior staff. There are many opportunities for pupils to work with others during lessons, and there is a good "buddy" system for pupils to help those who find it difficult to play amicably in the playground. Social awareness is also developed through the links with the local retirement home. Harvest gifts are delivered, and pupils sing their harvest songs and visit again to sing Christmas carols. Assemblies meet statutory requirements and offer pupils very good opportunities to pray and to reflect on their own lives. Spiritual development is also promoted very well through art, literature and through the very high quality displays in all areas of the school.
32. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is now very good and this is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The school actively seeks to promote the pupils' understanding of a rich and diverse society. For example, the focus this term on stories from many cultures is skilfully linked with art, music, religious education, geography and dance to enhance the pupils' understanding.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school has maintained a high level of care in a supportive atmosphere that meets the variety of personal and educational needs of pupils in the school. The headteacher and staff know the pupils well and are committed to ensuring their wellbeing. Good arrangements ensure the welfare, health and safety of all pupils. Child protection arrangements are good. The school follows local guidelines and the policy outlines procedures for staff to follow. The headteacher is the designated person and attends regular training. Other members of staff receive regular training and information ensuring that they understand the school's arrangements and procedures. Daily first aid and care for pupils who are unwell is good. Staff are made aware of pupils with specific medical needs. Regular informal checks of the site and premises take place and all equipment is subject to annual safety reviews. Each year the Governing Body inspects the site as part of the budget review.
34. The very good systems for supporting and monitoring pupils' personal development provide a secure foundation from which they can learn. Class teachers, supported by their assistants, know the pupils in their class well. Any issues are discussed with the headteacher, and when necessary individual systems are put in place to monitor pupils causing concern. Termly written assessments carefully record all aspects of an individual pupil's personal development from the time he or she starts in the Nursery. The achievements and good work of pupils are recognised and rewarded in the weekly celebration assembly. The support for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Target-setting is accurate and specific, and the pupils' progress is monitored closely. There are good links with outside agencies. Provision for pupils with statements is very good.
35. High standards of behaviour in the school are promoted through the clear expectations and shared commitment of the headteacher and staff. The code of conduct outlines procedures to follow, and provides staff with a framework of rewards and sanctions. Class teachers have individual discretion on managing behaviour in the classroom and do so very well, frequently using praise. Any concerns that staff have about pupils' behaviour are discussed with the headteacher, and when

necessary, individual programmes are introduced. Bullying is rare and very good procedures deal with any instances that do occur.

36. Monitoring of attendance in the school is good. Registers are checked daily and parents immediately contacted when pupils are absent without notification. Where there are concerns, referrals are made to the educational welfare officer. Parents are reminded about the need for regular attendance and are encouraged not to take their children on holiday during term time. Pupils with poor and irregular patterns of attendance are quickly identified and monitored.
37. It was a key issue at the last inspection to develop manageable and thorough systems to monitor the pupils' progress. This has been successfully tackled. Assessment procedures are now very good. The school now has a very effective framework for supporting and monitoring the pupils' academic progress in all subjects. Teacher planning is clearly linked to National Curriculum attainment levels and places emphasis on what the pupils are expected to learn. This enables the teachers to evaluate general progress and to identify specific strengths and weaknesses. Assessment is used consistently throughout the school to inform planning and target-setting, and is having a positive impact on pupil progress. In addition, the school analyses its data in English and mathematics. Assessment procedures in the Nursery and Reception classes are equally efficient. Monitoring is thorough and pupils are given the opportunity to work collaboratively and independently.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. The school is well regarded by parents, who are supportive of the school. The majority of parents who attended the parents' meeting and completed the questionnaire were generally happy with the school. No major concerns were raised. The parents agreed that teaching is good, were happy with progress and felt that the school expected children to work hard and achieve their best. Most considered behaviour good, felt their children liked school and that the school is well led and managed and staff approachable. The inspection team supports the positive views expressed by parents. The main area of parental concern related to the range of activities provided outside lessons; however, the inspection found that the school offers a reasonable range of such activities.
39. The school has established strong and effective links with parents who are valued as partners in the education of their children. Induction into the Nursery is very well organised and includes home visits, which help to establish a close relationship with parents. The headteacher is keen to involve parents in school life, although few parents work in the classrooms and around the school. The headteacher regularly encourages their support, holding frequent informal open meetings where issues such as bullying and holidays during term time are discussed. Parents are invited to class assemblies and to provide their views on aspects of school life through regular questionnaires. They are also invited to help in lessons and around the school. A supportive parent-friends association arranges many fundraising events that have enabled the school recently to refurbish the Nursery toilets and purchase a new storage shed.
40. Children are encouraged to take reading books home regularly from the Nursery onwards. Some parents are involved in their children's learning at home, sharing books and listening to them read. Other appropriate work such as learning spelling is also set.
41. Information to parents is very good. The school regularly communicates with parents in a variety of ways and this helps them to become involved in their children's learning and to understand the work of the school. Parents whose children have special educational needs are kept fully informed of the support that their children are receiving. Parents receive very good information about school matters, forthcoming events and key dates through the innovative way messages and information are inserted in the home school diary. A detailed prospectus provides useful information on school routines. Good opportunities are provided for parents to understand the curriculum and topic work being taught from the Nursery upwards. In addition to the half-termly planners and curriculum workshops, several leaflets provide parents with information on curriculum areas and how they can

help their children at home. Frequent informal opportunities enable parents to meet teachers. A formal consultation meeting in the spring term offers parents the opportunity formally to discuss their child's progress and parents can discuss annual reports. The quality of information in the written annual reports is satisfactory. They provide information on what has been covered and brief details about what pupils can do. Brief targets for individual development are now included but they do not provide parents with clear information on strengths and weaknesses.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. The contribution of the leadership and management of the headteacher in introducing changes that have led to significant improvements to the school has been considerable. The clear direction and the sense of purpose that she has brought to the work of staff have been crucial in ensuring that the pursuit of higher standards has become central to the work of the school. The headteacher has worked with much success to develop an atmosphere within which staff are encouraged to search for ways in which they can improve the quality of the education that they provide and where the drive to raise standards is shared. This has required firm action to be taken where staff could not meet the challenges set. With the support of senior staff and governors, important changes have been introduced which have been to the considerable benefit of pupils and the standards that they now achieve.
43. One valuable procedure that has had a significant bearing on improvements in teaching is that the work of staff is now carefully, systematically and rigorously monitored. This has enabled strengths to be identified and good practice shared, so that greater consistency has been achieved across classes in the same year groups. Similarly, where shortcomings have been identified, advice and training have been provided which have resulted in improvements. The formal processes by which the performance of teachers is managed have also been instrumental in helping staff to identify where improvements are needed in their work. These processes are wisely being extended to include support staff, who play an increasingly important role in the push for higher standards.
44. Senior staff and subject co-ordinators have seen their role and their impact on the school change considerably since the last inspection. They play a pivotal role in the development of their areas of responsibility. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well managed, and the school has handled very well the transition to the new Code of Practice. Governors are very well informed and monitor provision regularly. Statutory requirements are fully met and the inclusion of all pupils with special educational needs is very good.
45. The Governing Body also has developed its expertise and effectiveness since its establishment as a group separate from the junior school two years ago. Individual governors have participated regularly in training. They have established close links with individual classes whose progress they track through visits and communication, including e-mails. Governors have provided considerable support for the school and the headteacher in securing the changes needed to improve the education provided. They now fulfil their roles and responsibilities satisfactorily. They have become more involved in helping to shape the school's future and more rigorous in evaluating its effectiveness through the committee structure and the regular visits of a small group of governors. The increased use by senior management of test data to evaluate the success of the school has proved a useful tool and provided valuable information for governors.
46. Improvements in monitoring the work of teachers and evaluating the effectiveness of the school have led to the development plan's sharp focus. Shortcomings, such as in pupils' writing, have been identified as priorities for improvement and plans established, underpinned by challenging targets. The action taken to meet earlier weaknesses highlighted by the last inspection have also been tackled vigorously.
47. Financial planning is carefully undertaken and ensures that funding is directed towards the priorities of maintaining high levels of teaching staff, increasing the number and effectiveness of classroom assistants and improving resources for ICT. The school has a good level of experienced teachers.

To compensate a recent increase in class size, the governors have been committed to increasing the support available to teachers in their classrooms. There is now a high number of classroom assistants, who perform a valuable and effective role, including one appointed specifically to support ICT teaching. The classroom assistants have been well trained, and some are undertaking further qualifications. Their professional development needs are met well. The procedures for supporting the professional development of teaching staff, the induction of new staff and the management of their performance are good. The school's administrative and financial management benefits considerably from the employment of a finance manager working alongside two other administrative staff.

48. The accommodation is satisfactory. The main school building benefits from a new computer suite and a library, but all Year 2 pupils are currently housed in temporary buildings, which are nearing the end of their useful life. The accommodation for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is very good, and they have free and easy access to a secure outdoor play area. The quality and quantity of learning resources are very good, particularly for ICT. Teachers use resources well to make their lessons interesting. There is a very good range and quality of well-used books in classrooms and in the library.
49. The progress made by the school in recent years and the rigorous manner in which areas for improvement are identified and tackled have resulted in the elimination of most major shortcomings. The thoroughness with which initiatives are tackled and the quality of the teaching throughout the school place it in a strong position to secure further improvements and to raise standards.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50. To continue the good progress since the last inspection and to raise standards further, the school should:
 - (1) Improve the quality of pupils' writing by (paragraphs 7, 63, 66 and 67)
 - raising expectations from Year 1 onwards
 - providing more opportunities for writing in geography, history and religious education
 - providing tasks which give further scope for pupils to extend their imagination
 - promoting better handwriting and presentation of work.

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

51. In addition to the items above, the governors may wish to consider the inclusion of the following point in their action plan:
 - Strengthen curriculum links with the junior school. (paragraph 29)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	56
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	11	28	16			
Percentage	2	20	50	29			

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	51.5	201
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	25

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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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 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	53	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	51	48	53
	Girls	56	56	56
	Total	107	104	109
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	94 (93)	91 (92)	96 (98)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	49	52	52
	Girls	56	54	53
	Total	105	106	105
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	92 (97)	93 (97)	92 (92)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	-
Black – African heritage	-
Black – other	-
Indian	-
Pakistani	-
Bangladeshi	-
Chinese	-
White	203
Any other minority ethnic group	-

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.5
Average class size	29.4

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	298

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	62
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	680389
Total expenditure	667258
Expenditure per pupil	1834
Balance brought forward from previous year	44599
Balance carried forward to next year	57730

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	304
Number of questionnaires returned	99

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	29	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	40	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	54	1	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	47	11	2	2
The teaching is good.	63	32	0	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	38	12	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	27	3	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	37	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	42	45	9	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	51	42	2	2	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	44	2	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	46	18	3	15

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

52. The school has sustained the quality of provision for children at the Foundation Stage reported at the previous inspection. In some areas considerable improvement has been made. The Nursery is housed in a self-contained unit within the main building. It has easy access to a secure outdoor area. This area is well equipped and is particularly well used. There were two Reception classes at the time of the inspection; these also have easy access to a secure, well-equipped, well-used outdoor area. The whole of the Foundation Stage accommodation is light, spacious and equipped with a wide range of good quality resources.
53. Admission arrangements are sensitive to the needs of young children, and staff work hard to establish a good relationship with parents and to involve them in their children's learning. By the time that they transfer to the Reception classes, at the start of the term in which they reach their fifth birthday, they have made considerable progress in all aspects of their learning. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority of children reach standards expected nationally in all areas of learning and a significant number exceed these standards.
54. Overall, the school makes very good provision for children at the Foundation Stage. They make at least good progress, and in some areas very good progress. Teaching is mostly good, and in the Nursery it is mostly very good. Teachers plan carefully in line with the nationally recommended curriculum, including providing outdoor activities, which are of a very high standard. In all classes, good provision is made for children with particular needs. All teaching staff have high expectations of what children of this age can achieve through an appropriate curriculum. Staff have worked hard to establish secure systems of assessment, which are used to inform the planning of activities. Support staff are well trained. They work together closely with the teachers, and their contribution has a beneficial effect on the progress made by the children. Individual support offered to children with special educational needs is very good. The children are receiving a very good start to their educational life.

Personal and social development

55. Considerable emphasis is placed on the personal and social development of the children in both the Nursery and Reception classes. All children make very good progress in this aspect of their learning, including those with particular needs. By the time that they leave the Reception classes, most children achieve standards above those expected. This represents very good achievement and reflects the sensitivity of teaching staff to the need to develop the children's confidence. The development of independence and confidence is supported by the activities planned for the children. The teaching is at least good and often very good. As a result, children are beginning to take responsibility for their own learning. Children are very aware of routines. They tidy up automatically at the end of lessons, taking care of equipment. They are able to concentrate, work well together in groups, take turns sensibly and learn to listen to others in class sessions. They show tolerance to those who find this more difficult. Staff provide very good role models, and the staff, including support staff, excel in the way in which they talk to, question and involve themselves with children during activities. The children's spiritual and cultural development is fostered through stories, discussions and the general ethos of the classes. Reception class children also benefit by attending assemblies.

Communication, language and literacy

56. All children, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress. Most are likely to achieve the standards expected in all aspects of language and literacy. Teaching is mostly good or very good; only one satisfactory lesson was seen. A few children in the Reception classes are already working at Level 1 of the National Curriculum in some aspects of language and literacy, for example in speaking and listening and in reading. The level of progress reflects the

high quality of teaching they receive. Teachers in all classes recognise the need to develop speaking and listening skills; opportunities are seldom missed to intervene and question children to move learning forward. Elements of the literacy hour are taught in all classes. Phonics are introduced using appropriate texts for the age and interests of the children. The children in the Nursery can identify their name cards and a few can write their own names. Most children are able to attempt the writing of their own name. In the Reception classes, all the children can write their own names legibly. Writing is encouraged throughout the Foundation Stage. Children in the Reception classes are aware of where to start on the page and are increasingly aware of how to form their letters correctly. Children are introduced to books very early. From the Nursery onwards they choose books to take home and share with their parents. More able children in Reception read simple texts with confidence and are already applying their phonic skills to the text. In all classes, children are very happy to share books with adults and to talk about what they have read.

Mathematical development

57. The children, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress as a result of the teaching they receive, which is always at least good. Most children are on target to achieve nationally expected standards by the time that they enter Year 1. From the Nursery onwards, children are encouraged to recognise and use mathematical language. Lessons in Reception are fun. This stimulates and motivates the children. Children can describe the properties of shapes. For example, they know that a triangle has three sides and three corners. In a very good lesson, the practical activities offered during the whole-class session resulted in the progress of many children. They were able to explain what they had learnt, and the group activities provided in the follow-up session reinforced and extended the learning that had taken place. Children are encouraged to record their findings. For example, they know how to construct a bar chart. Children can sort by colour and shape, and most can count to twenty. In all classes, high quality, appropriate resources are available and are well used to support learning. Teachers and support staff intervene effectively to move learning forward.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

58. In the Nursery, the children's knowledge and understanding of the world is being developed through a variety of activities, which draw their attention to the world around them. Teaching is very good and as a result, children are on target to achieve nationally standards expected by the time that they enter Year 1. In some aspects, these standards are exceeded. The children have regular access to water and are encouraged to think about its properties. They take part in cooking, making popcorn. The process of change is discussed with them. They are also made aware of the health and safety aspects involved in this activity. For example, they are made aware of how important it is to wash their hands first. A significant improvement since the last inspection is the excellent way in which the outdoor facilities are used to support the children's learning. They are given opportunities to look for mini-beasts under stones, they learn how to measure rainfall and are encouraged to draw around puddles when the sun comes out and to observe how the puddle shrinks as it dries up. They are introduced to simple mapping activities. In the Reception classes, these earlier experiences are developed further and very good use is also made of the outdoor area to support learning. Children work with magnets and are beginning to understand that some objects will attach themselves to the magnet whilst others will not.
59. Children are encouraged to use the computer. They control the mouse with confidence, know how to change the screen, and to click, drag and drop pictures. All classes, including the Nursery, use the computer suite. In one very good lesson in the computer suite, strong links were established with other areas of the curriculum such as numeracy. As a result, all of the children observed were already exceeding the early learning goals in this aspect of their learning.

Physical development

60. Children make very good progress in their physical development. Teaching is consistently good or better; as a result, most children achieve above the expected standard by the time that they enter

Year 1. The use of the outdoor area attached to the Nursery to develop the physical activities of the children is excellent. Reception classes continue to use this provision very well. There is an excellent range of equipment in the Nursery outdoor area, which the children use confidently. Staff adapt the equipment in both the Nursery and Reception outdoor areas to support the development of gross motor co-ordination skills. For example, activities are readily available which encourage children to go over, through or under apparatus to increase their skills in body control. A physical education lesson for a Nursery class was observed in the hall. The children were very aware of routines and behaved very well. They learnt how to work with a partner as they rolled balls to each other and made progress by managing the ball with one hand. Teachers are very careful to teach the skills required, such as how to cut safely. Support staff make a valuable contribution to this aspect, always explaining the right way to tackle these processes.

Creative development

61. The children are on target to achieve the early learning goals by the time that they enter Year 1. This reflects the quality of teaching that they receive, which is never less than good and often very good. Progress is very good. Activities provided for the children when they enter the Nursery ensure that they receive a wide range of experiences, which support the development of their creative skills. They handle paintbrushes and paints with confidence. Displays reflect the activities in which they have been involved. Role-play areas are provided indoors and out. These are changed very regularly in both the Nursery and Reception classes to reflect various aspects of life, such as the ticket office of a railway station.
62. Creative activities are extended in Reception. Lessons are very well resourced with equipment of a high standard; these resources inspire use and support learning. There are some very good examples of collage, clay models and general displays throughout the area. Support staff are deployed well and give excellent support. In the Nursery and Reception classes, all of the activities on offer sustain the interest of the children. Design and technology is introduced through food technology. Children can explain what they are doing and why they need to use particular resources. No music was observed during the inspection; however, Reception classes attend assemblies and join in the singing with enthusiasm.

ENGLISH

63. Standards in English are good overall and have improved since the previous inspection, when attainment was found to be average. When pupils start in Year 1, standards in language and literacy are similar to those found nationally at this age. Progress overall is good and pupils achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs make very good gains in their learning, as a result of focused support and carefully planned work. National Curriculum test results have risen, and standards in reading are well above average. This is the result of very good teaching. Test results in writing are above average. Inspection evidence shows, however, that pupils do not make as much progress in writing during Years 1 and 2 as they could. Teachers' expectations are often not high enough, and pupils do not have enough opportunity for extended writing. Spelling and punctuation skills are thoroughly taught and standards are good, but standards in handwriting and presentation are weaker. The school has already identified writing as a focus for improvement. Boys consistently perform better in writing than girls, in contrast to the national trend. Neither the school nor the inspection evidence could suggest a reason for this.
64. The pupils make good progress in speaking and listening, and by Year 2 they reach above average standards. Listening skills are good. Teachers are skilful at holding pupils' attention, and the content of lessons is pitched accurately at the age and interest level of the class. For example, pupils in a Year 1 class were totally absorbed by a story about a tiger. They ignored noise from other classes because their attention was gripped by the teacher's excellent presentation. By Year 2 most pupils speak confidently and clearly, and the higher attainers express their ideas with assurance. Teachers generally target questions carefully to ensure that all pupils are involved in answering. Occasionally a few pupils dominate the lesson, but in most sessions teachers ensure that the pupils are reminded to listen to others, rather than calling out the answers.

65. Reading is promoted very effectively throughout the school, and pupils clearly enjoy books. Progress in reading is very good, and pupils achieve very well. Reading skills are taught thoroughly, and the strong focus on letter sounds and word building enables pupils of all abilities to tackle unfamiliar words confidently. By Year 2 most pupils read simple texts competently and with expression. Higher attainers read fluently and with very good understanding. The lower-attaining pupils cope well with reading aloud, but are less confident in talking about their reading. Teachers use the structured reading schemes very effectively alongside many other books, so that the pupils encounter a wide range of good quality books. Year 2 pupils can distinguish between fiction and non-fiction books. Reference skills are taught thoroughly, and average and higher attainers gain a good grasp of alphabetical order. Most pupils use the contents and index pages confidently and can find information quickly in simple reference books. The most able readers can scan the text quickly, searching for key words. The excellent home-school books provide valuable links with parents. Pupils take a variety of books home, and many, but not all, read regularly to parents or carers.
66. Standards in writing in Year 2 are currently average overall, although punctuation and spelling skills are good. The school plans a significant focus on writing during this term. Some aspects of writing are taught well, but teachers do not have high enough expectations about presentation nor of the amount they expect pupils to write. Year 1 pupils write sentences independently and begin to use full stops and capital letters, but many average and higher attainers are not challenged sufficiently to extend their work by writing a series of sentences. Year 2 pupils write short stories, often based on texts used during the literacy hour. While these texts are of good quality, and promote pupils' reading skills very effectively, they do not always offer pupils enough opportunity to develop their own ideas imaginatively. Although a few pupils use a good range of vocabulary, a scrutiny of pupils' writing shows that many use a relatively restricted range of words. There is scope for an increasing focus on developing pupils' imaginative use of written language. In some lessons teachers do challenge pupils to use descriptive vocabulary. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson, where the teacher was very effective in encouraging the pupils to think creatively and to develop more interesting sentences. There are not enough opportunities to write at length in other subjects such as history, geography and religious education.
67. Standards of handwriting are not as good as they should be. Handwriting is taught in all classes, but these lessons do not have enough impact on improving writing. Although most pupils position letters correctly on the lines, writing is often uneven in size, and this passes uncorrected even in handwriting books. Spelling skills, however, are taught thoroughly, and pupils gain a good understanding of spelling patterns. In a good lesson in Year 2, the teacher used a variety of interesting resources to interest and motivate the class. The pupils worked hard to find and use words containing "er, ir and ur". They were very eager to share their findings at the end of the lesson and many were disappointed when the session ended.
68. Pupils respond well to the consistently high expectations of behaviour in all classes. Little time is wasted during lessons, and pupils settle down quickly to start activities. Learning support staff make a significant contribution to the pupils' progress; they are well trained and have full access to lesson planning so that their support is focused and effective. The pace of lessons is generally good and pupils remain motivated and interested. Planning is good and lessons are generally well structured with a good balance between direct whole-class teaching and individual or group activities. Occasionally too little time is spent on whole-class teaching and general teaching points are not given enough emphasis. Teachers use ICT well to reinforce learning, and the pupils' learning is constantly made relevant and coherent by skilful links with other subject areas, for example history, geography and art. Tasks are usually varied appropriately to the different needs of pupils. Teachers have a good knowledge of individual progress, and refer frequently to pupils' individual targets. Pupils are aware of the targets and know what they need to do to improve their work.
69. Subject management is good. Careful analysis of results and the monitoring of planning, teaching and learning have resulted in the identification of writing and presentation as weaker aspects of the subject. The school has begun to focus on improving these. There has been very good progress

since the previous inspection in developing subject planning, assessment and target-setting.

MATHEMATICS

70. National Curriculum test results, and particularly the results achieved by boys, have improved since the last inspection, and were above average in 2001. Pupils in Year 2 are currently working to a similar standard. This represents very good progress from their attainment on entry to Year 1. Few pupils are working below Level 2, the standard expected for Year 2 pupils, and a good proportion are working at the higher Level 3. Pupils achieve very well and make good progress because much teaching is of a high quality, the curriculum is well organised and most work hard and are keen to do well. More able pupils are challenged by the work provided and weaker pupils are given very good support from classroom assistants.
71. Teaching is very good overall. The features of the daily mathematics lesson have been successfully implemented with very good examples of each aspect of the recommended structure observed. There is also effective support for the development of numeracy in other subjects. As a consequence, number skills develop well. Suitable attention is paid to the understanding and use of the properties of shapes, and pupils learn to handle and present data well, often using their ICT skills to enhance their work. Pupils in a Year 2 class also used the computer suite to consolidate their understanding of place value and number patterns. Basic number skills are well taught and teachers develop the pupils' problem-solving and investigative skills through the activities that they employ, enabling the pupils to learn to become more systematic in their work and to search for patterns.
72. Mental arithmetic sessions at the start of each lesson are varied and interesting. Pupils enjoy the activities and sharpen their skills well. In the best lessons, teachers ensure that the more able are extended and weaker pupils gain confidence by adapting the materials and their questioning. Classroom assistants participate fully in these sessions supporting individual pupils. The mental arithmetic session in a well taught Year 1 lesson was organised effectively with pupils working in pairs to practise adding on in twos, while in a Year 2 class the pupils again worked in pairs to learn number bonds to 20. By Year 2, higher-attaining pupils begin to learn their times tables and develop several methods to support addition and subtraction.
73. Main class teaching has clear objectives for what pupils are to learn, which are often adapted by teachers following an evaluation of the success of previous lessons. New ideas and skills are developed through a step-by-step approach. Direct teaching is often brisk and involves pupils well by the good use of the teachers' questioning skills. For example, the teacher in a very good Year 2 lesson made interesting the development of strategies to identify when a calculation was incorrect. The pupils listened carefully and were keen to offer answers and suggestions to the questions that were presented.
74. Activities provided for the pupils to practise new skills and consolidate their learning are well prepared and capture the pupils' interest. They are usually prepared at different levels of difficulty so that a good challenge is provided for more able pupils and good support given to weaker pupils by well-deployed classroom assistants. For example, when trying to identify even numbers, a group of more able Year 1 pupils were asked to investigate what happened when two even numbers were added together. The weakest in the class were encouraged and supported so that by the end of the lesson they all understood how to identify even numbers beyond 10. The investigative approach for identifying lines of symmetry adopted in a Year 2 lesson was also supported by an additional challenge for pupils. All could identify a variety of triangles and quadrilaterals and the more able could find lines of symmetry on complex shapes.
75. Review sessions at the end of each lesson are effective in summarising and reviewing what has been learnt and enabling pupils to demonstrate what they know and can do. For example, in a Year 1 class ending a lesson on even numbers, a 100-square was used very effectively to consolidate the pupils' understanding of place value as well as to identify patterns of odd and even numbers.

76. The subject is well led and managed. The thorough, regular and systematic monitoring of the work of teachers has been instrumental in securing the good progress made since the last inspection. The mathematics curriculum is now well planned and the assessment of pupils' progress is very good. There are no significant shortcomings to be tackled and the subject is well placed to raise standards further.

SCIENCE

77. The teacher assessments of Year 2 pupils in 2001 were close to the national average. Standards have now improved and the majority of Year 2 pupils are well placed to achieve higher standards than those expected nationally, with particular strengths in investigations and knowledge and understanding of materials and forces. For example, pupils in Year 2 understand how electrical circuits work. They connect circuits including a switch, and also know why some electrical circuits will not work. They understand a wide range of forces such as gravity, pushes and pulls, electricity and water. They understand fair-testing, plan investigations, observe what happens and record the results. For example, they explained how they tested the effects of the height of a ramp on the distance that a car travelled.
78. The analysis of pupils' work shows that they make consistently good progress throughout Years 1 and 2 and successfully build on the knowledge gained in the Nursery and Reception classes. Teachers encourage pupils to investigate and record their results. As a result, pupils make good progress throughout the school and benefit from a strong and consistent emphasis on investigations, with many opportunities for them to discuss what might happen and give their reasons. Pupils confidently test, observe and share their findings with other pupils within the groups. This is shown in their understanding of the forces that are involved when toys move, and the effects of heating and cooling water. Pupils progress from identifying a range of materials and sorting them according to their properties and uses in Year 1, to identifying naturally occurring materials within manufactured materials. They also identify those that are magnetic and non-magnetic.
79. The pupils' learning throughout the school is good and this is directly related to the quality of teaching. It is equally good for pupils of all abilities, including more able pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils enjoy science. They listen carefully, work independently and use graphs and charts where appropriate. As a result of these positive attitudes, they achieve high standards and make good progress. Teaching is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan very well and are able to encourage pupils to investigate and use a wide range of resources. In the best lessons, teachers encourage pupils to work at a brisk pace, observe, question and challenge. Teachers take care to ensure that pupils understand scientific concepts. Practical sessions are well organised, focusing on the planning of experiments and considering what might happen before pupils experiment and find the results. These aspects contribute to the pupils' improved learning, especially when carrying out investigations. Teachers assess pupils' levels of understanding by rigorous questions and use their answers and written work to good effect when planning the next lesson.
80. The pupils' learning benefits from a very good curriculum. The school has successfully adapted national guidance to support teachers' planning. The half-termly and weekly lesson plans ensure that all teachers in each parallel age group are teaching the same aspects of science. This ensures the equality of opportunity for all pupils and continuity throughout the school. Personal and social issues, such as the importance of a healthy diet and plenty of exercise and caring for the environment, are developed well throughout the school. There is also a gardening club, and good use is made of the school environment, including the pond. Visits and the use of the local area further enrich pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding. Pupils benefit from many opportunities to use literacy, numeracy and ICT to support their learning in science lessons. As a result of very good curricular planning, pupils have very positive attitudes to science and to the environment, and make good progress.
81. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. Standards have risen. The pupils' attainment is assessed carefully and the information used to plan the next stages of learning.

Science is well led and organised. Staff and governors have a very good understanding of the school's standards. They ensure that teachers and pupils use resources well and have recently appointed a new co-ordinator to lead the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

82. Standards throughout the school are very high with excellent standards in ceramics, pictorial composition and pupils' knowledge and understanding of a wide range of artists. These standards are reflected in the ways in which pupils work with sensitivity, care and confidence when using a wide range of techniques, materials and styles which are very mature compared to the standards expected for Year 2 pupils. Pupils handle materials very skilfully, and their planning and sketchbooks show very creative skills as they develop their own designs from a wide range of ideas.
83. During the inspection, these very high standards were reflected in observational drawing, using pencil and focusing on shape and texture, symmetrical patterns, illustrations and working in the style of many artists, for example Archimboldo and Paul Klee. The work seen during lessons, in pupils' sketchbooks and in displays shows very high standards and reflects enthusiasm for art and very good artistic interpretation. Excellent examples of this are to be found in the Year 2 pupils' studies of Paul Klee where they have experimented in their sketchbooks with many aspects of his patterns. They know about his life in Switzerland and his ambitions to be a musician and how these ambitions are reflected in his art.
84. There are many aspects in school which contribute to the very high standards and very good progress made by pupils, including the more able and those with special educational needs. These include the excellent leadership and management of the co-ordinator, which is very supportive of all teachers and therefore gives them confidence resulting in very good teaching. The curriculum is very rich and as a result, pupils have the confidence to develop their artistic skills and use them in other subjects. Pupils have very positive attitudes to art and excellent levels of concentration and commitment. They listen carefully, absorb a wealth of information and are very creative and confident artists.
85. The school is committed to producing artists and young people who appreciate art. Pupils achieve very high standards because of these attitudes. The quality of teaching is very good, especially the teaching of artistic skills, supported by clear explanations and high expectations. Teachers use a very wide range of resources and encourage pupils to experiment with new techniques. The very good use of pupils' sketchbooks in Year 2 shows that they experiment with a wide range of ideas. Excellent teaching of the importance of the background, foreground and the area between has resulted in very good pictorial work, especially pupils' composition of seaside scenes where they use good proportions and as a result, there is a good feel for perspective.
86. Art permeates the school's curriculum and results in pupils' very high levels of artistic skills and knowledge and understanding in art, and their ability to extend this to other subjects. A recent whole-school focus on the picture 'The Graham Family' by William Hogarth resulted in excellent illustrations by Year 2 pupils and a wide range of activities for pupils in the Foundation Stage and in Year 1. This initiative develops pupils' skills in literacy, design and technology, history and, in particular, the social aspects of life at that time. This type of work is one of the benefits of the school's links with the National Gallery.
87. Excellent leadership and management promote art throughout the school and the community, and are successful in giving art and design a very high profile. The work of each class is rigorously monitored, and the assessment of pupils' skills has resulted in new curricular planning. The headteacher, staff and governors have rightly identified art and design as one of the strengths of the school. Standards were high at the previous inspection. Now they are very high with some excellent features and, as a result of the very good teaching, very positive attitudes and excellent leadership and management, very good progress has been made since the previous inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

88. Standards are good with particular strengths in the designing, making and evaluation of work and in the pupils' abilities to examine objects to find out how they are made. By Year 2, pupils make good progress in designing, making and evaluating. For example, during the inspection they examined puppets in detail to find out the materials used and how they were joined. As a result of this, they knew the wide range of materials it is possible to use and the many ways in which puppets can be operated.
89. While planning their work, they think about the effects that they want to achieve. During the inspection, pupils were very inventive in the range of the materials which they suggested for making puppets, the types of puppets and the puppet shows that they could present. Projects become increasingly demanding as pupils get older and nearly always involve sketching, drafting, designing with labels, making and evaluating. Pupils achieve very well in the use of a wide range of materials with very a high quality of finish. A good example of this was the Mexican Gods' Eyes, which involved very high levels of skills in sewing, wrapping and colour combinations. Pupils build on the skills learned in the Foundation Stage very well.
90. The very good teaching in design and technology, which is reflected in pupils' work, also contributes to high standards and very good progress. The best teaching is lively, stimulating and enthusiastic. As a result, the pupils greatly enjoy this subject and their very positive attitudes contribute to very good learning. They bring high levels of enthusiasm and anticipation to the lessons, listening carefully, showing good knowledge of previous work and setting about their new tasks with enthusiasm and concentration, often working in pairs or groups to good effect. As a consequence of very good teaching, pupils work with interest, imagination and care and achieve high standards. Teachers plan very thoroughly and set challenging but achievable tasks. In most cases, they ensure that all pupils understand well and that they concentrate throughout the lessons. The work rate in most lessons and also the standards, quality and variety seen during the inspection were good.
91. The curriculum offered is very interesting and challenging. It is broad and well balanced, providing pupils with a very wide and enriching range of activities. The curriculum is very well planned and ensures that by Year 2 pupils are working with a higher degree of accuracy in realising their designs. They think ahead about the materials they will use and the sequence of their work. They are given many opportunities to choose the most suitable equipment rather than use what is provided. As a result, standards are high and pupils are very inventive.
92. The very high level of ongoing assessment results in the amending of the curriculum when necessary. As a result of this planning, pupils make very good progress, not only in design and technology lessons but also in applying their knowledge to other subjects. The leadership and management of design and technology are very good. The co-ordinator has continued to revise the scheme of work, which now includes good guidance for assessment. Considering that standards were in line with those expected for Year 2 pupils, and that progress was satisfactory during the previous inspection, it has been a considerable achievement to improve further standards, progress and the quality of teaching.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

93. Three history lessons were observed during the inspection. No geography lessons were seen. In the last inspection, standards were found to be in line with national expectations in the subjects. It was, however, noted that the subjects were not taught in sufficient depth. In addition, there was no consistent tracking of pupils' progress and attainment over time. The school has taken steps to tackle these shortcomings in both subjects. Evidence gathered during the inspection such as the three lesson observations, scrutiny of curriculum plans, discussion with the subject manager and an analysis of work, indicates that standards are now above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. This is good improvement since the last inspection.

94. In geography, pupils in Year 2 show an awareness of their local area and places beyond their locality. They are able to identify similarities and differences and have some awareness of the physical and human features of places. They are becoming familiar with geographical vocabulary. Their awareness of weather and the effect of climate on how people live, and the growth of plants, is developing. They are also aware of the differences between coastal and inland sites. Pupils have been introduced to simple mapping; they can explain the route the map represents.
95. In history, pupils are learning to compare people's lives in the past with those of the present. For example, pupils in Year 2 studied seaside holidays past and present, whilst pupils in Year 1 are examining artefacts from Victorian times. They are aware of great events in the past; for example, they know that the Monument in the City of London marks the spot where the Great Fire of London started.
96. Teaching is good overall. The good lessons were characterised by skilful use of questioning by teachers to move learning forward. All three lessons were planned with suitable activities to motivate the pupils. Learning objectives were specific and shared with the pupils. Work seen and the lessons observed, indicate that whilst there are good links established with some subjects, for example, science, opportunities are missed to develop writing more extensively in both subjects.
97. Good use is made of the local environment and community to support learning. The school held a geography day at the beginning of the autumn term. This was a successful event and an examination of a photographic record of the day reveals that many aspects of the geography curriculum were covered. In addition, there were strong cross-curricular links. Staff and children acted out a Hindu wedding. Pupils also undertake visits to enhance their understanding of geographical features. During the inspection, a good lesson on Victorian artefacts was led by a member of the local museum staff to support the current history topic. The value of these visits are reflected in the pupils' knowledge of the objects they saw and their understanding of their use.
98. The co-ordinator manages both subjects. Teachers' planning is linked to the school's own schemes of work, which are supported by a national scheme in both subjects. Assessment processes are now in place and being used effectively to inform future planning. Good improvement has occurred because subject management is effective and planning ensures progression in the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

99. Substantial improvements have taken place since the last inspection in the arrangements for teaching ICT, the level of resources, the expertise of staff and the standards achieved by all pupils. The considerable investment in resources, staff and training has been a significant factor in ensuring that ICT has a high profile in the school. The provision of resources is very good. The computer suite, which has been in operation for almost two years, is a valuable resource. It is used very effectively to teach basic skills and to provide opportunities for pupils to apply and develop these skills in other subjects. All classes, from the Nursery upwards, not only have a lesson each week for the teaching of skills but also have further planned opportunities to use the suite in subjects such as English, mathematics and science. As a consequence, the suite is in use virtually continuously. The pupils achieve well and make good progress and as a result standards are above those expected by the National Curriculum.
100. Classroom displays and pupils' work show that the good skills developed by children in the Nursery are extended well as pupils move through the school because they are regularly used and systematically developed. The use of art software, for example, shows a high level of skill by Year 2, with many of the more advanced features used effectively. Similar developments take place in the pupils' word-processing skills, resulting in some quite stylish finished documents by Year 2 pupils, linking text and pictures. Year 2 pupils can also change the style, size and layout of their text.
101. The school has invested considerably in staffing specifically aimed at supporting learning in ICT. A

classroom assistant with considerable ICT skills has been engaged to work exclusively in the computer room. Her input is very effective whether supporting teachers or working with individual pupils. Teaching is good, whether it is by the normal class teacher, the newly appointed ICT co-ordinator or led by the ICT classroom assistant. Pupils are taught basic skills well and given considerable time in which to practise and refine their skills. The activities chosen by teachers are interesting and capture the pupils' imagination and attention. As a consequence most pupils are very keen to use computers and work hard at the activities that they undertake. They learn new skills rapidly because of the opportunities provided to apply them to work in other subjects, and become confident users of all ICT equipment. The good level of resourcing includes computers in all classrooms. These are often used, but in many cases teachers have not built opportunities for their regular use into their planning, a weakness that the new ICT co-ordinator intends to tackle.

102. Very good use is made of the computer suite to support the pupils' learning in other subjects. These sessions are often led by the ICT classroom assistant. Year 1 pupils, for example, applied the skill of dragging text across the screen to group words by the letter blends they were considering in their literacy lesson. This skill was also used by pupils in another Year 1 class to reorganise jumbled words into the correct order to make sensible sentences. Year 2 pupils used a web-site to find information about materials in a science lesson. Another Year 2 class used a web-site containing mathematical puzzles very effectively to support their understanding of place value and estimating.
103. Subject co-ordination has gone through several changes in the last year, but progress has been maintained. ICT is to be the subject of greater attention next year, when monitoring the work of teachers and evaluating standards will increase. The ICT curriculum is well organised, and processes for evaluating the progress of pupils are developing and have rightly been identified as an area for further development.

MUSIC

104. Standards in music by Year 2 are in line with those expected at this age. This differs from the good standards found during the previous inspection when standards were found to be above average. Since then staff changes have resulted in a loss of some musical expertise. The school has tackled this by introducing a commercial scheme of work to ensure that teachers have detailed guidance for planning. This scheme covers the full National Curriculum requirements and includes recorded music to be used during lessons.
105. Pupils generally enjoy singing and sing well in unison. During assemblies they sing tunefully, with good control of pitch and dynamics. Most Year 2 pupils learn songs quickly and sing confidently as a class, or in smaller groups. In the one Year 2 lesson seen, most pupils sang a Chanukah song well, with good attention to a change in tempo. The pupils become familiar with a range of percussion instruments. Most pupils hold and play them correctly and maintain a steady pulse as they accompany songs. Some lower-attaining pupils need help in using instruments and do not readily join in the singing.
106. Teaching in the lessons observed was good overall. In the better lessons the pace was brisk, and activities were varied well so that the pupils remained interested and involved. Links with other subjects are strongly developed and this makes learning a coherent experience for the pupils; for example, Year 2 pupils learned the Hora dance as they sang their Chanukah song and the teacher emphasised the links with work in religious education. Good organisation and control ensured that pupils in a Year 1 class concentrated on the tasks set. The teacher quickly and skilfully organised pupils into pairs so that all worked sensibly with a partner and potentially foolish behaviour did not develop. A good balance of practice, demonstration and performance, with teaching points interspersed throughout, ensured that pupils made good progress. There is very good support for pupils with special educational needs and consequently these pupils were fully included in all lessons. In a lesson which was satisfactory overall, the teacher did not ensure that pupils understood what they were to be learning, and not enough time was spent either on improving performances or drawing out teaching points when pupils demonstrated.

107. There is no co-ordinator for the subject at present; however, the school has moved quickly to ensure that staff have suitable support in teaching the full curriculum. Training is planned for later this term. Resources are good, and the school is well placed to move standards in the subject forward. Despite these advances, there has only been satisfactory overall progress since the previous inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

108. The above average standards in physical education reported at the last inspection have been maintained. In the case of dance, they are now enhanced by the very good teaching of a specialist. Pupils build well on the opportunities provided in the Nursery and Reception classes to develop physical awareness and the use of space. All classes in Years 1 and 2 have two sessions of physical education each week, enabling them to be taught a balanced programme that includes all aspects of the National Curriculum, with a particular emphasis on dance. Teaching is very good overall, with much that is of a high quality. As a result, pupils achieve well and make good progress in the development of a wide range of skills.

109. All pupils use the space available to them well. They are aware of how to move safely, avoiding each other, whether in the warm-up to lessons, performing complex routines in dance lessons or when moving around and over apparatus in gymnastics sessions. Year 1 pupils, for example, developed simple routines, linking movements across the floor and then holding a balance on apparatus before returning to their original position. Balances and movements were inventive and involved the use of different parts of the body such as elbows and knees. Good use is also made of the expertise of a local football coach to teach Year 2 pupils. All pupils participated fully in the lesson observed when being introduced to basic football skills. They built on their previous knowledge and understanding of how to control the ball well. The lesson provided challenge for the more highly skilled and moved learning forward at pace.

110. Dance lessons are particularly well taught and much enjoyed by the pupils. The high level of subject expertise of the teacher is used to good effect through carefully planned lessons that are briskly taught. Very well executed demonstrations enable pupils to see what is expected of them. The lessons during the inspection were in preparation for a forthcoming production, so of necessity required set routines to be followed. This limits the pupils' opportunity to express themselves and interpret the music individually; however, plans show that this method of teaching is not regularly adopted. Dance lessons use a wide variety of music from around the world. The origin and instruments used are discussed with the pupils, as in a Year 2 lesson creating a dance to Peruvian music. The instruments used were on view to the pupils and a video of the Andes and of condors flying helped to set the scene vividly for the pupils who became engrossed in the work. Short sections of the dance were skilfully practised and these put together into a complex and challenging routine. Pupils in both Years 1 and 2 rehearsed and gradually improved their individual movements, and some completed the complex final dance well the first time through.

111. Subject co-ordination and management are satisfactory. The subject is currently a focus for development and the policy and scheme of work are being rewritten. Some observation of teachers has taken place, although the impact on development is limited as the co-ordinator only works part-time. In spite of this, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. One area of difficulty that staff deal with well is the size of the hall, which is limited when apparatus is being used.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

112. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus by the time that the pupils reach the end of Year 2. Progress in the subject is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In the three lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory in one, and in the other two it was good.

113. Pupils acquire a sound understanding of aspects of Christianity. They can tell the story of Jesus'

birth and know that Christians believe he was God's son. They also know that other faiths have their own special people. Teachers use resources effectively to interest and involve pupils. For example, when a Year 2 class heard the story of Joseph and his brothers, they could relate their own experiences of jealousy. A higher-attaining pupil was able to verbalise how she tried not to be jealous but could not rid herself of the feeling, which she found very unpleasant. Pupils take part in discussions sensibly and teachers reinforce learning suitably through questioning. Lessons rely strongly on stories and direct experience of resources and these help all pupils to learn. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress in the subject.

114. Pupils are introduced to aspects of other major faiths as well as Christianity, for example the festivals celebrated by those of the Jewish faith, such as Chanukah. Pupils are clearly used to responding to stories in the light of their own experiences and demonstrate a growing awareness of other religions. They are able to discuss moral issues sensibly. Whole-class discussions and assemblies support learning in the subject. There are strong links with local churches. There are also good cross-curricular links with other subjects, such as music, PHSE and geography. There are, however, many missed opportunities to develop writing more extensively in other subjects.
115. The school has identified the subject as a priority for development. A subject manager has been appointed this term, who has a very clear idea of what needs to be done to continue improvement in provision for the subject. Assessment procedures are well established and are being used to inform future planning. This has contributed to the satisfactory improvement in the subject since the last inspection.