

INSPECTION REPORT

CEDAR ROAD LOWER SCHOOL

Northampton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121911

Headteacher: Mrs M A Irvine

Reporting inspector: Mr P L Evans
20737

Dates of inspection: 18th – 21st March 2002

Inspection number: 194024

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Cedar Road East Northampton
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Neil Kitson
Date of previous inspection:	May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20737	Paul Evans	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further
8919	John Kerr	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents
18461	Vanessa Wilkinson	Team inspector	English Religious education English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?
11976	Heather Toynbee	Team inspector	Curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage Science Geography History Music	How well does the school care for its pupils?
29534	Nichola Perry	Team inspector	Art Design and technology Special educational needs	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	8 - 9
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	9 - 11
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	11 - 13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	13 - 14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	14 - 15
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	15 - 18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	19 - 22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	23 - 37

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cedar Road Lower School is a larger than average school, which provides education for 295 pupils, 149 girls and 146 boys aged from four to nine years of age. The majority of pupils live within the local area, which consists of a mix of local authority and privately owned houses. The proportion of pupils identified as being eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is higher than in most schools and some of these pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils on the school's special educational needs register is broadly in line with the national average, although the number of pupils with a statement of special educational need is below average. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below what is expected for their age. The headteacher is retiring at the end of the spring term and the deputy headteacher will take over the role. Northampton Education Authority is in the process of changing to a primary school format, consequently, the governors have decided to appoint the deputy headteacher to the role of headteacher until the process is finalised.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The overall effectiveness of Cedar Road Lower School is good. The very good management of the school promotes very good attitudes and personal development of all its pupils, contributing to the good standards achieved by pupils as they leave the school.

When considering its context, the standards that it achieves, the level of education that it offers to all its pupils and the money that it spends, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' attitudes to school are very good.
- The behaviour of pupils is very good.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and their teachers are excellent.
- The school's provision of pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are very good.
- The governors' role in fulfilling their responsibilities is very good.
- The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good.

What could be improved

- The use of information and communication technology in other subjects.
- The use and application of mathematical knowledge and the level of scientific enquiry throughout the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 1997 when weaknesses were identified in the raising of levels of attainment of higher achieving pupils and the need to provide more opportunities for in depth investigation in science, history, geography and religious education. The assessments of pupils' attainment needed to be used in the planning of future learning targets and consistently provide information for parents to help them gain a clear understanding of what their children were being taught. It was also felt that there was a need to create an orderly community within the school. The school has effectively worked on all the issues contained in the last inspection report.

The improvement in the school's standards during the period 1999 to 2001 exceeded national averages in reading writing and mathematics. The information the school provides for parents is now good, the school is now an orderly community and assessment information is now used effectively in planning. The achievement of higher attaining pupils is now satisfactory overall. Pupils have more opportunities for

investigation and enquiry, although these are very teacher directed. Overall the school has made good improvement since the last inspection.

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	B	C	B	B
Writing	B	C	B	B
Mathematics	A	C	C	C

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

On entry to the Foundation Stage, children's levels of attainment are below those expected for their age. They make good progress in the school's Reception class. As they move into Year 1, the great majority achieve the targets for children of their age in all six areas of learning, as set out in the national early learning goals for the foundation curriculum.

In the 2001 national test for seven year olds the school's results were above the national average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Standards in science, according to teacher assessment, were above the national average. During the three years 1999 to 2001 the schools trend of improvement was above the national average for all pupils, in reading writing and mathematics. When compared to the results of similar schools, results, at the end of Year 2, were average in mathematics and above average in reading and writing.

Inspection evidence shows that standards in English and music are above average at the end of Years 2 and 4. Standards in mathematics are average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 4. Standards in science are average at the end of Years 2 and 4. In information and communication technology, design technology, art and design, physical education, Religious Education, history and geography, standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 4.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen to come to school and have a very positive attitude to the work they undertake.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The behaviour of pupils in and out of classrooms is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The relationships between pupils and pupils and their teachers are excellent.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average.

The relationships between all pupils and staff are excellent. Teachers' management of pupils is very good, leading to the good behaviour of all including those with specific behavioural difficulties. There have been no exclusions and procedures for promoting attendance are good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is judged on the evidence gathered in lessons together with inspection evidence gathered from pupils' past work. It is good, overall. The effectiveness of the strategies for the teaching of English and literacy skills are very good. The strategies used for the teaching of mathematics and numeracy are good. A total of 47 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. In four lessons the quality of teaching was excellent. In 34 lessons it was good or very good and in the remaining nine lessons it was satisfactory. In one lesson the length of the observation was too short to make a judgement.

The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is good. The quality of learning is good for all pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum offered by the school is broad and balanced. It is good overall.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers and support assistants provide good support to enable these pupils to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. There is good provision for pupils for whom English is not the language they speak at home. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English are well supported.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils' spiritual development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The procedures for ensuring pupils welfare are very good. The monitoring of academic performance and personal development and the personal support and guidance offered to all pupils are all very good.

The relationship between the school and parents is good. Parents are very supportive of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides very good, clear educational direction for the school and very good management. There is a very strong professional relationship and excellent teamwork between the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body make a very good contribution to shaping the educational direction of the school. They are very effective in fulfilling their statutory duties and have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has effectively addressed the key issues from the last inspection.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school makes very good use of strategic funding and ensures that this is appropriately spent.

There is a very good match of teaching staff and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. The adequacy of learning resources is good, as is the school's accommodation. All classrooms are bright and contain colourful displays of pupils' work. Children in the foundation stage have access to wheeled toys and large-scale equipment, although there is not, as yet, a dedicated area for their outdoor use. However, this does not have a detrimental effect on their physical development. A specific dedicated area is planned for in the school's building programme.

There is a strong relationship and excellent teamwork between the headteacher and deputy headteacher and the contribution by staff who have management responsibilities is very good. The school applies the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teaching in the school. • The fact that their children like school. • They are comfortable to approach the school with any questions or concerns. • The high expectations the school has for their children. • The leadership and management of the school. • The good progress their children are making in school. • The fact that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school.

Inspection evidence supports the positive views of the parents who responded to the parents' questionnaire and attended the meeting for parents. Parents at the meeting raised a concern over their children's annual written reports. Inspection findings show that these reports are individualised and provide a perceptive judgement on each pupil's achievements. The school provides a good range of extra curricular activities and inspection evidence does not support the views of a small minority of parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. At the time of the last inspection in May 1997, children under five were making good progress from below average levels of attainment on entry to the school. By the time that they entered Year 1 they successfully reached or exceeded the desirable learning outcomes for children of their age. Standards for pupils at the end of Year 2 in reading and mathematics were above the national average. In speaking and listening, writing and science, standards were average. Standards in music and art and design were above national expectations. In all other subjects, pupils' standards at the end of Year 2 were what are expected for pupils of their age. The standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 4 were above national expectations in reading and music. In speaking and listening, writing, mathematics, science and all other subjects, standards were as expected for their age.
2. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English are above the national average at the end of Years 2 and 4. Standards in mathematics are average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 4. Standards in science are average at the end of both years 2 and 4. Standards in music are above expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 4. In all other subjects, standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress in the standards that pupils' achieve, since the last inspection.
3. Children's levels of attainment on entry to the school are below average overall as shown by county tests and assessments. By the time that they enter Year 1, the great majority have achieved the targets set for children of their age in the national early learning goals in all six areas of learning.
4. In the 1999 national tests for seven-year-olds, the standards reached by the school, compared to all schools nationally, were above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. In 2000, standards in all three subjects fell to average levels, but they returned to their 1999 levels in reading and writing, and were average in mathematics, in 2001. Overall, during these three years, the schools performance in reading, writing and mathematics exceeded the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 and above, the expected level for seven-year-olds, in the 2001 national tests was broadly in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher than expected level 3 was above the national average in reading and mathematics and in line with the national average in writing. Teacher assessments for the number of pupils reaching the expected level 2 and the higher than expected level 3, in science were above the national average. Inspection evidence confirms that most pupils are reaching average levels, in science, and some are exceeding these. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls.
5. When compared to the results of schools with a similar level of entitlement to free school meals, Cedar Road Lower School's results in the end of Year 2 national tests in 2001 were above average in reading and writing. In mathematics, the results of the school were average.
6. The school sets challenging, but realistic, targets and has developed very good strategies for attaining those targets. The school is in line to meet its targets for 2002.
7. Inspection evidence confirms the results of national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 2. Standards in Religious Education, art and design, design and technology, history, geography and physical education are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. The school has developed an information and communication technology suite and now has the equipment to teach all areas of the subject, including modelling and control technology. However, the suite is too small for classes of thirty older pupils and it lacks suitable ventilation. These difficulties are addressed in the school's planning. While there is some evidence of information and communication technology being used in other subjects, this use is underdeveloped and is the next focus of the school's planning. Standards in information and communication technology are broadly in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 4.

8. Teachers have good knowledge of their pupils and carefully identify those who need additional support. In all Years, there are some good examples of all groups of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and the higher attaining pupils being provided with challenging work to ensure that they achieve their full potential. However, there are some examples of the school's very good assessment information not being fully used to match work carefully to the capabilities of some lower and higher attaining pupils. The tasks offered to pupils in investigations in mathematics and science are too teacher-directed, have pre-determined outcomes and do not provide pupils with open ended investigations.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Children in the Foundation Stage are keen to learn and show a real interest in their lessons. Their level of personal development reaches the level expected nationally, by the time that they enter Year 1. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, for whom English is an additional language and those from minority ethnic backgrounds have very good attitudes to their work. They have a high opinion of the school and value its friendly and workmanlike atmosphere. As a result of the excellent relationships between the pupils and their teachers, pupils are confident to answer questions, to share ideas and to pose their own questions. This is an improvement since the last inspection when pupils attitudes, values and personal development were judged to be positive.
10. Lessons are lively with a good work ethic, so, naturally, pupils are keen to tackle any task, even if these are difficult. For example, in a top maths set in year 4, pupils had to work out an ancient Egyptian numerical system, before using the results in a comparative bar chart. Pupils of all abilities show an interest in discussions responding to the stimulating teaching and making confident contributions to the lessons. They concentrate and are conscientious in producing a good result. Pupils work equally well on their own, in pairs or in small groups. Their positive approach to work is beneficial to their good progress and is a strength of the school.
11. Most pupils quickly develop a sense of personal discipline, with a clear respect for the rules of this orderly society. They are considerate of each other and are well mannered and friendly to adults. There are very few distractions in class and poor behaviour rarely disrupts the flow of learning. Pupils really enjoy playtime. All ages mix together. If there is someone new to the school or if anybody has no one to play with or is unhappy, a Playground Friend is always on hand. As a result, very little oppressive behaviour or bullying is reported by pupils or their parents.
12. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the impact of their actions on others. If there is an altercation at play, the Playground Friends are encouraged to help to diffuse the situation without taking sides. The Friends are volunteers, chosen by a member of staff who serve for a short term of office. They are given brief instructions at the start but, more importantly, they discuss their experiences at the end of each week with a teacher. Pupils think highly of the provision, benefiting from it, either as a Friend or as a pupil learning to resolve differences in an amicable way. Discussions in circle time help pupils to express their feelings. As the pupils are good listeners in general, they become aware of each other's values as they progress as a group through the school. Pupils in a year 3 science lesson listened carefully and were very prepared to consider the ideas and predictions of others.
13. Relationships in the school are excellent. These positive relationships with each other and with adults in the school make a very significant impact on each pupil's personal development. As they mature, pupils are better equipped to be involved in the organisation of school life. The new school council is thriving. The elected pupils see it as valuable improvement and look forward to making their contribution. The playground Friends take their duties very seriously and are a good example as they care for each other. This creates a happy atmosphere around the school, where pupils grow in self-esteem.
14. Attendance is satisfactory. Parents are allowed to stay until 9.15 each morning in classrooms with their children. This creates a good bond between parents, children and their teachers and is a very pleasant start to the day. It does have an impact on punctuality, where a significant minority of pupils arrive after the registers are closed at 9 am. The school makes regular reference to the need for punctuality in letters to parents.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school, and includes many good features. The consistently high quality teaching builds very effectively on the common approaches used across the school, which are a major reason why pupils enjoy school so much and why standards have been maintained and continue to be high. Forty-seven lessons were observed across the school during the inspection. The quality of teaching in 18 was very good or excellent, in another 20 lessons it was good. Nine lessons were satisfactory and one lesson was seen for too short a time to make a judgement. No teaching was less than satisfactory. Teachers throughout the school have implemented the national strategy for literacy very well and for numeracy well. Their effectiveness in teaching basic skills in English and mathematics is good. This shows good improvement since the last inspection.
16. Teaching in English and literacy is good, overall, with very good teaching in a half of the lessons seen. In mathematics and numeracy, teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. In Years 3 and 4, pupils consolidate their learning and, because tasks are usually matched well to individual abilities, this accelerates the learning for older pupils.
17. Overall, the quality of teaching in both the reception classes is very good and, on occasion, excellent. Both teachers have high expectations with regard to children's behaviour and to their learning. Their knowledge and understanding of the needs of children of this age group are very good. Classroom assistants are an important part of the teaching team and they make a strong contribution to the learning process. Thorough assessment is undertaken in language and literacy work and this is used to plan activities and reinforce specific skills needed for reading and writing. The teachers plan very carefully and use a good range of resources to interest children.
18. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding are good, overall. In all classes, there is a good knowledge of how to teach letter sounds and reading, which helps pupils to make good progress in basic literacy skills. These skills are built on well in Years 3 and 4 where there is some additional challenge in the work and pupils have the opportunity to extend their skills in a variety of ways. In other subjects, the individual strengths of teachers are used effectively.
19. Teachers' planning is very good. In all lessons, teachers specify clear objectives, structure the use of time well and provide for the different levels of ability in their classes. Teachers share their teaching plans with support staff and brief them in good time for what support is needed. There are occasions when it is planned to include information and communication technology in lessons on other subjects. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, on producing flow charts to explain a process, the teacher directed pairs of pupils to the computer to undertake the task. They showed satisfactory mouse skills and were able to click and drag images to complete their chart. This was good use of information and communication technology and contributed well to pupils' learning. However, the school recognises the need to plan for more use of information and communication technology in other subjects.
20. The quality of marking is inconsistent, both between classes of the same age and between different year groups. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is at its best when written comments are added, which aid pupils' understanding of how they can improve further. Praise given for good work raises pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence. However, this high quality marking is not evident in all classes and where it is weaker, the school must concentrate on raising it to match the best quality found elsewhere in the school. The use of targets in English and mathematics is good. Where they are used effectively, they contribute to pupils' good understanding of their own learning and to the inclusion of all pupils in all lessons. Where teachers identify the next steps in learning, pupils respond enthusiastically.
21. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are good, overall. For example, in a good geography lesson in Year 1, the teacher had high expectations that pupils would remember the details of a walk around the area that the class had taken some time before. The pupils remembered different details individually and, through the teachers' good questioning skills a whole class picture was built up which was very detailed and accurate.
22. The presentation of work in English and related subjects, such as history and science is good and evidence from pupils' past work shows that teachers are consistent in their expectations of good

handwriting and standards of presentation. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 take great pride in the presentation of their projects and fact files in science. Standards of presentation are generally good in most subjects.

23. During lessons, teachers carefully repeat key vocabulary in different sentences and questions, so that pupils, including those with special educational needs, soon learn and understand it. This results in pupils being motivated to learn and use the vocabulary in their own work. Teachers use a good variety of grouping strategies. These include the pairing of pupils, to share in discussion tasks, to ensure that they help each other to learn and have opportunities to exchange and talk through ideas. Teachers use the end of lesson review sessions well to sum up what pupils have achieved and to recognise good work. This time also allows teachers to point out how pupils can improve and what they will be doing next. Classroom assistants work very effectively in lessons to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress.
24. The management of pupils is very good. Teachers have established their expectations in the classes and approach the encouragement of good behaviour and positive attitudes in a consistent manner. In the best lessons, expectations are very clear and rules are strictly followed. These are promoted positively through praising pupils who are sitting ready to learn, who help others, and who remember to raise their hands when asking or answering questions. Where engrossed in lessons, pupils produce high quality work and their attitudes to learning are very good. Occasionally, the approach is not so consistent and a few pupils do not respond so well. Sometimes, in well-planned lessons with good use of resources and interesting tasks, the restless behaviour of a minority of pupils does not allow others to get on with tasks. At times, noisy excitement takes over and insistence on quiet endeavour is needed to ensure that all pupils are able to carry on with their tasks. In these lessons, the quality of teaching and learning suffers from the lack of attention of a few pupils.
25. Teachers throughout the school make good use of homework, which is often linked to literacy work in the classroom. Older pupils extend their research skills in the work that they are expected to undertake at home. In most classes, pupils have mathematics and literacy homework, including reading. Reading diaries are provided for parents to write comments about how their children are progressing and these are used well to communicate between home and school.
26. Teachers and classroom assistants have good knowledge of all their pupils gained on a day-to-day basis and through the school's very thorough procedures for assessment. Teaching strategies motivate all groups equally, enabling them to participate fully and to make progress in their learning. Teachers give equal regard to pupils of differing attainment and the demands placed upon boys and girls are similar.
27. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. In line with good educational inclusion all pupils are fully integrated, including those with more severe difficulties, and experience equality of opportunity in all aspects of school life as appropriate. No pupils are disapplied from the National Curriculum. All pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, have full access to their entitlement, are fully included in lessons, which are mainly within the classroom, and there are no obvious differences between their treatment and that of others. Planned activities are mostly, but not always, matched to individual pupils' abilities and teachers' expectations are appropriately high. Resources, differentiated where necessary, are appropriate to meet the planned curriculum.
28. The English as an additional language support teacher works very closely with the school to identify and meet pupils needs. Targets are identified for each pupil and these are effective at guiding teachers and promoting pupils learning. Teachers provide good support for pupils in lessons and through the work that they prepare for them, enabling them to make good progress.

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

29. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good for pupils of all ages. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the curriculum was judged to be satisfactory. All the subjects of the National Curriculum have been implemented effectively and the school follows the local education

authority's agreed syllabus for religious education. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. A good programme of personal, social and health education, which includes citizenship, enhances learning opportunities. Sex and drugs education, are appropriately provided through the science curriculum and the personal, social and health education programme. Good quality subject policies are in place and these are supported by good plans of work, which include materials from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's modules. The curriculum is organised effectively to help pupils build on their learning progressively in all subjects.

30. The curriculum for children in the foundation stage is of very good quality. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. It provides them with excellent experiences in all the areas recommended for young children.
31. The national strategy for teaching literacy has been implemented very well and the strategy for numeracy is good. Both the strategies have had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning which is evident in teachers' confidence, skills and enthusiasm. Improvements have also arisen in other subjects because of the implementation of these two schemes. Since their implementation, teachers have effectively planned opportunities for pupils to use basic skills within other subjects. Because they have plenty of opportunities, pupils use these skills well to support their learning. For example, Year 3 pupils research Greek Gods during a history lesson. They know how to use information books effectively and use the contents and index pages to find the information they need. The teacher provides a good reminder about 'skimming' the text and pupils confidently use a wide range of resource materials. However, when undertaking investigations in mathematics and science, whole class preparation is taken to the point where the results are the same for all pupils and true discovery is limited.
32. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, and for pupils who have English as an additional language. All these pupils make good progress throughout the school.
33. Pupils have opportunities to take part in a good range of extra curricular activities. The inspection team does not support a minority of parents' views that the school could provide a better range of experiences outside lessons. Pupils have opportunities to take part in a wide range of activities including educational visits, which enrich their learning significantly. After school clubs include sporting activities such as football fun and in the summer term activities such as tennis coaching. There are also a good range of lunchtime activities, including the choir and recorder clubs as well as activities such as computers. Pupils in Year 4 also have the opportunity to take part in a short residential experience at an outdoor pursuit centre or in an activities week based at the local park.
34. The school has very good links with the local community, which contribute very well to pupils' learning. Pupils visit museums and other places of interest locally to enrich their learning and the choir performs at a local old people's residence. These links, together with visitors to the school, such as artists in residence and the mayor of Northampton add to pupils' learning and their understanding of the wider community.
35. The school has very good links with the local teacher training college and effectively supports the initial teacher training programme by providing a significant number of placements for student teachers. There are also very good links with a local upper school, Northampton School for Boys, where higher attaining Year 4 pupils have opportunities to extend their learning in mathematics. Pupils from local secondary schools and students from the local college, who are on child care courses, have opportunities for very well planned work experience at the school. Links with the local middle school are also very good.
36. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, which is an overall improvement since the last inspection. There has been good improvement in the provision for moral, social and cultural education and satisfactory improvement for spiritual development. The school works hard to promote positive attitudes amongst all its pupils. They are encouraged to make sensible choices and develop a sense of personal responsibility. The headteacher and staff provide very good role models and their responses to pupils are an important factor in promoting very good behaviour throughout the school.

37. The provision for spiritual development is good and the school provides pupils with knowledge and insight into the values and beliefs of Christian and other faiths through the religious education curriculum. Acts of collective worship are broadly Christian in character and are used very effectively to celebrate pupils' success and share what they have learned. Pupils play a very active part in assemblies and are very well involved in their preparation and presentation. For example, Pupils in Year 4 perform a poem with musical accompaniment, they read some of their own poems and present a dance routine based on a clown poem, based on the work that they had done during their literacy lessons.
38. Assemblies do not always contain appropriate moments of prayer or reflection, so opportunities are missed for pupils to develop their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge and there is insufficient emphasis on the spiritual aspects of art and music. However, from the reception class upwards pupils are encouraged to reflect on their work during the plenary element of lessons and, within the personal, social and health education programme and religious education, they are given good opportunities to reflect on caring for each other and the environment. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for each other through the playground 'buddy' system and reception age children are expected to be aware of when others may need help in physical education lessons.
39. Pupils moral development is very well promoted through the school's policy and approaches to behaviour. Pupils are very aware of the difference between right and wrong and are constantly encouraged and supported to make positive decisions about their attitudes and conduct. Pupils show respect for each other, for example, when they listen carefully to each other's contributions during discussions. They respect adults, are polite to visitors and are pleased to share in each other's achievements. Teachers value pupils work, encouraging them to develop positive attitudes.
40. Pupils' social development is very effectively promoted. They are encouraged to form constructive relationships and teachers provide very good opportunities for them to work collaboratively. Pupils in Year 2 work in pairs to discuss emotions such as angry, afraid and safe during a religious education lesson about Jonah. From the reception classes upwards pupils are increasingly ready to share ideas, resources and take turns. The very good links with the community enhance pupils social confidence because they have very good opportunities to meet visiting speakers, visit places of interest and prepare and perform for pupils in the school, parents and to go out into the community to sing for the local Ladies Club. These experiences help pupils to identify with the feelings and experiences of other people and to develop an awareness of community.
41. The school is very successful in teaching pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions, by planned opportunities within subjects such as art, music and history. The school also takes great care to ensure that pupils have opportunities to experience the richness and diversity of non-European cultures. For example, the school has had a week where pupils were able to focus on the Asian culture. This included finding out about life, religion and food. In religious education pupils learn about the differences and similarities in beliefs and moral values in the major world religions and in ancient cultures. For example, Year 3 pupils are currently learning about the Greek Gods. The school acknowledges and celebrates the festivals of other faiths such as Diwali and Chinese New Year.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is very good. Pupils work in a safe environment, where their welfare is very well supported. Pupils are confident in the advice of their teachers who know them very well. Behaviour is well managed throughout the school, as is attendance. Parents are very satisfied with standards of behaviour and find it easy to approach teachers if they have a concern about their children's progress and welfare.
43. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress and personal development are very good. The procedures for introducing new children and their parents into school are well planned and effective. This ensures that these children settle quickly to the routines of school life. As pupils continue through the school, time is given to each individual particularly those who are thought to be making less progress than expected. Parents of these pupils are involved immediately. Pupils say that teachers are very helpful and they would go to them if they need help in any way.

44. The school's behaviour policy is very good. Because all staff follow the policy with discretion, their management of behaviour is seen to be fair and consistent by the pupils. Teachers' high expectations of good behaviour and pupils' positive attitudes ensure that lessons proceed with purpose and at a good pace. There are few rules. They are short, clear and understandable by pupils of all ages. There are some pupils who have behavioural difficulties, particularly in year 3. On the relatively few occasions when behaviour is not of the high standard expected, staff act quickly and effectively.
45. Aspects of pupils' personal development are covered in two important initiatives. It was suggested, in discussion with pupils, that Playground Friends would be a help to pupils who find playtime intimidating. This has been a very successful initiative. It has not only helped to defuse tension as pupils learn to resolve their own differences, but has also been invaluable in raising the self-esteem of the responsible older pupils acting as Friends. Again, after discussion, the School Council has recently been instituted with proper elections and representation from every class in the school. This has allowed more pupils to be responsible for the organisation of the school.
46. Additional aspects of personal development are included in the well-developed programme of personal, social and health education. The programme covers sex education and drugs awareness in ways appropriate to the age groups. The programme has already been updated to include elements of citizenship, including the proper election procedures for the School Council. The opportunities for discussion in circle time help pupils to explore issues themselves and to engage adults in testing their ideas. In all subjects, pupils are encouraged to comment on the work or ideas of their peers.
47. Procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance are good. With the co-operation of parents, almost all absences are accounted for. Where this is not the case, staff are vigilant and take prompt action. The procedures at the start of the day, which encourages parents to be involved in the classroom for the first fifteen minutes, works well. It can, however, have an adverse effect on punctuality. A significant minority of parents do not recognise the start as 9 am, but increasingly bring their children to school nearer 9.15 so missing the benefit of the earlier start.
48. Procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' wellbeing are very good. The health and safety policy of the school is thorough. Staff and governors carry out routine checks of the premises and equipment and defects are dealt with swiftly. The site manager, who is also a governor, completes all risk assessments and makes representations to the governing body of any defects or improvements necessary. He is also involved with the development proposals. All staff are fully aware of the child protection procedures. The Headteacher designate has attended recent training on the accepted procedures and is fully aware of how these are applied by all staff including mid-day supervisors. Accidents and injuries are treated promptly, records kept and parents informed.
49. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic performance have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now very good. An assessment of what individual children can do when they start school is carried out so that staff have a clear idea of attainment on entry. This is used as the basis for tracking pupils' performance against later achievements. Progress in all subjects is tested and tracked as pupils move through the school to check on how well they are getting on and to predict future results. Information is collected and analysed by the conscientious assessment co-ordinator. This is meticulously organised and provides a useful data bank on which teachers and governors can draw. It provides useful, accurate evidence for outside agencies. Pupils' gender and ethnicity are taken into careful consideration. Very good use is made of assessment data to help set targets for the school and for individual pupils. Individual targets are shared with pupils and parents and help to involve parents in their children's education.
50. The use of assessment information as a guide to future planning is good. For example, on-going assessment is used daily in the two Reception classes. It is used to monitor every small step taken by individual children in the six areas of learning and to plan their future work accordingly. On the basis of assessment information, pupils in Year 1 identified as needing extra help are provided with additional language support to bring them up to average attainment. There are some inconsistencies in the way that teachers mark pupils' work. Although most teachers are good at praising pupils for what they have done, they are sometimes less successful in indicating what children must do next to improve. At the end of many lessons, teachers are good at providing a range of ways in which pupils can record or write up their work according to their different abilities. This allows all pupils to take part in such tasks at their own level. Teachers are not always so successful in planning a variety of

activities that will either challenge more able pupils, or match the ability of lower attainers, during the main body of lessons.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. The school continues to maintain very effective links with parents. Parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate the efforts made to involve them in their children's education.
52. The school has addressed the key issues from the previous inspection report. Parents are now provided with information to enable them to have a better understanding of what is taught. In addition, they are told about the targets that their children have been set and some indication of how they can help their children to raise their levels of attainment. As a result, almost all parents who responded to the OFSTED questionnaire felt that the school works closely with them and that they are well informed about their children's progress. They also find a welcoming and sympathetic response if they approach the school with problems or concerns. The school sends out its own questionnaire on a regular basis. The results of these are included when reviewing the school's development plan.
53. The quality of information for parents is good. Half-termly curriculum maps are published for each year-group and early learning goals are provided for parents of children under five. The school provides useful information for the parents of new pupils and the Governors' Annual Report is interesting and covers all statutory information. Letters to parents and the regular Newsletter are well written. They are brief, but to the point, on subjects such as attendance and the need for punctuality. Language is friendly, but most of this information contains examples of educational jargon, which many parents will not understand.
54. Pupils' annual reports are personal and give details of what pupils know and can do. Subject reports are perceptive and provision is made for teachers to comment on pupils' personal development. Reports include targets for improvement which parents and pupils find very helpful. National curriculum levels for aspects of English and mathematics are provided on a separate form which is enclosed with the pupil's report. However, no details are given about the standards in any other subjects or any simple demonstration of the level at which the pupil is working. Regular meetings with teachers enable parents to support their children well.
55. Large numbers of parents bring their children into the classrooms at the start of each day. They read with their children or help them to complete a project or a piece of homework. This also gives parents the opportunity to discuss their children's work and homework with the teacher. This makes for a very relaxed and purposeful start to the day.
56. An active parents' association raises substantial amounts of money which are given to charity or used for particular projects that are very beneficial to the quality of education provided by the school. There is a strong sense of community in the area. Parents and other volunteers regularly help in classrooms and around the school, for example hearing individual pupils read or by helping with school activities. This is much appreciated by the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. The school is very well led and managed. This is good improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be mostly effective. The headteacher provides a very clear educational direction for the school and is very well supported by the deputy headteacher. They have established an excellent working relationship and together they set high standards for themselves, staff and pupils. The head and deputy headteacher have a very strong commitment to the school and the pupils, which is shared by the staff.
58. Teachers, who all have responsibilities for the various areas of the curriculum, make a significant contribution to the work of the school. The guidance provided by the head and deputy headteacher is effective, because a very clear educational vision has been established for the schools future. Together, the governing body, senior management and staff have all worked effectively to address the shortcomings identified in the last inspection, with the result that good progress has been made on the key issues. The desire to achieve high standards and good quality provision is reflected in the schools aims and in the improvements seen in the school.

59. The school is facing a period of significant change. The local education authority, following a review of its provision, is re-organising schools to become single phase and, in the future, Cedar Road School will provide education for pupils of reception age to Year 6. In addition the headteacher is retiring at the end of the spring term 2002. The current deputy headteacher has been appointed to take over as headteacher so that there is continuity for the school during this period of development. The headteacher, senior management and governors are working very closely with the local education authority to ensure that the changes are managed effectively. The school has approached this challenging time in a very positive and well-managed way. It has undertaken a considerable amount of consultation and planning to ensure that it is well prepared.
60. Inspection evidence confirms parents' very positive views about the leadership and management of the school. The school, through its aims and development plans has a very good focus on improving pupils' learning. It effectively evaluates the performance of pupils in National Curriculum tests and other assessments and from this it establishes priorities for improvement. For example, the information gained by monitoring pupils' achievements in tests and assessments, indicated that they were not achieving as well in writing as in other aspects of English. In order to address this and to promote improved standards the school has focused effectively on this area and inspection evidence indicates that teaching, planning and an emphasis on writing across the curriculum is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. The school analyses performance data effectively to determine how well pupils of different abilities and from different ethnic backgrounds are achieving. This ensures that all pupils have the same opportunities to make progress because teachers are able to plan well to address any areas of need.
61. The school gains good information about how effective leadership and management are through well focused classroom observations and the analysis of National Curriculum tests and school assessments. The monitoring of teaching and learning, by the senior management, is rigorous and effective. It is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils. Monitoring procedures also involve the scrutiny of pupils' work. Lesson observations are followed up with written and verbal feedback and support and guidance where necessary. This ensures that the quality of teaching is constantly improved. Teachers use the information from lesson observations effectively to help them improve their planning and to monitor pupils' work.
62. The subject leaders for English and mathematics are effectively involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and there is clear guidance and an agreed focus to their observations. This ensures that the outcomes have a positive effect on standards. For example, the recent focus on writing has enabled the school to ensure that its planned improvements are being effective. Staff benefit from the school's desire to improve because they are provided with good opportunities to undertake training, enabling them to meet the high expectations set by the senior management and governors.
63. The school seeks to validate its own monitoring by involving local education authority advisors in observing lessons and it has recently achieved the Investors in People award, which provides an accreditation and recognition for its professional development and its commitment to the effective management of personnel. The school seeks the views of parents about its effectiveness and the governors have analysed and acted upon issues arising from a questionnaire circulated in 2001. They have also carried out a survey of parents to help them to identify concerns about the school's future in light of the local education authority's review. They are using this information effectively to help them plan how the developments will be managed and to identify any improvements that need to take place.
64. The school has successfully implemented the performance management processes. Improvements in the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils are effectively reflected in the targets set for teachers. Regular monitoring of teaching and learning provides good opportunities to ensure that individual targets are addressed effectively. This process contributes to the successful teaching seen in the school and has led to improvements in the provision of professional development of teachers, since the last inspection.
65. The school has established good quality policies and procedures to guide all aspects of its work and these are implemented consistently. Policies follow a similar format and have, as a central focus, the aims of the school. This helps to ensure that the school is constantly striving to meet its aims in all aspects of its work.

66. Responsibility for the curriculum has been effectively delegated to curriculum co-ordinators and the deputy headteacher, who has a very clear role in its overall management and development. Co-ordinators are well established in their roles and well supported to carry out their responsibilities. Performance management is used effectively to identify training needs and teachers have good access and encouragement to attend a range of relevant training. This ensures that they are supported to develop the skills that they need to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively. All training costs are effectively evaluated. Teachers are required to report on their experiences and decide if a course has been worthwhile. This ensures that the school can make informed decisions about further training and obtain best value from its spending.
67. The governing body shares the headteacher's commitment to the continuing improvement of the school. It meets regularly as a full governing body and has formed well-structured committees to carry out its work effectively. The governing body has a very clear and corporate view of how it wishes to see the school develop in the long term. This reflects the headteacher's vision and the role that the school has been asked to perform in the local education authority's reorganisation.
68. The governing body is not only very supportive of the school, but is also very effective in its own work. Governors are very well informed about the work of the school. They receive regular, informative reports from the headteacher and subject co-ordinators make presentations about new initiatives or the progress that has been made towards targets. Recently, there have been presentations in literacy, numeracy and provision for children in the foundation stage. Governors are linked to the subjects of the curriculum and they regularly visit the school on both an informal and formal basis. They have good first-hand experiences of the work of the school and have a very good understanding of its strengths and shortcomings. Governors maintain a clear vision of raising standards.
69. Governors are very actively involved in planning for school development, monitoring the school's performance and evaluating its success. They look at the outcomes of National Curriculum tests and school assessments, which enables them to make informed contributions and decisions about priorities for future development. The governing body measures the effectiveness of the school through its own monitoring systems and holds the headteacher accountable for the success of the school. Statutory requirements are fully met.
70. The school, following the last inspection, has established a very clear set of aims. These are very effectively reflected in all the work that it does, as they are central to its planning process. The school development plan covers an appropriate period of time to ensure improvement over a longer period. Local and national initiatives are effectively included in the targets that are set. The procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are good. Monitoring is effectively linked to the priorities for development, and the school evaluates the impact these improvements have on standards and the quality of teaching. However, the planning processes do not identify clear evaluation criteria which enable the school to say if a development is having a sufficient or sustained impact as no longer term monitoring is identified. This is already recognised by the school and is to be addressed in the near future.
71. Planning is effectively informed by a review of the previous year. Regular senior management, staff and governors' meetings are used effectively to review and monitor the school's progress towards the targets it has set itself. In this way, staff and governors play a significant part in contributing to school developments. In addition, subject co-ordinators review their subjects and establish an action plan, which identifies development needs. These are used very effectively to inform how the budget is used. Because targets are linked to the school budget, priorities are very effectively supported by financial planning. School administration is efficient and supports teaching and learning well. The procedures for ordering equipment and resources are very well known to staff and are managed efficiently. The school uses new technology effectively to order goods and produce budgetary information and reports on the state of the school's finances.
72. Financial planning is undertaken very effectively by the senior management team and the governing body, through the school development plan. Clear criteria for development and success are established with costings. The impact of these spending decisions is evaluated in terms of 'has it made a difference'. The school makes very effective use of resources and finance, because it has a clear vision for the future and is able to identify needs over the longer term. The school has effectively

matched the funding of some initiatives with the local education authority and this has enabled it to make good improvements to its provision and accommodation.

73. Very effective use is made of specific grants to improve what the school offers to pupils and support their progress. The school ensures that it gets best value from its purchases and investments. It uses the local education authority's services and purchasing agreements to ensure that it gets best value and it effectively evaluates the impact that investments in staff and resources have on standards. These agreements are reviewed regularly to ensure that they continue to fully meet the school's needs and provide good value. Costs, including staff costs, are considered as a percentage of the budget and evaluated against the effectiveness of pupils' learning. The school also compares its performance in relation to other schools very effectively through the data from national tests.
74. There is a very good match of experience, expertise and new ideas to the demands of the curriculum. Teachers and support staff are deployed well. There are very good induction procedures for staff. New teachers are supported extremely effectively, not only by the colleagues with whom they share year groups, but also by the whole staff who are very welcoming and helpful. They learn the routines and expectations of the school very quickly and settle to their work well. Students feel extremely lucky to be carrying out a teaching practice in the school and are finding the experience very helpful and supportive.
75. The accommodation provides good space in classrooms for teaching the full curriculum and the hall is spacious and well equipped for gymnastics. Several small rooms are available for specialist activities, including one for music and another used as a computer suite. The latter is too small and lacks sufficient ventilation for whole class activities. The school has recognised these problems and plans to extend this room at a later date. The school site includes good hard surfaced areas for play and a large field for games. Environmental areas, including a pond, enhance the science curriculum. A very committed caretaker, who carries out redecoration and items of maintenance as part of his role, keeps all areas of the school in a spotless, well cared for condition. Quality displays throughout the school celebrate pupils' work very effectively. They make for a stimulating learning environment in which each and everyone's contributions are valued. A good range of high quality resources is available to support work in all subjects and teachers use these very effectively in their lessons.
76. Taking into account the attainment of children when they enter school, the progress that they make as a result of good teaching and the standards that they attain when they leave at the age of 9, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

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

- i. further develop the use of information and communication technology as a tool for teaching and learning in all other subjects; (7, 19, 110, 119, 133, 141, 147, 150, 151, 170)
- ii. develop and implement strategies to ensure that all pupils have a satisfactory range of experiences in the use and application of their mathematical skills and in developing their own experiments in science, in order to provide truly open ended investigations in both these areas. (8, 31, 110, 118)

The governors may also wish to include the following minor matters in their action plan:

- i. while there are examples, within the school, of best practice in the marking of pupils' work, not all marking reaches this high standard; (20, 50, 112, 118, 148)
- ii. the use of assessment information and target setting does not always ensure appropriate challenges for some lower and higher attaining pupils; (8, 50, 143)
- iii. some parents assume that school does not begin officially until the end of the shared learning experience, at the beginning of each day; (14)
- iv. in pupils' annual written reports, no details are given about the standards achieved in the main subjects or any simple demonstration of the level at which the pupil is working. (54)

The numbers in brackets refer to the paragraph numbers in the main report

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

47

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

25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	14	20	9	0	0	0
Percentage	8	30	43	19	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

YR – Y4

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)

295

Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals

30

Special educational needs

YR – Y4

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

2

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register

66

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language

14

Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission

12

Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving

7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	26	34	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	23	23
	Girls	31	33	31
	Total	51	56	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (90)	93 (87)	90 (85)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	23	25
	Girls	33	31	33
	Total	53	54	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (87)	90 (85)	97 (85)
	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	3
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	11
Indian	3
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	7
Chinese	0
White	217
Any other minority ethnic group	6

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.1
Average class size	29.7

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	206.52

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	577981
Total expenditure	561582
Expenditure per pupil	187194
Balance brought forward from previous year	31120
Balance carried forward to next year	47519

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	297
Number of questionnaires returned	67

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	21	0	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	30	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	45	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	48	3	0	0
The teaching is good.	84	16	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	40	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	24	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	24	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	55	42	1	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	72	27	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	31	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	46	18	10	4

Inspection evidence supports the positive views of the parents who responded to the parents' questionnaire and attended the meeting for parents. Parents at the meeting raised a concern over their children's annual written reports. Inspection findings show that these reports are individualised and provide a perceptive judgement on each pupil's abilities. The school provides a good range of extra curricular activities and, in this area, inspection evidence does not support the views of a small minority of parents.

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

77. The 60 children in the Foundation Stage are based in two adjoining classrooms, but very effective joint planning ensures that pupils have opportunities to take part in activities in both of these. Together with very good teamwork on the part of teachers and classroom assistants this organisation provides a very high quality and range of learning opportunities. There is an excellent match of activities, to the needs of pupils of this age range, in the six recommended areas of learning. Good liaison between these classes and the rest of the school, especially Year 1, ensures that children get to know other teachers and routines and this smoothes their transition from one class to another. Students are welcomed and well deployed and give children effective extra support in carrying out their various activities. The school has further improved on the good quality of provision for children in the Foundation Stage observed at the time of the last report.
78. All children are admitted into the reception classes in the September when they are four. They commence attending half time and gradually move into full-time attendance according to age and readiness to cope with a longer school day. When they enter the school, their attainment is very varied but is, overall, below average. Whilst some children have benefited from attendance at a range of pre-school playgroups and nurseries many still have poor social skills. Testing shortly after entering the school provides good benchmarks upon which the staff can plan appropriate work. Very good assessment procedures allow staff to record and track individual children's development and gauge progress over the year. Children with special educational needs receive very good quality support in the classroom and take small steps towards success. By the time that they are ready to start Year 1, almost all pupils have made good progress and attain the early learning goals for children of this age in all areas of learning. Some of them have already begun to work on aspects of the National Curriculum.
79. Overall, the quality of teaching in both the reception classes is very good and, on occasion, excellent. Both teachers have high expectations with regard to children's behaviour and to their learning. Their knowledge and understanding of the needs of children of this age group are very good. Classroom assistants are an important part of the teaching team and they make a strong contribution to the learning process. In all six areas of learning the children work extremely hard with great concentration to complete their given tasks without wasting any time. They show a commendably high interest in all that they do and a very mature spirit of independence for their age.

Personal, social and emotional development

80. Teaching and learning are very good. Many children enter the reception classes with immature skills in personal and social development. Children make rapid strides in this area because of the very good teaching and almost all attain the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1. This gives them a secure foundation for their school life. The school places a strong emphasis on building positive relationships with parents before their children start school and has developed a highly successful induction programme. This results in parents feeling confident about placing children in the school and children settle well. Children in the reception year are eager to learn because there is a bright and welcoming atmosphere and the teachers prepare resources imaginatively. They soon gain confidence because the adults are caring and help them to understand the routines. The adults all work together very well and provide the children with very good role models on which to base their own relationships with each other.
81. In both classrooms, there are very good opportunities for children to work and play independently and, when appropriate, they gladly share and take turns in using equipment. For example, in a role play situation involving measuring walls for the correct amount of wallpaper and sticking pieces of this in place, children happily shared the tape measure and the roll of masking tape provided. Pupils are expected to put away the apparatus used in physical education lessons. They work together very

effectively, in groups and this joint effort enables them to lift the heavier pieces of equipment. Behaviour in all lessons is very good and this results in teaching and learning taking place in a happy and supportive atmosphere.

Communication, language and literacy

82. Very good teaching of communication, language and literacy means that children make good progress from a low starting point and the great majority attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year.
83. The children listen well to their teachers, especially when the situation involves an element of excitement. For example, the arrival of a party invitation from Elmer the elephant was a mystery that unfolded. Children were keen to be involved in framing an answer together and then, individually, confident in attempting their own replies. The teachers use sessions at the end of lessons very effectively to encourage the children to share their ideas and what they have achieved. The children listen politely to each other and wait their turn to speak. Very imaginative and stimulating role-play situations provide great scope for pupils to talk to each other and to adults in a variety of ways. Many can talk fluently in well-formed sentences, putting their ideas forward clearly and sensibly. For example, two boys playing with a plastic castle were excitedly enacting a story about a knight. "He's fighting a wizard" and "he's just had his head cut off" were just two of the story lines shared confidently with a visitor. The children enjoy listening to stories read to them by adults and most know that authors write books and illustrators draw the pictures. The shared reading time at the beginning of each day demonstrates the great value that the school puts on its partnership with parents in teaching children to read. Children understand that print carries meaning and should be read from left to right. Parts of the National Literacy Strategy are effectively introduced in whole class sessions and these are carefully extended towards the end of the year. This helps children get ready for more formal work in Year 1. Many interesting activities are planned to help children learn early writing skills. These include opportunities to write their names in sand and to call out a word beginning with the first letter of their name during registration time. The children are encouraged to hold their pencils correctly to form recognisable letters and their copying over of handwriting patterns shows good pencil control and grip. About half the children are able to write the initial letters of words and three-quarters are able to sound these out correctly. These skills are helping many to read a range of familiar words independently and to attempt writing for different purposes. For example, to take an order in a role-play café.

Mathematical development

84. From a below average ability on entry, very good teaching enables children to make good progress in their mathematical development. This results in almost all children attaining the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. Adults take every opportunity to help children to see how mathematics is used in everyday life, including using a weighing machine when baking, cutting a pizza into segments and choosing items from a shopping list. Very effective use is made of good quality equipment that interests children and encourages the ordering of numbers, sorting, pattern making and counting. Very good teaching ensures that children learn a good range of mathematical vocabulary and so, when filling a range of containers with coloured water, children talk confidently and accurately about these being full or empty, bigger or smaller. Children are becoming adept at counting on and back from ten and this is made fun through number songs and rhymes. They gain in confidence and become more accurate because their teachers provide plenty of repetition and practice. Displays, such as washing lines of numbers, reinforce learning. The more able children can do simple addition sums, combining together two groups of objects, and those involving subtraction. Photographic evidence shows that the correct names for shapes are introduced and children link the properties of everyday objects to these.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

85. This area of the curriculum greatly enhances children's learning and enjoyment for school and almost all attain the early learning goals in this area by the end of their reception year. Very good teaching provides many exciting and interesting activities that extend the children's outlook on life and helps them make good progress in their understanding of what is happening in the wider world. The children visit the local park to identify living things. They look for changes in the playground surface on a frosty day. Photographs of Diva lamps made by the children, show a growing knowledge about the beliefs of other people. A visit by a mother and her baby is used to start a discussion about family life and to highlight past and present events in their own lives. The caretaker explains to the children how he

uses materials and pieces of cleaning equipment to keep the school clean and shows them the tools he needs to do maintenance work.

86. The children enjoy playing with a very good range of construction kits and modelling materials and are keen to talk to an adult about what they have made. During the inspection week, children were working in a very busy factory assembling “teddy bears” which were then packed ready for sale. Children knew the importance of wearing a headscarf to stop their hair being caught in the machinery. Several are able to use a simple computer program unaided and use the mouse to move the cursor and ‘click on’ to achieve a correct selection of items on the screen. Others need more help. Children use tape recorders and headphones confidently and sensibly when listening to recorded stories.

Physical development

87. Children achieve well in this aspect and almost all will attain the early learning goals by the end of their reception year. Through very good teaching, children have ample opportunities to improve their skills in handling scissors, pencils, paintbrushes and other tools. They use these with developing control and enjoyment. Although the school has no fenced off outside area specifically for the use of the reception classes, good use is made of the playground to encourage such skills as catching, throwing and hitting balls and playing with hoops. Most of the children have a good awareness of space and move around the classroom and outdoor area with good co-ordination. When children are working in the hall, the demands made on them by teachers are very high and their response is good. Children demonstrate imaginative and controlled movements on pieces of apparatus, travelling along these in a variety of ways. The teacher identifies good practice and children confidently demonstrate this to the rest of the class. This allows all to improve on their work. The classroom assistant very effectively supports less sure children and this helps them to achieve appropriately. The teacher emphasises the need to warm up and, at the end of a lesson, a slow exercise ensures that children are ready to return to their classroom quietly.

Creative development

88. The great majority of children attain the early learning goals in this area of learning, by the time that they enter Year 1, because the teaching is very good. The range of experiences the children are given very successfully develops their creative skills and they make good progress in this aspect. Children enjoy working in the various imaginative settings provided. They play harmoniously with other children and act out various characters as part of a group. Their confidence in taking part in role play and drama situations is extended when other adults visit the school and join in with these activities. Children enjoy singing songs, particularly ones with associated action such as “Down in the Jungle”. The children sing tunefully and have a good recollection of the words of well-known and loved songs. They learn about the “hard” and “soft” sounds made by different instruments and how these can be used to describe the movements of different animals. The children’s skills in art are well developed and they are encouraged to explore freely the use of a wide range of media and materials. They are given good opportunities to use paint, make clay models of animals and create collage pictures with pasta.

ENGLISH

89. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English and literacy, are above average in speaking and listening and reading at the ages of 7 and 9 and are average in writing. Standards have improved in speaking and listening and reading since the last inspection, when they were judged to be satisfactory, and they have been maintained and are improving in writing.
90. National tests for 7 year olds in 2001 showed an improvement from the previous year. The proportion of pupils achieving at levels 2 and 3 of the national tests was above the national average in reading and broadly similar in writing. Comparisons indicate that attainment in writing, although in-line with the national average, is above that of similar schools. Results have improved over the last three years and the targets set for last year were achieved. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs all make good progress throughout the school.

91. Inspection evidence indicates that the majority of pupils' reach standards that are above average in speaking and listening and reading and are similar to expectations in writing. Standards in writing are more consistent than at the time of the last inspection and are improving because of the focus placed on this area by the school. Improved standards reflect improvements in the quality of teaching which is now very good and because of the emphasis placed on the development and use of basic skills in all subjects of the curriculum. There were no obvious differences between the work of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the targets set for them and the work they are given because teachers ensure that they are well supported in lessons. Teachers work effectively with the support teacher for pupils who have English as an additional language and appropriate targets and very good support enable them to make good progress.
92. Standards in speaking and listening are very good for pupils up to the age of 9. The majority of pupils develop very good listening skills. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when pupils were judged to find it difficult to contribute to whole class discussions. Teachers question pupils very well and, as a result, they are eager to share their understanding. Pupils' answers are relevant, indicating that they have listened carefully and understood. Pupils clearly listen well because they follow the instructions they are given accurately and, when this involves a change of activity, it results in pupils settling quickly to new tasks because they are clear about what they have been asked to do.
93. Teachers ensure that pupils have very good opportunities to explain their thoughts and share ideas about their work, so that, by the age of 9, pupils' speaking and listening skills are very well developed. For example, in a Year 4 lesson the teacher uses the plenary session very well to enable pupils to discuss the work they have done to edit a poem and change the vocabulary, but retain the meaning. Pupils clearly listen attentively and are able to share and build on each other's ideas. Adults are sensitive in their support of pupils and this helps them to develop confidence. Teachers are quick to praise the contributions made by pupils and this encourages them to participate.
94. Pupils have very positive attitudes to reading. The approach to teaching reading is well structured and very good attitudes are fostered by the reading session first thing in the morning, which is shared by a significant number of parents and siblings. This contributes significantly to the standards pupils achieve and promotes their interest in books. The school has not implemented a single reading scheme, instead, it uses a wide range of reading materials all carefully coded to different ability levels. This provides pupils with the experience of reading an interesting range of different styles of books and provides very good opportunities for them to practise their skills.
95. Pupils read with increasing fluency and accuracy and, by the age of 9, they have encountered a very good range of fiction and non-fiction, including myths and legends, autobiography, humorous stories and poetry. Teachers place a very good emphasis on pupils using their skills to research topics such as the Greek Gods. Pupils in Year 3 confidently use their knowledge about non-fiction texts, and their research skills to find the information they need. Pupils become aware of the differences in layout and style between fiction, non-fiction and poetry and this contributes effectively to their developing vocabulary; the examples used by teachers provide them with an understanding of how to write for different audiences.
96. The majority of pupils read accurately and with expression. They remember what they have read and are able to discuss themes and characters. Pupils in Year 4 can identify the pattern of the poem 'Through That Door' and they use their imagination and a rhyming dictionary effectively to find alternative vocabulary. Reading assessments are very good and provide a factual record of pupils reading ages which teachers use effectively to develop pupils' reading skills.
97. Across the school, standards in writing are satisfactory and improving. The school has addressed this area specifically because test results and assessments indicated that pupils did not achieve as well in writing as they did in speaking and listening and reading. Older, higher attaining pupils write stories in a logical way, developing and sustaining their ideas effectively. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Their stories show imagination and the composition of well-sequenced sentences. Pupils develop a good understanding of the basic rules of grammar and punctuation and many use interesting words. Pupils in Year 4 develop interesting 'dialogue' within the stories they write. The use of information and communication technology is seen in most teachers planning and, when computers are used in lessons, they make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

98. Pupils of all ages use their reading skills effectively to help them in their writing. Their increasing knowledge of phonics helps them to spell simple words correctly. Pupils develop their spelling skills further by learning to identify the letter combinations that make different sounds and they are given good guidance and opportunities to use dictionaries to check spellings and meanings, for example in a Year 2 lesson when pupils construct flow diagrams for the life cycle of the butterfly. Many pupils are developing a joined script and take care with the presentation of their work.
99. Older pupils develop their understanding of grammar and punctuation effectively because there is good teaching of word and sentence work. Where teachers stimulate pupils' imagination they are able to write at length and they tackle their work enthusiastically. Teachers ensure that pupils have good opportunities to use different forms of writing, such as writing flow diagrams and puppet plays.
100. Teaching and learning are very good and this enables pupils to make good progress and achieve high standards. During the inspection, teaching was very good, overall, across the school and in all the lessons observed it was at least good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when teaching was judged to be good. Teachers are very effective at helping pupils to make connections across the subjects of the curriculum and this enables them to use their literacy skills effectively to support their work. In all lessons, teachers place a very good emphasis on sharing with pupils what they want them to do and achieve and how this links with what they have learned before. As pupils are very clear about what is expected of them they settle quickly to their work and are confident. Pupils are actively involved in the learning opportunities they are given and they make good progress.
101. Teachers match work effectively to the capability of pupils. They group pupils of the same prior attainment together and prepare appropriate work for them. Individual needs are met effectively through targets, which are shared with pupils and for which pupils have some responsibility. This makes a significant contribution to the development of their independent learning skills and their awareness of their own learning. Teachers demonstrate in the way they plan and teach lessons that they have a very secure knowledge of the literacy strategy and this reflects the good quality training they have had. Teachers know their pupils well and they use assessment effectively to match work to their abilities, including those pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.
102. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has worked hard with the staff to promote literacy and improve standards. Monitoring of pupils work, the outcomes of national tests and school assessments and lesson observations enable areas for development to be effectively identified and addressed. Resources are good and there is an appropriate emphasis on developing the library provision further. School resources, are effectively enhanced by using the library service and the teacher resource library.

MATHEMATICS

103. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds, standards were in line with the national average. They were also in line with the average for similar schools. Whilst the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 was just below the national average, the percentage reaching the higher Level 3 was just above the national average. The school recognises that boys did significantly worse than girls and is attempting to deal with the issue. Results since 1999 have been average except in 1999 when they were well above average and, overall, have improved in line with national improvements in mathematics.
104. In Year 2, the work pupils were doing during the inspection shows that standards are similar to the national average. There is no significant difference in the standards attained by boys and girls. Pupils' achievements are good in relation to their prior attainment. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 build securely on the sound base provided in the Foundation Stage. Progress is mostly good in Years 3 and 4 and pupils attain standards that are above average by the age of nine.
105. Continued improvements to the curriculum, focused monitoring of teaching and learning, and the careful tracking of pupils' progress have also contributed to the improvements in standards by the age of nine.

106. Teachers ensure that mathematics lessons are fully inclusive and that all pupils are wholly involved in all mathematical activities. This enables all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, to achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Almost all make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of mathematics. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is well organised and learning support assistants are well briefed to develop their confidence and understanding. They provide strong support for both teachers and pupils. In all lessons seen this ensured that pupils sustained their concentration well when engaged in small group tasks and during whole class sessions. At the same time, the sensitive nature of the support encourages pupils to develop their capacity as independent learners. Taking this into account, pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment to reach their present standards at the end of Year 4.
107. Most pupils join the school with skills in mathematics that are below average, as shown by county tests and assessments. Although the rate of learning is not consistent they make good gains, overall, in their knowledge and understanding of number and in the other aspects of mathematics, including shape, measuring and handling data as they move through the school. In particular, as a result of the emphasis that teachers place upon the basic skills, they make good progress in acquiring strategies to deal confidently with number problems.
108. By the age of seven, most pupils develop a secure knowledge of the place value of each digit in numbers to 99, confidently adding and subtracting numbers to 20 and beyond. They estimate and measure length and tell the time to the half-hour. They identify the particular features of common two- and three-dimensional shapes and handle data confidently when carrying out a survey of the favourite drinks of pupils in the class.
109. By the end of Year 4, most pupils have developed good skills in mental mathematics and the majority work confidently and accurately with large numbers. Most pupils have a secure grasp of place value and of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Above average pupils successfully complete written calculations involving multiplication and division of three and four digit numbers. Most pupils understand the link between equivalent fractions, percentages and decimals and use this understanding to solve challenging everyday problems. Most pupils understand how to calculate perimeter and area. They understand how to translate data into graphical form, but the range of graphs is limited and is in need of extension. Pupils with special educational needs work at a lower level, but, as a result of sensitive support, they demonstrate good attitudes to their work and apply their skills well.
110. Pupils use their mathematics skills satisfactorily to support their learning in other subjects such as science, history and geography. Teachers have been well trained and supported in their adoption and implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. They use it consistently to guide their planning and, in this way, ensure that pupils' learning builds progressively as they move through the school. This has been a major factor in the improvement to the quality of teachers' planning since the last inspection. Information and communication technology is shown in some teachers' planning and, when it is used, it raises the level of pupils' learning. Too many opportunities to use computers in mathematics are missed. When setting investigations in mathematics, teachers prepare pupils and explain their tasks to the point where outcomes are predictable and true investigation is limited.
111. The three-part lesson structure is firmly established. Most, but not quite all, lessons begin with a brisk mental mathematics session that captures pupils' interest and develops and extends their calculation skills. In Year 2, for example, as a result of the teacher's quick-fire questioning, pupils were keen to respond and, as a result, learned quickly. In other lessons, this session is occasionally too short and does not present a suitable challenge to some groups within the class. A good feature of most lessons is the clear sharing of the aim of the lesson with pupils. This raises awareness of what they are expected to learn and helps to focus their attention. Most teachers use the plenary or final part of the lesson effectively to reinforce learning. In a very good lesson in Year 3, it was used very successfully, not only to involve pupils in assessing the gains they had made in their understanding of paper and pencil methods of addition, but also to discuss the next steps in their learning.
112. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall, in Years 1 and 2 and, while some very good teaching was seen, some teaching was satisfactory. In Years 3 and 4 the quality of teaching followed

a very similar pattern. Teachers throughout the school have good knowledge of the subject. They use it well to encourage pupils to discuss the good strategies they acquire for dealing with mental calculations. The very good relationships established within the classroom are the key to the most successful teaching at Cedar Road and are at the heart of teachers' skilful management of behaviour. Their encouraging manner ensures that both they and their pupils enjoy their lessons and the subject. Pupils see that their contributions are valued and join in discussions confidently. In Years 3 and 4 this resulted in very good attitudes and behaviour. The quality of marking is mainly very good and teachers' written comments help pupils to improve their work. However, in a small minority of classes the quality of marking does not reach this high standard. Arrangements for homework are good and support pupils class work well.

113. The co-ordinator provides strong leadership and support to colleagues and manages mathematics very effectively. Through her monitoring of teaching and learning she has a very clear view of standards across the school and thorough knowledge of what is working well and what is not. Careful analysis of test results is used well to identify any areas of weakness in pupils' learning. Tracking of pupils' progress is good and individual and group targets have been successfully introduced. This is proving to be influential in raising standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. On a few occasions the use of this high quality information is not rigorous enough to provide suitable challenges for a small number of pupils of both lower and higher attainment.

SCIENCE

114. Standards in science, observed during the inspection, are in line with those expected nationally by the time that pupils reach the ages of seven and nine. These standards are similar to those seen during the last inspection. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher than expected Level 3 at the age of seven is much improved. Overall, the attainment of pupils seen in the present Year 2 classes is below that shown in the 2001 teacher assessments, when it was judged as above the national average. This is mainly due to differences in the overall capability of the year groups. Pupils with special educational needs, those from ethnic minority backgrounds and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress.
115. Since the last inspection, there has been an improvement in teaching and this is now good, and sometimes very good in all classes with no unsatisfactory teaching at either stage. This leads to pupils making good gains in their scientific knowledge and understanding. Teachers choose appropriate tasks that capture the pupils' interest. For example, in Year 2, pupils enthusiastically found out which everyday materials, such as syrup and vegetable oil, would freeze when they were cooled. In all lessons the planning is good, and sometimes very good, and quality resources are used well. In Year 4, a member of staff had used a digital camera to prepare a series of photographs showing everyday processes that involved melting, dissolving, filtering and sieving. These provided very useful visual evidence upon which pupils could base their findings. All teachers start off lessons well by talking about what has already been learned, they question the pupils well and receive their answers with sensitivity. This gives pupils the confidence to put forward their own ideas and suggestions. All teachers use sessions at the end of lessons to consolidate what has taken place and through this, pupils have a good knowledge of their own learning. The teachers introduce an appropriate scientific vocabulary in each session and the pupils are gradually building up their own bank of suitable words and use these knowledgeably. Classroom assistants and other adults are deployed well and, in the best lessons, work alongside pupils with special educational needs, supporting them well both in whole class sessions and in question and answer activities. Throughout the school, teachers place a good focus on practical work, but investigations and experiments are often too directed. Pupils have limited opportunities to plan their own experiments and make effective choices of equipment. This prevents them from achieving the higher levels of which some are capable and which demand a greater level of independence. Previous work shows that pupils are not always asked to predict what will happen before starting an experiment, preventing them from working and thinking in a truly scientific way.
116. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make progress that is good in relation to their abilities, because they receive good practical support both from teachers and other adults. However, the main body of work in lessons is not consistently accurately matched to their capabilities. When it comes

to ways in which these pupils record their results, the match is better in many lessons, helping them to overcome literacy problems. The brighter pupils, too, initially carry out the same work as the rest of the class and it is only at the end of a lesson that extension activities are provided. Opportunities are lost to provide more challenging activities for these pupils within lessons.

117. Based on the national guidelines for the subject, the co-ordinator has introduced a scheme of work that ensures a secure consistency of coverage and approach throughout the school. This means that pupils build on and extend their scientific knowledge and understanding well as they move through the school. Good regard is paid to what is taught in other similar local schools, so that at transfer, all pupils will have covered the same aspects of science and no time will be lost in finding out what they know. Provision is enriched by educational trips, including visits to a farm, the Bedford Butterfly Park and Moulton Agricultural College. For environmental purposes, part of the field is kept as an unmown meadow for part of the year. There are good facilities for pond dipping in the fenced off garden area.
118. A very good assessment system tracks pupils' progress. The teachers assess pupils' work at the end of each unit studied and, together with each pupil, they set individual targets for future improvement. Teachers in all years are involved in looking at examples of work together, judging the national curriculum level shown. From these exemplar pieces the co-ordinator has compiled a portfolio of pupils' work for teachers to use as a future reference point. Its usefulness is somewhat diminished due to a lack of context sheets showing in what circumstances and with how much help each activity was carried out. The school has recognised the need to attach National Curriculum levels to assessed work, but is still awaiting advice from the local authority about how to gauge attainment in work of an investigative nature. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is usually positive and helps to build confidence. However, it does not consistently identify where there are weaknesses and what pupils should do to improve their work.
119. Pupils enjoy science, particularly the practical aspects. For example, in a very good Year 1 lesson about whether shiny objects need a light source to shine in the dark, the pupils patiently waited their turn to look into a dark box. By making the activity exciting by slowly opening a flap in the top – "Just a little bit, just a little bit more!" – the pupils' attention was held and they were keen to try out the experiment for themselves. Pupils take great care with resources and in a Year 2 lesson on freezing materials a brave teacher allowed pupils to ladle out syrup into beakers. The pupils rose to the occasion and did this very sensibly. Pupils work together well in groups, sensibly sharing equipment or materials and, when using a series of photographs in Year 4, coming to a consensus opinion. In a very good Year 3 lesson, in which pupils were comparing the permeability of soils, group relationships were particularly strong. Very good co-operation led to pupils with below average skills being well supported by other children and achieving at a higher level than if left on their own. Pupils' work shows many good links with mathematics through, for example, tables and graphs which record results. The use of computers for this purpose is under-developed. Displays in classrooms and around the school show strong links with other subjects. A large papier-mâché skeleton surrounded by smaller ones made from straws dominates the hall. In the Year 2 area, experiments with freezing water are linked to aspects of a winter walk and the observation of frost and ice in the environment. A collage of figures undertaking different activities illustrates how people can move in different ways. A high quality art display in one Year 2 classroom is based on the shape of petals. This is very successfully linked to collage work and to the designs of William Morris.
120. Parents work well with their children on homework assignments and in Year 2 some delightful collages of natural and man-made materials illustrate the very good partnership between home and school. This strong collaboration involving parents continues in Year 3 with magnetic games, which include design and technology elements, and in Year 4 with the design of posters asking people to look after the environment.
121. The co-ordinator for the subject is fairly new to her role, but already has been on a four-day course, the substance of which she has fed back at full staff meetings. The very good format of all the co-ordinators' files and the inclusion of important documents such as an Action Plan for 2001/2 are extremely helpful to anyone taking over responsibility for a subject previously held by someone else.

ART AND DESIGN

122. Only two art lessons were seen in key stage two during the inspection and none in key stage one. Judgements are made on the basis of lesson observations, discussion with the co-ordinator, scrutiny of the art portfolio and examples of pupils' work around the school. These indicate that standards of work are in line with those expected for pupils in years 2 and 4 and that teaching is good.
123. Displays in classrooms and around the school are a delight and demonstrate the high status of art and the school's commitment to developing pupils' creative skills. Pupils' learning is further enhanced through effective links with the local community and a range of art specialists who visit the school regularly to work with pupils on specific skills, such as the recent topic on weaving. Pupils enjoy art and make good progress, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
124. Pupils' skills in art are well developed across all year groups. Work in Years 1 and 2 develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of processes and skills through experience of a wide range of materials, which are used with increasing confidence. Pupils are able to mix colours effectively, such as in the Year 1 paintings of bears and the use of light and dark in their paintings of torches, candles, fireworks and lamps. The year 2 flower drawings and sketches of natural objects show how teachers pay good attention to line and shape and demonstrate that observational drawing skills are being well taught. There is clear evidence in the art portfolio that pupils' drawing skills are further developed in years 3 and 4 to ensure that they acquire increasing pencil control and awareness of how shading can be used effectively. Pupils' portraits show good development of pencil drawing and colour mixing and increased knowledge of the features of faces. They mix colours to explore tones and shades and the effect of colour, such as in their portraits.
125. The use of sketchbooks to develop pupils' planning of their ideas is not yet consistent throughout the school and needs further development. The school could make further use of sketchbooks to extend more able pupils' learning by encouraging increased exploration and development of their ideas, prior to proceeding with the final piece of work.
126. Work with paper is well represented through use of templates and collage, such as in the year 4 multi-media collage, including images from clipart, inspired by Picasso's 'Guitar and Violin'. The use of information and communication technology in art is well developed across the school. Year 4 pupils have produced some very effective dot pictures based on the work of Seurat, representing pointillism, and some lovely repeat patterns for wallpaper and wrapping paper designs.
127. Three-dimensional work is less well represented and the school has identified this as an area for further development, although there are some good examples around the school, such as the lighthouse and octopus produced with students from the local Art College. There is some use of clay for modelling, but further development is limited, as the school has to use the kiln at another local school.
128. Art is used well to support learning in other subjects; for example, decoration of Derbyshire wells at Pentecost, illustration of pupils' work on Anglo Saxons, Vikings, the ancient Greeks and Christopher Columbus. Art is very well used to illustrate pupils' writing in English, for example, poems in year 4. Pupils' cultural development is enhanced well through learning about the work of famous artists such as Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Seurat and Picasso. The multi-cultural nature of the school community is effectively celebrated through art; for example, in designs of patterned Islamic prayer mats, Caribbean artwork and illustrations of the work of Harriet Tubman.
129. The co-ordinator is providing sound leadership and management. She has introduced the new scheme of work effectively and the subject is generally well resourced, including a good range of books and examples of paintings by famous artists. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, teaching is confident and there is effective liaison between staff and the co-ordinator for advice and support regarding ideas, techniques and resources. Support staff contribute well to pupils' learning in art.
130. Pupils' work is assessed termly at the end of each module, although there is not yet a clear understanding of standards throughout the school. There has been limited monitoring of teaching and learning, due to other school priorities, but there has been some monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' work. The art portfolio is well annotated, with some levelling of pupils' work evident, and shows

good evidence of the range of skills being taught across the school. The school has made good progress since the last inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

131. Two lessons of design and technology were observed in each key stage during the inspection. Judgements are made on the basis of these observations, discussion with the co-ordinator, scrutiny of the design and technology portfolio and examples of pupils' work around the school. These indicate that standards of attainment are in line with national expectations for pupils at the end of Years 2 and 4.
132. The school's provision for design and technology is good and covers all aspects of the required curriculum. Teaching is good and has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy their lessons; they work well, demonstrate accurate recall of previous work and make good progress in their learning. Teachers' planning follows the recently adopted scheme of work, has clear learning objectives and effectively sequences learning so that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and make good progress.
133. Within the area of developing, planning and communicating ideas, pupils demonstrate good ability in discussing, sharing and planning ideas. They use their prior knowledge and speaking skills well. There are some good examples of using information and communication technology, which are specifically related to design technology, although these are few. Samples of pupils' plans show good understanding of the design process, diagrams are well drawn, are appropriately labelled with clear lists identifying the materials required and have generally well written instructions.
134. Pupils are confident in working practically and in choosing appropriate materials. They are given plenty of opportunities for making choices about their work through the skilful use of questioning by their teachers and support staff. Pupils' skills in working with tools, equipment and materials are generally developing well and they have a good awareness of health and safety issues. Some pupils' skills in accuracy, specifically in measuring and shaping materials, are less well developed, but are nevertheless satisfactory.
135. Pupils' abilities in evaluating processes and products are well developed where they are able to talk about their likes and dislikes and in making judgements about the effectiveness of commercially produced products. A good example of this was observed when pupils were evaluating Easter egg boxes. They were able to make clear decisions about who the products were aimed at and why and how successful they considered the companies had been. These discussions helped pupils to evaluate the effectiveness of their own Easter egg boxes. They were able to explain clearly what changes they had made to their original design and what they would need to consider if they were to carry out the same activity a second time. More able pupils could have been stretched through asking them to produce descriptions of materials that they would select if there was an unlimited choice. Teachers provide effective frameworks to support pupils' learning, such as the evaluation worksheet designed to ensure a collaborative approach to teaching and learning and which made good links with mathematics, when pupils were totalling their point scores.
136. Pupils explore and use a variety of materials and mechanisms and they know and understand how various mechanisms can be used to make things work. They are well motivated by this aspect of design technology. They have less confidence in their knowledge of how combinations of materials can be used to create different and more effective outcomes, although this aspect is developing through greater access to three dimensional work, where teachers will be able to make direct links to help pupils' understanding.
137. The co-ordinator has a clear idea of the strengths and areas that require further development within the curriculum. Staff are finding the new scheme of work interesting and challenging and it offers pupils a very good experience of design and technology. The scheme is also contributing to teachers' increased confidence and subject knowledge. Resources are generally well matched to meet the needs of the curriculum. Although there has been limited monitoring of teaching and learning and teachers' planning so far, pupils' work has been monitored and the co-ordinator has begun the process

of annotating and levelling work. There is clear evidence of good progress since the previous inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

138. Standards in geography are broadly in line with those found nationally at the end of Years 2 and 4 and all pupils, including those with special needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make sound progress as they move through the school. When they leave the school aged nine, most pupils have secure geographical knowledge and understanding, together with satisfactory skills, for their age. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound awareness of localities beyond their own, including a contrasting place in India and countries where people go on holiday. They have developed appropriate mapping skills, including simple plans and the construction and use of a simple grid and co-ordinates. Pupils are aware of aspects of their own locality and can discuss the features of this that they either like or dislike. By the time that they leave school, pupils in Year 4 have further developed many of these earlier skills. For example, they use a key showing a range of symbols used on maps. Pupils are aware of the different land uses in this country and compare those in Northampton with other places in the United Kingdom. They realise the problems caused by development, for instance those posed by the new runway at Manchester airport. They have greater understanding of local issues. Following a visit by the Mayor, they wrote to the Council to share their research and conclusions about improving the local environment.
139. Only two geography lessons were seen during the inspection, but, together with looking at pupils past work and from talking to pupils and teachers, inspection evidence supports the judgement that the quality of teaching, overall, is satisfactory. It is obvious from work seen that long-term planning successfully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum for this subject. Some aspects of the national guidance for the subject have been incorporated into this planning and other elements have been kept from a previous scheme of work. In order to maintain an interest in geography at times when it does not have a high status on the timetable, bridging topics such as "Where in the World is Barnaby Bear?" are sensibly covered in Years 1 and 2 and "What's in the News?" in Years 3 and 4. Barnaby Bear has obviously captured the imagination of the young children who send postcards from him wherever they visit on their holidays.
140. Pupils' attitudes to the subject were good in both lessons seen. In the Year 1 lesson, the teacher used a very clear map of the area, incorporating photographs of major features, to retrace the route of a previous walk which the pupils had undertaken. She asked good questions that reminded pupils of the places they had seen, and her sensitive acceptance of their answers enabled all pupils to speak without fear of failure. Their level of recall was good and most were able to draw a circular map of their walk that included the various highlights. In the Year 4 lesson, the teacher again used careful questioning to find out what pupils felt about the local environment. Pupils were well informed prior to the lesson and so they had lots of ideas. The teacher wrote these on the board and pupils felt that their contributions were valued. Unfortunately, her instructions about writing a letter to the Mayor were not clear enough and pupils were so keen to start on this that they left out the drafting stage. In both classes, the classroom assistant, or in the case of Year 4 another teacher, gave good close support to a group of less able pupils. This allowed them to be fully involved both during the initial discussions and later in drawing their maps or writing their letters.
141. Teachers use trips to places in the locality and, in Year 4, a residential trip to the Frontier Centre to enhance pupils' learning. There is limited use of information and communication technology to support work in geography, except in the good use of photographs to support work on different locations. Some pieces of Year 4 work show that a little research on the Internet has taken place and colourful sheets giving information about different countries printed off. This is an area for development. Parents are involved in research activities, such as a survey of street furniture carried out for homework by Year 4 pupils. An improvement since the last inspection is seen in the greater emphasis that teachers place on enquiry skills. Topic areas within this subject, such as one based on village life in India and another on a West Indian location, play a strong part in the cultural development of the pupils.
142. Subject co-ordination is good. The co-ordinator's file gives a useful overview of aspects of the subject such as planning, her action plan for the current year and courses attended. It is backed up by a portfolio containing examples of work produced each year in all classes from Reception to Year 4.

However, a lack of context sheets or National Curriculum levels somewhat restricts its usefulness. There is a very good system of assessing pupils' attainment across the school. This is based on the results of tests at the end of each topic covered and gives teachers a clear picture of pupils' learning as they move through the school.

HISTORY

143. Standards in history are broadly in line with those found nationally at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. All pupils make sound progress as they move through the school. In the last inspection report, there was reference to some weaknesses in the progress pupils had made in developing their enquiry skills. This has now improved as the school has introduced a new, more effective, planning system based on national guidance and teachers focus well on this aspect. Areas to be covered are agreed by other similar schools in the area and this ensures that, on transition, pupils' will not repeat areas already covered. Pupils' skills in interpreting evidence about the past in history are now developing satisfactorily as teachers are giving a good emphasis to this in their lesson planning. Previous work shows that pupils of all abilities are usually presented with the same activities during the main body of a lesson and it is only in follow-up research tasks that the brighter pupils are challenged.
144. Pupils in Year 2 have good levels of knowledge about the achievements of people from the past such as Harriet Tubman, the champion of black women, Sir Edmund Hillary and Florence Nightingale. They are able to answer the question "Where can we find out more?" giving sensible answers about the use of books, pictures and the Internet. They are eager to illustrate their work, but not so keen to write sentences to explain their drawings. They are introduced to important events in British history such as the Great Fire of London and the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The reason for Remembrance Day is well understood. Good displays in all classrooms in Years 1 and 2 help pupils to remember and understand what they have learned in lessons. For instance, in one Year 1 classroom a good display of toys both old and new supported pupils' understanding of differences in materials and manufacture.
145. Pupils in Year 4 are developing a suitable sense of chronology and use a timeline to place events in an appropriate order. All have factual knowledge of certain periods in the history of Great Britain, such as what it was like to be a child in the Second World War and what life was like when John Lennon was alive. In one very good Year 3 lesson, the pupils made great gains in their knowledge about the beliefs and religions of the Ancient Greeks. In this lesson, the pupils' research skills were of a particularly high quality.
146. The overall quality of teaching throughout the school is good. In the two lessons seen in Years 1 and 2 it was good and in the one lesson in Years 3 and 4 it was very good. Both Year 2 lessons were well planned and the teachers tackled a rather difficult subject for this age of pupils in a clear and interesting way. For example, both teachers asked how the pupils would feel if they were denied the right to choose a member of the School Council. This made Harriet Tubman's indignation about not having a vote more meaningful for them. The Year 3 lesson was very well planned. Effective questioning provided good openings for pupils to talk about what they already knew about Greek Gods. Opportunities were given to find out more information about these, using a very good range of books to produce a "fact file". Literacy skills were well employed as the emphasis was on the use of an index or contents page to locate facts and scanning techniques to save time. In this lesson, adult help was particularly well deployed and, as pupils were working in their literacy groups, it was easy to focus support where it was most needed.
147. Resources for history are good and well organised. The loan of artefacts from the local museum and boxes of books from the County's library service usefully augment them. A wide range of activities enrich pupils' learning in this subject. These include visits, for example to a castle and the local museum, and role-play situations. When the pupils carry out a local study, parents and grandparents who have lived in the area for a long time visit the school and share their memories. This helps strengthen the partnership between home and school. Good displays throughout the school show good cross-curricular links with history, design and technology, art and design and geography. In Year 1, graphs are drawn to show the popularity of different children's toys. Although in lessons, pupils suggest using information and communication technology as a means to find out information, this was not seen in history lessons during the inspection. The use of computers to aid pupils'

learning is an area for development. There is evidence in past work of the use of videos, for example one taken on Coronation Day, and photographs to illustrate historical aspects of topic work.

148. Subject co-ordination is good. The co-ordinator's file follows the same useful format as those for other subjects and includes an Action Plan for the current year. In order to monitor pupils' progress, she requests specific evidence from each class at least twice a year and in this way she has a clear view of strengths and weaknesses in the subject throughout the school. At the end of each unit pupils are tested about what they have learned and the results of these assessments are noted. A portfolio of examples of pupils' work has been compiled and these are carefully annotated. It would be even more useful if National Curriculum levels were attached, so that teachers could use these as benchmarks when making judgements about other work. Teachers' marking of past work is generally words of praise to boost confidence, rather than comments which will lead to future improvements.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

149. The standards achieved by pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 are in line with those expected nationally. This is good improvement since the last inspection, when standards were also judged to be in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 4, but expectations for the subject have increased sharply since then.
150. All pupils are fully included in the school's information and communication technology work. Pupils of all ages and abilities regularly use computers to draw pictures, to write stories, poems and factual text. Computers are sometimes used in other subjects, but in too many lessons when the use of computers would certainly enhance pupils learning, they are not used. When they are used, for example in a good science lesson in Year 2 to identify materials which will or will not melt, this positively enhanced their learning. A good display of Years 3 and 4 pupils' work in music shows that they have used computers to compose their own tunes based on familiar stories such as "The Iron Man". However, such good use of computers in other subjects is not a regular feature of lessons.
151. Pupils have satisfactory keyboard and mouse skills. Older pupils build on these skills and manipulate text and graphics on screen. Modelling and control technology are taught satisfactorily, there are sufficient experiences for pupils to model the interior of a classroom or to control a programmable robot, for them to make satisfactory progress. The school has made good progress with its improvement plan for information and communication technology, and the information and communication technology suite has now been opened. All teachers have undertaken training and the suite is now used regularly by every class. However, the suite is too small to properly accommodate 30 older pupils and there is insufficient ventilation. In addition, there is no large screen or projector for teachers to give whole class demonstrations. The school is aware of these weaknesses and intends to correct them within the planned building programme. The area that needs further development is the use of computers in teaching and learning in all other subjects.
152. Pupils thoroughly enjoy working with computers and all have equal opportunities to do so. They show very good co-operation when asked to work in pairs and good skills when working alone. Their behaviour is always very good in these situations.
153. No specific information and communication technology lessons were seen during the inspection. Consequently, an overall judgement on the quality of teaching is not made. However, evidence gathered from talking to pupils, the subject co-ordinator and from looking at pupils past work and displays around the school, supports the judgement that standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 4.
154. The school has improved its use of the resources available since the last inspection. There are computers available to all classes, although not in all classrooms. There is good provision of equipment in the information and communication technology suite. This is Internet linked and pupils use it for occasional e-mail and some Internet research, within appropriate procedures for safe use.
155. Subject co-ordination is good. The co-ordinator's file follows the same useful format as those for other subjects and includes an Action Plan for the current year. The co-ordinator has a clear view of future development and the school is well placed to improve even further.

MUSIC

156. As no class music lessons were observed during the inspection, it is not possible to give an overall judgement about teaching. However, an examination of planning and other documentation shows that good provision is made throughout the school. As at the last inspection, pupils' attainment in music is above the expected level, both by the ages of seven and by nine, and good progress in the subject is made throughout the school. National guidelines for the subject have been adopted and, using these, all teachers are well supported in carrying out their own class music lessons. Pupils use a range of instruments, sing songs and write their own compositions, using simple notation or one based on a pentatonic scale. They listen to music in many contexts and, for example, effective use is made of music to create a quiet and reflective atmosphere in assemblies. Staff make good use of these opportunities to talk to pupils about what they are listening to and to highlight the work of different composers. The pupils sing well-known hymns very tunefully and all of them join in the refrains enthusiastically. In one whole school assembly, the standard of the singing was particularly high and provided a few moments of moving quality. All pupils are fully included in these musical experiences.
157. Music is incorporated well into other areas of the curriculum. For example, in Year 3, pupils learn about the music of the Caribbean. They use a very good range of untuned instruments to support their growing knowledge and understanding of the culture of people living in the West Indies. Other strong links are made with history topics such as Christopher Columbus and the sea, literacy through the musical illustration of fairy tales and aspects of science, including visits to the zoo and to a farm. In Year 4, the writing of "My Rap" poems help pupils to understand about rhythm. A good range of audio-visual equipment supports the subject well and information technology is used to provide notation charts.
158. This area of the curriculum is enhanced by extra-curricular activities such as a recorder club for Year 4 pupils and a well-attended school choir. The very talented music co-ordinator leads these activities expertly and enthusiastically and, additionally, teaches large numbers of pupils together in hymn practice sessions. On these occasions, the teaching is excellent and, because of this, pupils understand they need to think about pitch, rhythm and timing as well as taking care with their breathing and diction. The older pupils are especially adept at singing in rounds of up to four parts. Some pupils extend their musical ability still further by attending small tutorial sessions run by a violin teacher. Pupils' performing skills are well extended by taking part in large local events and, in addition, participation in school productions staged before an audience. As in the last report, the quality of singing is a strength of the school.
159. Subject co-ordination is very good. The co-ordinator's file follows the same useful format as those for other subjects and includes an Action Plan for the current year. The co-ordinator has expert knowledge of the subject and uses this to lead and encourage others. There is a very good assessment system in place which accurately tracks pupils progress.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

160. Standards in physical education are in line with those normally expected nationally at the ages of seven and eleven. These show satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
161. The school has a hall, which is an appropriate size for physical education and is well equipped with large-scale and high-level equipment. Dance is a well-developed aspect of physical education throughout the school and pupils enjoy dance. For example, in a good Year 1 dance lesson, pupils had great fun and made good progress both in their dancing skills and their cultural development. They learned some of the skills of Irish dancing and compared these to their previous knowledge of Greek, Senegalese and American Indian dancing.
162. The teaching of the skills of traditional games is good throughout the school and a good range of extra-curricular sports clubs supplements this. These include soccer, athletics and tennis, according to season. The attendance at these clubs is good and they have a positive effect on the standards of the pupils who attend.

163. The school has established very good links with sports organisations in the area, such as the Northampton rugby union and soccer teams. These links enhance the standards achieved by the pupils involved.
164. The standards achieved in gymnastics are in line with expectations for most pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Pupils learn to build sequences of movement, changing both their pace and level of movement as they progress. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are fully included in all physical education lessons.
165. The organisation of swimming is satisfactory. Almost all pupils achieve the standards expected nationally in swimming by the time that they leave the school.
166. Five lessons were observed in physical education, three in Years 1 and 2, and two in Years 3 and 4. In three of these lessons the quality of teaching was good and in the other two it was satisfactory. This evidence together with evidence from talking to pupils and teachers and from looking at teachers' planning supports the judgement that the quality of teaching is good, overall. Teachers' planning is good and is linked to the school's good scheme of work. Teachers dress appropriately for physical education. They provide good opportunities for warm up and cool down at the beginning and end of lessons. Teachers demonstrate exercises effectively to the pupils during lessons and, consequently, pupils are able to improve their own skills. Teachers are aware of pupils' abilities and monitor their progress accordingly. All pupils enjoy their learning in physical education and their attitudes to the subject are good. Almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make sound progress throughout the school.
167. The quality of co-ordination in physical education is good. The quality and range of resources are good and effective use is made of them. The co-ordinator has developed a system of assessment for the subject, but this is not yet fully in place.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

168. Pupils attainment, at the age of 7 and 9, is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make good progress and the subject makes an effective contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The provision for religious education and pupils' achievements and progress have improved since the last inspection. At that time, standards were judged to be inconsistent across the school.
169. Pupils know some of the stories from the Bible, such as Jonah and the whale. Through these stories teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to explore emotions such as feeling scared, safe and angry. Pupils in Year 2 use their own experiences to help them empathise with Jonah. The curriculum ensures that pupils acquire knowledge and understanding of different religious traditions when they study the Jewish and Muslim faiths. Teachers ensure that during religious education lessons pupils have good opportunities to reflect on their learning in pairs and as a class. Pupils in Years 2 and 4 share their knowledge and understanding of the Bible. Teachers also provide good opportunities for them to explore their ideas when they discuss 'what could an Angel be?'
170. It was not possible to observe any lessons for older pupils, but scrutiny of teachers' planning, pupils' work and observations of lessons for younger pupils indicates that teaching across the school is good. Teachers make effective use of a range of teaching strategies, such as sitting in a large circle for story telling and paired discussions. Good quality resources are used well to gain pupils' attention and promote their learning. There is a good emphasis on discussion, which effectively supports the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils are thoughtful and they share ideas well, listening to each other and developing their ideas from what they hear. Sensitive support enables pupils to share ideas confidently and openly with each other. There is very little use of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning in Religious Education.
171. The subject is well managed and the quality of provision has been improved since the last inspection. There is a satisfactory level of assessment to track pupils' progress. Teaching is now more consistent and the experiences that pupils have enable them to build successfully on what they have learned and they make good progress. Pupils' learning is enriched by a good range of visits and by visitors to the school, such as the parent who came to talk to pupils about the Jewish faith and Shabat. Teachers plan visits to places of worship such as the local Methodist Church. The vicar comes into school regularly and pupils go to the church to celebrate festivals such as Harvest and Christmas. These opportunities enrich pupils' learning.