

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **SHELTON LOWER SCHOOL**

Marston Moretaine

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109471

Headteacher: Mr. James Smart

Reporting inspector: Alison M. Cartlidge  
OIN 23609

Dates of inspection: 28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> January 2002

Inspection number: 194035

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lower Shelton Road Upper Shelton Marston Moretaine Bedfordshire
Postcode:	MK43 0LS
Telephone number:	01234 768269
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. Marian Palmer
Date of previous inspection:	May 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23609	Alison M. Cartlidge	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Curriculum  Mathematics  Art & Design  Design & Technology  Music  Religious Education	The school's results and achievements  Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development  How well is the school led and managed?
9545	Kevin Greateorex	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?  How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23239	Mike Capper	Team inspector	English  Science  Information & Communication technology  Geography  History  Physical Education  Special Educational Needs  Equal Opportunities	How well are pupils taught?  How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Shelton Lower School is situated in the village of Upper Shelton in Bedfordshire. The school is much smaller than average, with 35 full-time pupils between the ages of four and nine on roll. In addition, there are 5 nursery children who attend school part-time. Pupils are taught in two classes, with three year-groups in each class. Pupils come from a mix of owner-occupied and rented housing, and are all from homes where English is the first language. The school admits children earlier than at the time of the last inspection. They start school in the term following their fourth birthday and attend part-time for the first half term. Their attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year, and has been broadly average until recently. However, in the last two years, attainment on entry has been above average, with no pupils having special educational needs. No pupils take free school meals, and this figure is well below average for the country. The school has twenty per cent of its pupils on the register of special educational needs, and one pupil has a statement. These figures are broadly average. About fifteen per cent of the pupils change school during the year for a variety of reasons. The headteacher has a very heavy teaching commitment.

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

The school provides a sound education for its pupils, with attainment being average overall by the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 4. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction for the work of the school, and has been successful in gaining the full support and confidence of parents, members of staff and governors in carrying out planned developments. Pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum and develop good behaviour and attitudes towards learning. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with good teaching of children in the early years. The school is successful in its aim to be 'a small school with a big heart' and, despite an above average cost per pupil, provides sound value for money.

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

- Pupils attain good standards in English, mathematics and information and communication technology by the end of Year 2.
- Teaching is consistently good in the nursery, reception and Year 1 class.
- Reading is taught well, resulting in good standards throughout the school.
- Members of staff are caring and friendly, and help pupils to behave well and enjoy school.
- The very good provision for information and communication technology is helping to raise attainment.
- Parents are very supportive of the school's work.

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

- The effectiveness of teachers' planning and the assessment of older pupils, to ensure that work meets their differing needs more closely.
- Pupils' knowledge in religious education.

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

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

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in 1997, when it had many significant weaknesses. The quality of teaching has greatly improved. Pupils' attainment is higher in English, information and communication technology, art and design and design and technology. However, the weakness in teachers' planning still exists in many lessons in Years 2, 3 and 4, reducing the progress that pupils of differing prior attainment can make. In addition, the good attainment in religious education has not been maintained. The commitment of staff and governors and their development planning show that the school is well placed to improve further.

## STANDARDS

Fewer than ten pupils take the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 each year, and the table showing the standards achieved by pupils is omitted to protect the identities of individual pupils. Attainment varies considerably from year to year, depending on the number of pupils with special educational needs. At the time of the inspection, all the pupils with special educational needs were in Years 3 and 4.

By the end of the reception year, most children make good progress. They exceed the expectations for children of this age group in all areas of learning with the exception of creative development, where they are in line with expectations.

Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is above average in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. It is broadly average in science. Attainment is in line with national expectations in all other subjects, and pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils make good progress overall in reading, writing and mathematics. The school sets challenging but achievable targets for pupils at the end of Year 2. National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 2 vary from year to year. Taking the last three years together, attainment has been above average in reading and writing but below average in mathematics and science. Although most pupils attain the expected level (Level 2), fewer pupils than found nationally attain the higher level (Level 3) in mathematics and science. Nevertheless, more pupils are on target to attain the higher level in mathematics in 2002 than in the past. Whilst girls perform better than boys in tests, there is no significant difference between girls and boys in their class work.

By the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in all subjects except in reading, where attainment is above average, and in religious education where it is below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In religious education, pupils do not remember clearly what they have learnt. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, continue to make satisfactory progress overall, and good progress in reading and information and communication technology. Whilst pupils develop a good knowledge of scientific facts, their investigative skills are less well developed. It was not possible to form a judgement on attainment and progress in music because no lessons were on the timetable during the inspection.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and are confident and keen to work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils of different ages and backgrounds play together well and have a good understanding of the school's rules.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others. They work together sensibly in lessons and help each other when necessary. Pupils are keen to take responsibility for aspects of classroom routines. However, they do not often show initiative when they are working.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance rates are well above national averages and there is no unauthorised absence.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 –4
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with over half of the lessons being good or better. Most of the good teaching is in the nursery, reception and Year 1 class, where the teacher and learning

support assistants understand the needs of young children well and are successful in meeting the wide range of ages and abilities through careful planning. A variety of practical activities make learning interesting and meaningful.

In Years 2, 3 and 4, teaching is satisfactory overall, with good teaching of reading and information and communication technology. In this class, lessons are well resourced, and the teachers plan a range of exciting and stimulating activities to keep pupils involved in their work. Lessons start with clear explanations of what pupils are going to do, which help to make learning purposeful. In some lessons, questioning is used very effectively to involve pupils of differing age or ability. However, teachers' planning lacks detail about what pupils of differing ability are expected to learn.

Teachers in both classes have good relationships with the pupils and manage their behaviour well. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to take a full part in all activities. Information and communication technology is used very effectively to support learning in different subjects. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, with a good range of additional activities. The curriculum for children in the nursery and reception year is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils receive good help from learning support assistants, although the work provided is sometimes too difficult.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Assemblies are very well planned and pupils are taught to appreciate and respect views or beliefs that are different from their own. They are given good opportunities to think about how their actions can affect others and are encouraged to take responsibility for aspects of school life.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Members of staff are considerate and caring and meet pupils' personal needs effectively. However, the school's procedures for monitoring the academic progress of pupils are unsatisfactory overall.

Parents are keen to take part in school events and by helping their children at home. The school values highly the contributions made by parents.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. Members of staff carry out their responsibilities diligently but have limited time available to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body is very enthusiastic and supportive of the school. It is kept well informed by the headteacher and has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and the priorities for future development. There is a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve its role as a 'critical friend'.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. A clear school development plan outlines appropriate areas for improvement and is linked effectively to the professional development of individual members of staff. However, there is not sufficient link between developments and their expected impact on raising standards.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's finances are handled effectively by the headteacher and part-time administrative assistant. The governing body and a finance officer from the local education authority monitor spending closely. The evaluation of the effectiveness of spending to ensure best value is informal, but spending decisions are carefully considered and additional funding is used efficiently.



The school has a satisfactory level of staffing. There is a generous allocation of well-trained learning support assistants. An information and communication technology assistant has provided the school with valuable additional expertise, and his skills are used effectively to help raise attainment.

Whilst accommodation is satisfactory overall, there are restrictions in space, particularly in the classroom for children in the nursery, reception and Year 1 class, and in the access to the library for all pupils. These limitations mean that pupils have less opportunity to take the initiative in their learning by choosing from a range of activities or by carrying out independent research. The shared entrance to the only toilet for adults and the girls' toilets in the main building is unsatisfactory.

The school has suitable resources to support learning in all areas of the curriculum. Effective use is made of visitors and visits to the local community to extend pupils' learning. Information and communication technology is used very effectively to support learning and school management.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching and the progress their children make.</li> <li>• Children like school, behave well and are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• Members of staff are approachable and work closely with parents.</li> <li>• Children are helped to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homework.</li> <li>• Extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. Parents' reservations about homework and extra-curricular activities are not supported by inspection evidence. Homework is appropriate and there is a good range of extra-curricular activities for a school of this size.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Year groups are very small and attainment varies considerably from year to year, depending on the number of pupils with special educational needs. At the time of the inspection, all the pupils with special educational needs were in Years 3 and 4.
2. Children's attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. However, attainment on entry has been above average in the last two years, with no children having special educational needs. By the end of the reception year, most children make good progress and exceed the expectations for children of this age group in all areas of learning, with the exception of creative development where they are in line with expectations. Since the time of the last inspection, attainment has improved in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. It has been maintained in other areas of learning.
3. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is above average in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. It is in line with national averages in science. Attainment is in line with national expectations in all other subjects, and pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Attainment has improved by the end of Year 2 since the last inspection, when it was below average in English. Pupils now make good progress overall in reading, writing and mathematics. The school sets challenging but achievable targets for pupils at the end of Year 2 in English and mathematics.
4. National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 2 vary from year to year. Taking the last three years together, attainment has been above average in reading and writing but below average in mathematics and science. Although most pupils attain the expected level (Level 2), fewer pupils attain the higher level (Level 3) than found nationally in mathematics and science. More pupils are on target to attain the higher level in mathematics in 2002 than in the past. Whilst girls perform better than boys in tests, there is no significant difference between girls and boys in their class work.
5. By the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in all subjects except reading, where attainment is above average, and religious education where it is below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Since the last inspection, attainment has improved in speaking and reading. However, the good standards in religious education noted at the time of the last inspection have not been maintained, and present pupils do not remember what they have learnt clearly enough. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, continue to make satisfactory progress overall, and good progress in reading and information and communication technology. Whilst pupils develop a good knowledge of scientific facts, their investigative skills are less well developed.
6. Throughout the school, attainment and progress are better in art and design and design and technology than at the time of the last inspection. It was not possible to form a judgement on attainment and progress in music because no lessons were on the timetable during the inspection. Standards in music were good at the time of the last inspection. Parents are pleased with the progress their children make, especially in learning to read.
7. No pupils have been formally identified as being gifted or talented. However, good provision is made for younger pupils to work in the class with the older pupils when necessary.

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

8. The positive attitudes of pupils and their respect for others' feelings, values and beliefs are a good feature of the school's work. The weaknesses in behaviour that were identified at the time of the last inspection are no longer evident in class. The school continues to be a friendly place for

pupils to learn. The caring family atmosphere that has been established by the headteacher and members of staff makes a good contribution to pupils' learning.

9. Children in the reception year have well-developed personal and social skills. They behave well, and even the youngest children are good at waiting for their turn patiently. They concentrate hard when listening to others and are beginning to make sensible contributions to discussions. Children play together amicably, sharing and looking after resources without fuss. They are confident and enthusiastic about trying out new activities, and are happy to make choices about what they are going to do. For example, children chose from a range of activities during a literacy lesson and persevered with that work once the choice had been made. Members of staff have good expectations of children's independence, and new children quickly learn the class routines, such as packing away resources at the ends of lessons.
10. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 have good attitudes to school. Teachers and learning support assistants are quick to praise. This usually encourages pupils to respond well to the work they are given. Their positive attitudes are demonstrated by their willingness to undertake monitor duties around school. The only occasions when attitudes are less positive is in the small number of lessons in Years 2, 3 and 4 where teachers do not make clear their expectations about how quickly pupils should work or where work is insufficiently challenging. When this happens, a few older pupils are slow to get started and do not work as quickly as they should. This has a negative impact on their learning.
11. Pupils are able to take part in a good range of extra-curricular activities and they do this eagerly. Clubs are well attended and pupils are very keen to come to school. This is reflected in the very high levels of attendance that the school achieves. Attendance rates are well above national averages, and there is no unauthorised absence. The punctuality of pupils is good, which means that little time is wasted at the start of each day.
12. Parents are very pleased with the behaviour of their children. There have been no recent exclusions from the school and behaviour is good in classrooms and on the playground. Pupils move calmly and sensibly around school, showing good levels of co-operation. They play together well, whatever their age, and have a good understanding of the school's rules. They know that they are expected to behave sensibly at all times, and they largely achieve this. During assemblies, pupils listen attentively to the teacher, make sensible contributions to discussions, and respond well to opportunities for prayer or quiet reflection. Lunch-times are pleasant social occasions where pupils chat together. Pupils are well supervised by experienced and kind midday staff.
13. The good relationships that exist between pupils and their teachers help to make the school a happy place. All adults are helpful and friendly, with the result that pupils enjoy talking to adults and to visitors. This was very noticeable during the inspection. There is a strong caring ethos within the school, and pupils from different backgrounds play together happily. Pupils work happily together in lessons, supporting each other with help and advice when necessary. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated and are given good support by their classmates.
14. Personal development is satisfactory. Teachers know the pupils very well and give them appropriate opportunities to take responsibility for aspects of classroom routines. However, pupils do not often show initiative when they are working. This is largely because opportunities for personal research are under-developed, partly due to restrictions caused by limitations in the building. For example, whilst pupils have opportunities to carry out independent research using collections of books in the classroom, they have limited access to the library because it is in an unsupervised and separate part of the school building. Pupils are able to devise some of their own work in mathematics, science and design and technology. This was seen to good effect in a science lesson for pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4, where they were able to plan out their own way of separating different sorts of materials.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and has improved significantly since the last inspection when 23 per cent of lessons were found to be unsatisfactory. Teaching is now good or better in over half of the lessons, with one unsatisfactory lesson observed.
16. The majority of the good teaching is seen in the nursery, reception and Year 1 class, where basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught well. In this class, the teacher is very successful in meeting the wide range of ages and abilities. She has a good knowledge of the needs of nursery and reception children, and work is carefully planned to meet these needs. The teacher's planning clearly shows what pupils of different age or ability are expected to learn in a particular lesson. Lessons are well organised, and good use is made of skilled learning support assistants to ensure that nursery and reception children are provided with good opportunities to develop a range of skills. Pupils' learning is assessed effectively, and the teacher uses the information collected to plan future lessons. Regular meetings with learning support assistants help to ensure that they are fully involved in this process and make a good contribution.
17. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught well to pupils in Year 1. There is a good level of challenge for these pupils. Work is varied according to their previous learning. In a literacy lesson, for example, some Year 1 pupils worked on using different letter sounds. More able pupils did a similar task, but their learning was extended because they had to use a dictionary to check the spelling of words that they were making. This meant that both groups of pupils made good progress in this lesson.
18. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 2, 3 and 4. Lessons in this class are well resourced and teachers are successful in making learning fun. They plan a range of exciting and stimulating activities that help to keep pupils involved in their work. Lessons start with clear explanations of what pupils are going to do, and this helps to make learning purposeful for them. In some lessons, questioning is used very effectively to involve pupils of differing age or ability. This was seen to good effect in a literacy lesson where the teacher varied his questions according to which pupil he was asking. There was a different focus to each question depending on the age of the pupil, and this helped to ensure that all needs were met. In a history lesson, good questioning followed by a 'brainstorming' session was successful in helping pupils to focus on the task that they had been given. However, teachers' planning generally lacks detail, with some lesson plans merely identifying the area of study. This means that teachers are not always providing successfully for the different age groups and ability levels within the class. Work is not matched closely enough to the needs of individual pupils, with the same piece of work often being given to all pupils.
19. Work in Years 2, 3 and 4 is regularly marked, but teachers rarely write detailed written comments to help pupils to understand what they have achieved or how they could improve further in the future. There are no consistent procedures for recording pupils' learning from lesson to lesson, and this leads to work not always being pitched at the right level for the ability of the pupils. This was the case in the one unsatisfactory lesson seen during the inspection. Although the teacher had prepared very well for this numeracy lesson, the worksheets that were provided were much too hard for many pupils. Pupils did not understand what they had to do and completed very little work in the lesson as a result.
20. Reading is taught well throughout the school, and this contributes to the high standards achieved by pupils in this aspect of English. Teachers make good use of a commercial reading scheme to ensure that skills are developed systematically. Pupils are encouraged to use their knowledge of letter sounds to work out how to read new words. Where appropriate, pupils are taught to use other strategies to improve their reading. Teachers ensure that pupils are given purposeful reading tasks in lessons, which helps pupils to improve the range of their reading.
21. Teachers in both classes have good relationships with the pupils and manage their behaviour well. Members of staff are caring and patient, showing a good concern for pupils' personal development. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and

encouraged to take a full part in all activities. However, when all pupils do the same piece of work, teachers rely on additional support to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. This means that the work is not always appropriate to their specific needs, and this leads to some work being too hard and remaining unfinished.

22. A strength of teaching throughout the school is the very effective use of ICT to support learning in different subjects. Teachers take care to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the computers. They give them good opportunities to develop new skills and to practise them in subjects such as literacy, numeracy, science and history. For example, in a history lesson in Years 2, 3 and 4, pupils learnt how to put text onto a picture of the school. They developed this skill at the same time as thinking about how the school had changed over time.
23. Most parents are happy with homework provision, and inspection findings confirm that arrangements for homework are satisfactory. Teachers plan interesting homework in a range of subjects such as English, mathematics and science. Pupils report that they enjoy the homework that they are given.

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

24. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which is extended further by a good range of additional activities. There have been important improvements since the last inspection. The curriculum now fully meets statutory requirements. There are now schemes of work in place for all subjects. These ensure that pupils' skills and knowledge are developed more systematically than they were in the past.
25. The curriculum for children in the nursery and reception year has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Planning is detailed, showing clearly how the needs of younger and older children in the age group are to be met. There are some limitations in the accommodation, which is small and lacks a secure outdoor area. This makes it difficult for the teacher to set out the full range of activities that are found in most nursery or reception classes. Nevertheless, the good organisation of learning and the very effective use of learning support assistants mean that, in practice, the needs of nursery and reception year children are met well. Learning support assistants regularly take children out of the classroom so that they have opportunities to work outside. When working in the classroom, the very high level of adult help means that children are supported well in their learning, with access to an interesting range of activities that are appropriate to their individual needs.
26. In Years 1 to 4, teachers plan exciting and stimulating activities. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been appropriately implemented and are having a good impact on standards in English and mathematics, especially in Years 1 and 2. However, there is an important weakness in the curriculum for older pupils because planned work does not always meet the needs of all pupils. In the Years 2, 3 and 4 class, teachers' planning lacks detail of expectations for pupils of differing age or ability, and this means that needs are not always met successfully. In subjects such as science, history and geography, pupils often do the same activity whatever their age or previous learning. This means that, on occasions, work is either unchallenging for higher attaining pupils or too difficult for lower attaining pupils.
27. Great care is taken by all members of staff to enrich the curriculum whenever possible. A stimulating range of educational visits is planned each year, making a good contribution to pupils' learning. For example, pupils have visited a Sikh temple and a cathedral as well as a local village. All of these activities are carefully followed up in class, and pupils recall with enthusiasm what they have done on their various days out of school.
28. Links with the community are good and further enhance the curriculum. Regular visits from members of the local community are used to good effect in lessons. These include visits from artists and authors. For example, a thought-provoking sculpture that is now placed in the school grounds resulted from a recent art project led by a visiting sculptor. The school has good links with other local schools in order to ensure that transfer arrangements are smooth and problem free.

29. The school provides a good number of extra-curricular activities. Clubs for gymnastics, French and recorders are well attended and give pupils good opportunities to develop skills outside lessons. Although a number of parents feel that the school could provide more out-of-school activities, inspection findings are that provision is better than usual for the size of the school.
30. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, overall. The school is very welcoming to pupils who have special educational needs, and works hard to ensure equal access to the curriculum for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress overall. They benefit from the high level of educational support available in classes. Individual education plans for these pupils are detailed and provide clear guidance for members of staff when planning work. However, work in class does not always meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. On too many occasions, teachers rely on giving these pupils extra adult support to complete the same work as other pupils rather than planning different work more appropriate to their individual needs.
31. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory overall. Assemblies are very well planned and include an opportunity for prayer or quiet reflection. In religious education, pupils learn about Christianity as well as other faiths such as Islam and Judaism. However, their recall of what has been taught is limited, and this is an area that should be improved.
32. The school's provision for pupils' personal development continues to be good. Stories in lessons promote pupils' awareness of moral values, and school rules are prominently displayed around the school. Teachers use discussion times to promote an understanding of right and wrong. Pupils are given good opportunities to think about how their actions can affect others. For example, in a very effective assembly, the teacher 'introduced' characters such as 'Gertie Grumble' and 'Charlie Cheerful' to help pupils learn about how their mood, cheerful or otherwise, can make a difference to their classmates.
33. Provision for social development is good. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for aspects of school life and they do this well. Even the youngest children in the reception year help to tidy up at the end of the sessions. Older pupils are willing to perform a range of tasks around school, including helping younger pupils at work. However, they are given limited opportunities to show initiative in their own learning. This is a comparative weakness in the school's provision for pupils' social development.
34. Provision for pupils' cultural development continues to be good. The school works hard to teach pupils about their own and other cultures through a range of planned activities. Pupils recently had a 'Rosh Hashanah' breakfast, which helped them to appreciate the traditions of a faith other than their own. In geography, pupils learn about Kenya and write to pen pals in that country. In history and physical education, pupils learn about the local community and take part in traditional activities such as country dancing. These activities help pupils to appreciate each other's cultural differences and to learn to respect views or beliefs that are different from their own.

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

35. The school provides good support and guidance for pupils' personal needs and effectively promotes their welfare, health and safety in a warm, caring and secure environment. As at the time of the last inspection, all members of staff know the pupils well and have a clear picture of their strengths and weaknesses. Updated information regarding pupils' personal development is shared by all teachers and learning assistants at their regular meetings, and is then used to provide effective support for the pupils. Staff and parents have regular contact at the start of the day, allowing parents to be made aware of any emerging strengths and weaknesses. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of the pupils and consistently monitor well their personal development and their ability to cope on a day-to-day basis. Virtually all parents believe that the school helps their children to become more mature and responsible.
36. As at the time of the last inspection, the school's procedures for monitoring the academic progress of pupils are unsatisfactory overall. There are satisfactory arrangements for assessing

children in the nursery and reception years. Members of staff know the children well and adapt work to suit their individual needs. Various appropriate assessments are carried out in English and mathematics throughout the school, but the information collected is not always used effectively to help teachers plan work that meets the needs of all pupils. There are no formal assessment arrangements for other subjects, and this means that pupils of differing abilities often complete the same work.

37. Procedures to monitor and promote attendance are effective. Registers are marked speedily, correctly and efficiently at the start of the school day and after lunch. Absences are properly noted and contact made with parents to explain the absence. Attendance figures are correctly aggregated and are now properly recorded in both the school brochure and the governors' annual report to parents. There was no unauthorised absence recorded last year.
38. The headteacher and other staff provide very good role models in promoting high standards of good behaviour. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are in place. Basic school rules are clearly set out and are well understood by pupils. The policy is consistently applied by all members of staff, who were seen to pre-empt incidents of possible misbehaviour in the playground with firm, calm intervention and so maintain good control.
39. Child protection issues continue to be handled effectively, and all members of staff are aware of the need for vigilance and the steps to take if necessary. Health and safety are promoted effectively in the school. Potential hazards are identified through regular inspections by the headteacher and a governor. Appropriate action plans are produced and remedial action taken. All staff members are safety conscious and constantly ensure that pupils' welfare is safeguarded. All members of staff work hard to create a secure environment, and they promote the well being of pupils effectively.

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

40. Parents are very supportive of the school and confirm that it has many strengths. All those responding to the questionnaire agree that their children like school and are pleased with teaching and the progress their children make. Virtually all parents believe that the school expects their children to work hard, and they would feel comfortable about approaching the school with a problem. They feel that the school is well led and managed and is helping their children to become mature and responsible. They confirm that behaviour in the school is good. They feel that the school works closely with parents and they feel well informed about how their children are getting on.
41. A very few parents expressed reservations about the amount of work to be done at home and the range of activities outside lessons. These reservations were not supported by inspection evidence. The work to be done at home is appropriate for pupils of this age range, although the policy is currently under review by the headteacher. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities including music and gymnastics.
42. Parents and other adults are encouraged to involve themselves in the life of the school, and many take part enthusiastically in a wide range of activities, They help with particular activities in classes and around the site. In addition, parents are very supportive of the work that their children are expected to do at home. There is an enthusiastic and particularly active parents and teachers association that raises substantial amounts of finance in support of the school and helps out in other practical ways around the school. The school values highly the contributions made by parents to enhance the children's learning and personal development.
43. The information given to parents is satisfactory overall. The school prospectus is clear and comprehensive, setting out a good overview of the school's values and its curriculum. The governors' annual report to parents is well presented and gives parents a clear indication of the vision for the future. Reports to parents provide much good information about what the children know and can do. However, while some contain information about progress and areas or targets for improvement, this is not consistently included for all pupils.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The quality of leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction for the work of the school, and has been successful in gaining the full support and confidence of parents, members of staff and governors in carrying out planned developments. A clear school development plan outlines appropriate areas for improvement and is linked effectively to the professional development of individual members of staff. However, there is insufficient link between developments and the expected impact on raising standards, and there is no formal record of discussions held when evaluating the effectiveness of work from the previous year.
45. The school was requiring considerable improvement at the time of the last inspection, and necessary changes have been successfully managed by the headteacher, governing body and members of staff. Most parents are happy with the way the school is led and managed, and have noticed that the school is now better organised. Good progress has been made towards addressing issues identified at the time of the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved, especially for children in the nursery, reception and Year 1 class. Attainment and progress has improved in speaking, writing, art and design and design and technology, although good attainment in religious education has not been maintained. The weakness identified at the time of the last inspection, of lesson planning not being based on what pupils already know, still exists in many lessons in Years 2, 3 and 4, reducing the progress that pupils of differing prior attainment can make.
46. A strength of the school is the dedication and hard work of all members of staff, who often work additional hours on a voluntary basis. The headteacher is a class teacher most of the week and therefore has a very heavy workload, which greatly limits the time available to lead and manage school development. Members of staff are all valued and know that the suggestions they make to improve the school are appreciated and that they are included in important discussions. Teachers have several responsibilities for leading and developing different subjects, and work has started on using information on pupils' test results to set targets for year groups and individual pupils in English and mathematics. However, members of staff have limited time to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning in all the subjects they manage. The commitment of members of staff and relevant planning suggest that the school is well placed to improve further.
47. The new and relatively inexperienced governing body is very enthusiastic and supportive of the school. It is kept well informed by the head teacher and so has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and the priorities for future development. There is a good understanding of what more needs to be done to improve their role as 'critical friend', and all governors have attended recent training to support them in their responsibilities. It is continuing to improve its effectiveness by becoming involved in regular visits to the school, by setting up a curriculum committee and by taking part in planning for the future. The governing body has therefore improved since the time of the last inspection when it was not fulfilling its statutory duties.
48. As at the time of the last inspection, the school's finances are handled effectively by the headteacher and part-time administrative assistant. The governing body and a finance officer from the local education authority monitor spending closely. The evaluation of the effectiveness of spending remains informal, but spending decisions are carefully considered and additional funding is used efficiently. The cost per pupil is relatively high but, despite this, the school provides sound value for money.
49. The level of staffing is satisfactory, though the school is less generously staffed than at the time of the last inspection. Whilst class sizes are small and there is a generous allocation of well-trained learning support assistants, the headteacher has a very heavy teaching commitment and is responsible for too many areas of the curriculum. As at the time of the last inspection, members of staff carry out their responsibilities diligently, but have limited time available to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning effectively. There are appropriate procedures for staff appraisal, and opportunities for members of staff to develop professionally have been improved since the time of the last inspection when they were unsatisfactory. An information and communication



technology assistant has provided the school with valuable additional expertise, and his skills are used effectively to help raise attainment. There was a lack of expertise in this subject at the time of the last inspection.

50. The school premises are attractively decorated and kept safe and clean. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and all areas of the curriculum can be taught. Nevertheless, there are restrictions in space, particularly in the classroom for children in the nursery, reception and Year 1 class, and in the access to the library for all pupils. These limitations mean that pupils have less opportunity to take the initiative in their learning by choosing from a range of activities or by carrying out independent research as they get older. The shared entrance to the only toilet for adults and the girls' toilets in the main building is unsatisfactory.
51. The school has suitable resources to support learning in all areas of the curriculum. Effective use is made of visitors and visits to the local community to extend pupils' learning. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning and leadership and management.

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

In order to raise pupils' attainment and the quality of education provided, the headteacher, members of staff and governors should:

1. Meet the differing educational needs of older pupils more effectively in lessons by:
  - clearly identifying in planning expectations for different abilities and age groups,
  - assessing what pupils already know,
  - using assessment information to help plan suitable work for groups of pupils or individuals. (Paragraphs 18, 19, 26, 36, 45, 89, 90, 91, 93, 100, 103, 108, 113, 118, 120, 126, 140, 146, 151)
2. Improve attainment in religious education by enabling pupils to keep a meaningful record of what they have learnt. (Paragraphs 5, 31,149)

In addition to the main issues, the school may wish to consider including the following minor issues in its action plan:

- Improving the quality of reports on pupils' progress so that they include clear areas for development. (Paragraph 43)
- Increasing the use of the outdoor area for children in the foundation stage. (Paragraphs 25, 54)
- Providing more opportunities for pupils to carry out personal study and to take the initiative in their learning. (Paragraphs 14, 33, 76)
- Decreasing the headteacher's workload. (Paragraph 49)
- Improving the privacy for adults and pupils in the toilets in the main building. (Paragraph 50)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	16
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	1	8	6	1	0	0
Percentage	0	6	50	38	6	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	5	36
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	5

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.6

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	26
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

### Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	20

**Education support staff: YN – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	75

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	NA
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	NA
Total number of education support staff	NA
Total aggregate hours worked per week	NA
Number of pupils per FTE adult	NA

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	128,018
Total expenditure	126,288
Expenditure per pupil	3,508
Balance brought forward from previous year	9,869
Balance carried forward to next year	11,599

**Results of the survey of parents and carers**

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	36
Number of questionnaires returned	19

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	84	16	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	89	11	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	84	11	0	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	37	10	0	16
The teaching is good.	74	26	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	69	26	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	90	5	0	0	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	84	5	0	0	11
The school works closely with parents.	58	37	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	90	5	0	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	74	21	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	53	26	21	0	0

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

52. Children are taught in a mixed age class of nursery, reception and Year 1 pupils. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. However, attainment on entry has been above average in the last two years, with no children having special educational needs. Children make good progress in the nursery and reception years. As a result, the attainment of most children by the end of the foundation stage is above the nationally expected levels in the recommended areas of learning, with the exception of creative development where attainment is in line with national expectations. Attainment and progress were found to be good in language and literacy and mathematics at the time of the last inspection. Improvements have been made since that time in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. As at the time of the last inspection, children develop positive attitudes towards school and learn to behave well.
53. The quality of teaching is consistently good in all areas of learning. Two experienced learning support assistants provide good support in class and work closely with the teacher to plan work that meets the needs of all children effectively. Members of staff have a good understanding of the needs of young children. A firm but fun approach to managing behaviour is successful in helping children to learn what is appropriate in a given situation, and they respond very quickly to the teacher's requests for attention. All members of staff have good relationships with the children and understand their personal needs well. Clear instructions in lessons and the effective use of praise enable children to work quickly and confidently. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was found to be satisfactory overall but sometimes unsatisfactory.
54. The curriculum is good overall, with clear plans showing what children in the nursery and reception years are expected to learn each term. All areas of learning are successfully included, providing a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Practical work is well emphasised and activities successfully engage the children's interest. An attractive outdoor area supports learning well in physical development, but it is under-utilised in other areas of the curriculum during the winter months. The limited amount of space in the classroom means that the teacher is unable to provide a wide choice of activities at the same time, restricting opportunities for children to take the initiative and to extend their independence, especially in creative development. The school has suitable plans and funding to extend the classroom. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection when it was satisfactory, and parents are pleased that their children enjoy learning through play.
55. Appropriate records are kept to show how individual children are progressing in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and physical development. The teacher uses informal methods to provide suitable work in knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Reports to parents show clearly what pupils can do, but not how they can improve in the future.

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

56. Members of staff have high expectations of how children should behave, and the children soon develop polite manners from the good example set. For example, children are reminded to say please and thank you and to close the door after entering the classroom. From an early age, children sit quietly and listen intently to members of staff or each other. They learn and follow the simple class rules and are keen to take part in the activities in class. Children quickly develop an understanding of the importance of taking turns, and form good relationships with members of staff and each other. Parents are pleased with the attitudes and values promoted by members of staff.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

57. By the end of the reception year, most children listen carefully for a good length of time and speak clearly and confidently. They read simple, familiar texts fluently. They know the sounds different letters make and enjoy talking about the story and characters in books. They show good understanding by relating what they are reading to their own lives and experiences. Most write their own names and some common words, forming letters correctly.
58. Higher attaining children are confident when reading more difficult books. They have more extensive vocabularies and use their knowledge of the sounds that letters make to help them read and write unfamiliar words. They write simple sentences without adult support and use well-formed letters in their handwriting. Lower attaining children can put story pictures into the correct sequence and copy adults' writing.
59. The learning support assistants help children in the nursery year to enjoy choosing books and videos to take home. Effective guidance is given to enable children to sit sensibly, look at the illustrations and turn the pages carefully. Children are confident when speaking to the class and are able to explain a sequence of events clearly. For example, the teacher asked effective questions enabling them to explain how they made play dough. Fun activities such as jig-saw puzzles and hunting for letters buried in the sand tray help younger children learn about the shape and sounds of different letters. Higher attaining nursery children write their own names and several recognisable letters.
60. Pieces of unsupported writing are assessed each term to show progress. A useful home-school reading record encourages parents to support their children at home regularly, and enables members of staff and parents to make helpful comments on the children's progress. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support children's learning. All pupils enjoy playing letter recognition games on the computers.

## **Mathematical development**

61. By the end of the reception year, all children count beyond ten, put numbers in the correct order, and can add together small groups of objects accurately. They have a good understanding of mathematical vocabulary, such as taller/shorter and lighter/heavier, and identify objects that are heavier or lighter than themselves. Higher attaining children read and write numbers to ten accurately. Nursery children count small groups of objects up to five, and those with higher attainment count beyond ten. All children learn that symbols can be used to represent objects in simple bar charts.
62. Members of staff make the subject interesting by providing practical activities and games. For example, children enjoy sorting lighter and heavier objects found in the classroom.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

63. Children know how to sort materials to find those that are waterproof, and they understand that some materials can be recycled. They talk about places that are special to them and compare different places of worship such as the village church and a mosque. When making objects from reclaimed materials, they join card and paper together successfully using glue or sticky tape. They use the mouse effectively to select icons on the computer screen when playing various games. The teacher uses questioning effectively to help children discuss solids and liquids, and how solids such as flour can sometimes behave like a liquid. Children's knowledge of 'forces' is developed effectively by playing a game requiring them to twist, squeeze, bend pull, press and squash dough. During the game, children also develop their literacy and numeracy skills effectively by reading the captions and counting the number of places they need to move after throwing the die. Members of staff are successful in making the subject relevant to the children, making good use of visits and visitors. For example, children were taken on a spring walk in the village to see the bulbs they had planted sprouting, and enjoyed using water hoses when a fire tender came to school.



## **Physical development**

64. Children are dextrous when cutting with scissors or working with play dough. They help to set out the gymnastics equipment safely and devise their own ways of moving by climbing, jumping and balancing on the equipment. They show good control in their movements and successfully link two actions together to make a sequence. Younger children show control when running in the playground.
65. The teacher is successful in drawing children's attention to the importance of exercise and the impact of physical activities on their bodies. Children are given effective help so that they jump safely. Learning support assistants provide effective role models in gymnastics lessons by joining in with activities. They are patient and supportive, helping children who hurry their work to take more care to develop their pencil control.

## **Creative development**

66. Children mix paint to make various shades of colour and show good control when applying paint to a pattern or picture. For example, they make careful hand-prints by first using primary colours and then mixing colours together. They make marks on paper in a variety of ways and draw lines that are straight, curvy and spiky. Lower attaining children generate fewer ideas when given the opportunity to explore how many different lines they can make. Most nursery children paint and draw recognisable figures, colouring in shapes carefully.
67. The role-play area is well resourced to provide interesting activities for the children. At the time of the inspection, for example, it became a fire station, with uniforms, alarm bell, telephones and relevant jig-saw puzzles. However, children have limited access to these good resources because of a lack of space in the classroom and the need for older pupils to be able to work quietly.
68. All children enjoy joining in with singing games, and most sing in tune. The learning support assistants are skilful in encouraging children to participate, and use their voices effectively to create suspense and engage children's interest.

## **ENGLISH**

69. Pupils' standards of attainment are above average overall at the end of Year 2 and broadly average by the end of Year 4. Pupils' attainment on entry has improved in recent years, and this is reflected in the higher attainment now being shown by pupils at the end of Year 2. Throughout the school, reading skills are well taught and standards are good. This is a strength of pupils' attainment. Standards in writing are good in Years 1 and 2, with all pupils on target to at least achieve the expected level (Level 2) in tests at the end of Key Stage 1. Writing skills are less secure in Years 3 and 4. Although pupils' attainment in these groups is satisfactory, their work shows weaknesses in spelling and presentation.
70. Standards of attainment have risen since the last inspection in both writing in Years 1 and 2, and in speaking throughout the school. The literacy hour has had a good impact on the rate at which pupils learn writing skills, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to take part in discussions and to perform in front of audiences, and this has helped to improve pupils' speaking skills.
71. National Curriculum test scores are not reliable indicators of the overall standards achieved in English. They vary significantly from year to year due to the small size of year groups and the impact of differing numbers of pupils with special educational needs. In 2001, when the year group contained a relatively high number of pupils with special educational needs, pupils' attainment was broadly average in reading and writing when compared with all schools, though below average when compared with similar schools.

72. Inspection findings show that there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls, although test results suggest that there has been in the past. The headteacher has carried out a detailed analysis of this data, and boys' writing has been an area of focus in school improvement planning. This has been effective, and any differences that may have existed are no longer evident in pupils' day-to-day work.
73. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress and develop a good knowledge of the basic skills of writing. Their understanding of basic punctuation rules is good, and they present work neatly, with higher attaining pupils already beginning to use a joined handwriting style in their everyday work. Pupils have a good vocabulary when speaking and in Year 1, the teacher is successful at encouraging them to use this in their writing. In this class, the teacher successfully helps pupils to develop a good knowledge of the sounds that letters make. There is a very strong emphasis on teaching these skills, starting with the youngest children in the reception/Year 1 class. A good range of strategies is used to develop these skills. As a result, pupils in Years 1 and 2 become confident about using their knowledge of letter sounds to help them work out how to spell new or unknown words.
74. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make sound progress in developing writing skills. They begin to write more confidently for a wide range of topics, though their spelling and presentation is weaker than it should be. Teachers do not always make their expectations over presentation clear enough at the start of lessons and, as a result, handwriting could be improved. Pupils do not yet successfully apply their skills learnt in spelling tests to their everyday writing, and they lack independence when spelling new words, often relying on help from an adult. Good use is made by teachers of 'story starters' and 'story frames' to help pupils to structure their writing. This is effective in encouraging story writing, though many pupils in Years 3 and 4 write with limited imagination or creativity. Older pupils successfully use punctuation to add interest and emphasis to their writing.
75. Listening skills are good throughout the school, with speaking skills being satisfactory. Many younger pupils are articulate, and speaking and listening skills are effectively promoted in class and in other activities. Throughout the school, pupils are given appropriate opportunities to perform in front of an audience. For example, they all take part in a Christmas play as well as in regular class assemblies. They respond well to these opportunities, speaking confidently for a range of purposes.
76. Pupils develop good reading skills because the teaching of reading is very effective throughout the school. Teachers make good use of a commercial reading scheme to ensure that skills are developed systematically. Pupils are encouraged to use their knowledge of letter sounds to work out how to read new words, and they do this confidently from an early age. Where appropriate, pupils are taught to use other strategies to improve their reading effectiveness. Throughout the school, pupils are given good opportunities during group reading sessions to share books and read to each other and to an adult. They do this successfully, using an appropriate range of strategies to read unknown words. For example, they look at the pictures and try to work out what the word is from the context of the sentence. Pupils enjoy talking about the books they are reading. Higher attaining pupils explain clearly why they enjoy particular types of books. In Years 3 and 4, pupils explain clear preferences for authors or types of books. Teachers ensure that pupils are given purposeful reading tasks in lessons. This helps pupils to improve the range of their reading. However, research skills are less well developed because whilst pupils have access to collections of books in the classroom, limited use is made of the library for this purpose.
77. The quality of teaching in lessons observed during the inspection was good in Year 1 and satisfactory in Years 2, 3 and 4. Throughout the school, teachers are enthusiastic when talking about the subject. This helps to motivate pupils. Activities are carefully planned to develop specific literacy skills. Effective use is made of resources and questioning to involve and motivate pupils. Teachers give clear instructions and explanations so pupils understand what is expected of them.
78. In the Year 1 class, the teacher provides work that successfully meets the needs of pupils across the range from lower to higher attainment. Lesson planning is effective in identifying the

expectations for different groups of pupils. For example, a group worked on using different letter sounds to build new words in a good lesson for Year 1. More able pupils did a similar task, but their learning was extended because they had to use a dictionary to check the spelling of words that they were making. This meant that both groups of pupils made good progress in this lesson.

79. In the Year 2, 3 and 4 class, the teacher effectively involves all pupils in discussions at the start of lessons. Questioning is used successfully to ensure that pupils of differing prior attainment are suitably challenged. However, a weakness is that the teacher does not always make clear what pupils are expected to achieve by the end of a session. As a result, pupils do not always work quickly enough. In particular, older pupils are slow to get started and often produce less work than might be expected for their age or ability.
80. A good feature of teaching throughout the school is the support given by learning support assistants, who are extremely valuable members of the teaching team. They are well trained and well informed. They often work with pupils who have special educational needs and help them to learn well. Individual education plans clearly are written for all pupils on the school's register for special educational needs.
81. Throughout the school, the provision of homework is satisfactory. Pupils take reading books home to share with their parents and are regularly given other activities to do at home.
82. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. The school makes good use of a range of assessments to monitor pupils' learning from year to year, and is beginning to set targets for pupils. Writing is regularly assessed, and this helps to identify what pupils have achieved and what they need to do to improve. Reading diaries are maintained, but the comments made by teachers or other adults are rarely diagnostic and do not show strengths or weaknesses. This means that they are not helpful to teachers in helping to improve pupils' reading skills. The quality of marking is variable. It is most effective when identifying clearly what pupils have done well or how they could improve. On occasions, marking lacks detail and does not guide pupils in making specific improvements.
83. Resources are satisfactory. There is a well-resourced library, and books are prominently displayed in all classrooms. However, the effectiveness of the library is limited by its location, which means that pupils are unable to visit it easily to carry out individual research or to find books for themselves. The school has tried to overcome this problem by employing a librarian for an afternoon a week to ensure that pupils have regular access to the library. These sessions are effective, allowing pupils to choose books. In addition, the librarian sometimes reads a story to the pupils. These activities help pupils to develop library skills and successfully promote an interest in books.
84. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support the development of pupils' literacy skills.

## **MATHEMATICS**

85. Year groups are very small, and attainment varies considerably from year to year depending on the number of pupils with special educational needs. At the time of the inspection, all the pupils with special educational needs were in Years 3 and 4.
86. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in mathematics is above average and by the end of Year 4 it is broadly average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress, with pupils in Years 1 and 2 making good progress overall. Since the last inspection, attainment and progress in mathematics have improved in Years 1 and 2 and have been maintained in Years 3 and 4.
87. National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 2 vary considerably from year to year, but are below average overall when the last three years are taken together. Most pupils attain the expected level (Level 2), but few attain the higher level (Level 3). More pupils are on target to attain the higher level in 2002 than in the past. There are no significant differences between boys

and girls in the work produced in class, although in the past girls have performed better in tests than boys.

88. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of number when adding and subtracting and can find out fractions of whole numbers and shapes. They develop an understanding of relative weight, and make suitable estimates when placing objects in weight order. By the end of Year 4, pupils use their number bonds effectively when calculating how much change they need when handling money, and can describe various strategies for dealing with the same number problem. Lower attaining pupils have a weak knowledge and understanding of angles in shapes.
89. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of good teaching and one unsatisfactory lesson being observed. When teaching is unsatisfactory, the work provided does not match the pupils' needs well enough and is either too easy or too difficult for significant groups of pupils. When this happens, pupils lose interest in their work and do not learn effectively. In the better lessons, the mental mathematics activities at the beginning of lessons are lively and challenging, with teachers asking relevant questions to pupils of differing prior attainment. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4, groups were allocated different multiplication tables and asked to stand up when the number called out was in their table. This meant that all pupils worked at their own level, were fully involved and challenged, and enjoyed listening out for their numbers.
90. In all lessons, teachers explain clearly the purpose of the lesson and the tasks pupils are to do. They successfully encourage pupils to discuss the strategies they are using to find answers. Practical activities are emphasised well and various attractive resources are well prepared and used effectively. Teachers are careful to use the correct mathematical terms, such as 'mass' and 'non-standard measures', when describing activities. Teachers are successful in encouraging pupils to make estimates to help them establish whether their answers are likely to be correct. The good relationships that teachers develop in their classes mean that, as at the time of the last inspection, pupils work together well and have good attitudes towards their work. The weakest element of teaching in the class for Years 2, 3 and 4 is the use made of information collected on what pupils already know to guide the planning of work for small groups. At these times, tasks are often too similar for all ages and abilities, and this limits progress. Pupils with special educational needs are given help from well trained learning support assistants, though the tasks they are given are sometimes too difficult for them to understand even when supported. The quality of teaching is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection.
91. There is a satisfactory curriculum that covers all aspects of mathematics. Teachers are supported in their lesson planning by the National Numeracy Strategy and a commercial scheme of work. Individual targets have been set for pupils, although these are not accessible to the pupils or referred to in lessons. Pupils' progress is monitored by regular multiplication tables tests, as well as end of topic and end of year assessments. However, as at the time of the last inspection, the information from these tests is not always used effectively when planning future work and, as a consequence, pupils are not all given suitably challenging work in lessons. Reports to parents show the progress pupils have made but do not show what they need to learn next. Some good educational resources have been purchased recently and are used well to support learning. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to play mathematical games, using information and communication technology, and to use the skills they have learnt to support their work in other subjects.

## **SCIENCE**

92. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 show that standards were well below average in 2001 when compared with all schools and similar schools. This year group had a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs, which adversely affected the results. Inspection findings show that attainment is now higher in Year 2 as a result of more time being allocated to teaching the subject. This has helped to improve standards, with pupils' attainment now broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Standards of attainment are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection.

93. Throughout the school, pupils are developing a good knowledge of scientific concepts. Their ability to apply these skills to practical situations is less well developed, although it is still satisfactory overall. Whilst most pupils are achieving standards that are appropriate to their prior attainment, higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged in lessons. This is because teaching does not yet consistently meet their needs, with pupils often doing the same activity whatever their ability.
94. Pupils with special educational needs are often given additional adult support in lessons to help them complete tasks. However, work is not always matched closely enough to the needs of lower attaining pupils and this means that their progress is uneven. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys or girls or pupils from different backgrounds.
95. Pupils throughout the school have been learning about materials. In Year 1, where attainment is good, pupils are able to identify different materials that can be found around school. They know what a magnet does and explain that it attracts metals. They make sensible predictions to identify what will happen to different substances when heat is applied to them. When describing different sorts of liquids, they use a good range of scientific vocabulary, such as 'opaque' and 'transparent'.
96. By the end of Year 2, pupils can explain the difference between various materials. They sort materials, using appropriate criteria, and know that some are man-made and some are natural. They understand that applying heat can change materials and explain what happens to water when it is boiling. By the end of Year 4, pupils' scientific knowledge has developed well, with higher attaining pupils knowing what happens to substances when they are dissolved in water, and using this knowledge to help them separate salt and sand in an investigation. Pupils confidently explain the difference between liquids and solids. They recognise that some materials can share properties, even though one may be a solid and the other a liquid.
97. Pupils' ability to apply their scientific knowledge to practical situations is satisfactory. They are beginning to understand what is meant by a fair test, and measure accurately, using equipment such as thermometers. Pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 accurately measure temperatures in different parts of the classroom. They successfully carry out investigations, for example finding out which sort of paper would make the best paper towel by testing the absorbency of different papers. During the inspection, pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 carried out an investigation to find out how to separate different materials. This lesson clearly illustrated the comparative weaknesses in pupils' scientific skills. Even higher attaining pupils found it difficult to devise, plan and organise their own investigation, with time being wasted on needless arguments. Pupils confidently wrote observations of what they had seen, but most were unable to explain why something had worked. Pupils' recording of their work is sometimes poorly presented, and they are not always successful in drawing scientific conclusions from their work.
98. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall throughout the school, with an example of good teaching seen in Year 1. This lesson was particularly successful because individual needs were met well although the class included two age groups. The teacher has good subject knowledge and used a good range of practical activities to help pupils develop an understanding of forces. The lesson was very well resourced, with pupils able to work with the play dough that had been made by the reception children. The teacher encouraged pupils to manipulate the play dough in different ways so that they experienced and learnt about forces such as 'stretching', 'squashing', 'pressing' and 'bending'.
99. In science lessons in Years 2, 3 and 4, there is a good focus on making learning interesting by providing a range of practical activities. The teacher has good subject knowledge and gives pupils good opportunities to apply their knowledge to investigations and experiments. Questioning is used well to encourage pupils to think about what they are learning and to help the teacher assess their understanding. Pupils enjoy the work, but they are too often slow to get started. Teachers' expectations in this area are too low, and pupils need greater encouragement to get work finished on time.
100. Throughout the school, teachers prepare carefully for lessons, making good use of resources, including ICT where appropriate. Behaviour is well managed and pupils quickly become engrossed in their work. Lessons are carefully planned, though teachers' planning does not

always identify expectations for pupils of differing ability or age. Higher-attaining pupils and lower attaining pupils often do the same work, particularly in Years 2, 3 and 4. This means that, on occasions, work is either too hard or too easy and, as a result, individual needs are not always met. For example, higher attaining pupils would benefit from more opportunities to devise their own ways of recording their work, whilst lower attaining pupils do not always finish work because of the over-emphasis placed on writing as a means of recording findings.

101. There are good links between science and other subjects. Pupils are given many opportunities to write in science, and they make interesting collages in art, showing man-made and natural materials. They draw charts and maps of the classroom, showing different temperature measurements.
102. The school provides a broad and balanced science curriculum, and since the last inspection has adopted an appropriate scheme of work to ensure that skills are developed more systematically. However, long and medium term planning does not yet identify how pupils' skills in using and applying their scientific knowledge are to be developed from term to term.
103. Assessment procedures have been improved, and regular termly assessments show pupils' attainment at that point. Teachers regularly mark work, but rarely write useful comments to help pupils identify what they need to do to improve. Teachers often evaluate learning at the end of lessons, but rarely record their evaluations on their planning to show which pupils have achieved well and which will need additional support in the future. The lack of day-to-day assessment information is the main reason why planned work does not always meet the needs of all pupils. The science co-ordinator has identified assessment as an area that requires more development.
104. Resources are good and have improved since the last inspection. The subject manager recently audited resources and identified where improvements were needed. This has been effective in ensuring that lessons are now well resourced.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

105. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 4 and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Younger pupils work together effectively, making interesting sculptures from twigs. They paint colourful pictures, making good use of space and colour to represent characters, such as clowns, ballerinas and soldiers. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand how to mix a range of colours. Older pupils make careful collages from a range of natural and man-made materials. They observe closely when completing portraits of faces cut from magazines and match line, colour and proportion well. However, they often demonstrate weak sketching skills at other times, and there is no evidence of their evaluating their own or other people's work. Attainment and progress have improved since the time of the last inspection when they were unsatisfactory.
106. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with an example of good teaching in Year 1. In the better lesson, the teacher made effective use of the local environment to encourage pupils to observe 'line' in the world around them, and used a reproduction of Paul Klee's 'Revolution of the Viaducts' to show how wide and narrow lines can be used for artistic effect. Good exemplification at the start of the lesson encouraged pupils to have enough confidence and knowledge to try ideas for themselves.
107. Teachers prepare well for lessons and provide interesting resources that successfully capture pupils' interest. A range of techniques is taught successfully, with helpful advice to pupils about the suitability of materials, such as correct brush size. Teachers are skilled in managing pupils' behaviour so that pupils concentrate well and listen carefully. However, older pupils are not always provided with enough support to help them generate ideas and, as a result, some of their work is unimaginative and rushed. No judgement was made about the quality of teaching at the time of the last inspection, although pupils' work at that time showed that skills were not being taught as effectively as they are now.

108. The curriculum for art and design is suitably broad and balanced. An interesting range of activities is planned which provides pupils with experiences of working with a range of materials. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the curriculum was unsatisfactory. However, there are still no formal methods of assessing pupils' progress. The subject has been a recent focus for school development and training, and resources have been successful in improving standards in the subject.
109. A resident artist worked with pupils in both classes during the last academic year, giving an effective boost to their understanding and helping them to design an interesting sculpture from brick and metal to hold their millennium time capsules. Information and communication technology makes a good contribution to pupils learning in the subject. Pupils regularly use 'paint' programmes to make colourful pictures, and older pupils make interesting repeat patterns.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

110. No lessons were on the timetable during the inspection. Judgements on pupils' attainment and progress have been made by scrutinising work, teachers' planning and photographs of products. As at the time of the last inspection, there is no evidence to show how pupils design or evaluate their own work or use the skills they have learnt in literacy lessons to support their learning.
111. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 4 and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Younger pupils make pencil holders from reclaimed materials, and simple but effective pop-up mechanisms by successfully joining card and wood. Older pupils make various shaped Christmas boxes using their knowledge of three-dimensional shapes learnt in numeracy lessons, and make attractive money containers by successfully joining fabrics using various stitches and fasteners. When making pop-up books, pupils demonstrate knowledge of a range of mechanisms such as 'sliders' and paper 'springs'. Attainment and progress have improved since the last inspection when they were unsatisfactory.
112. As at the time of the last inspection, it was not possible to form a judgement on the quality of teaching, although pupils' work suggests that teaching has improved since that time.
113. The curriculum now meets statutory requirements, but there are no formal assessment arrangements, and examples of work are not kept to make a satisfactory record of pupils' progress over time.
114. Effective use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in the subject. For example, pupils in Year 1 used a paint programme to design and make pictures for calendars.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

115. No geography lessons were on the timetable during the inspection. Judgements on attainment and progress have been made by scrutinising pupils' work and looking at teachers' planning.
116. The standards of attainment achieved by the pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 are in line with national expectations. All pupils, including those identified as having special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall. However, progress is uneven in Years 2, 3 and 4 because sometimes all pupils do the same work whatever their age or ability. This means that their needs are not always fully met.
117. In Year 1, pupils are beginning to develop a sound understanding of where they live, and they understand the difference between different sorts of settlements. They know that not all places are the same and can explain why water is important if people are to live. After going on a visit to a nearby village, they write about what they have seen, explaining in discussion features of the

village that differ from their own. Pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 identify common rivers and mountain ranges on maps of the United Kingdom. They carry out a study of Kenya, learning about the differences between their lives and those of a Kenyan child. They write with clear detail about the sorts of food and drink that are found in Kenya, with more able pupils beginning to link this with the impact of the differing climate. Pupils explain why they would like to visit Kenya and compare the different geographical regions of the country.

118. There is not enough evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. However, a scrutiny of pupils' previous work indicates that they are often given the same task whatever their ability. This means that learning is uneven, with the needs of all pupils not being met consistently and some pupils struggling to complete work. This is particularly evident amongst less able pupils, with pieces of work often unfinished. There is an overuse of worksheets in Years 2, 3 and 4, which means that pupils are not encouraged to write purposefully. As a result, opportunities to extend literacy skills are missed.
119. Teachers' planning indicates that good use is made of local resources and visits. There are also good planned opportunities for links between geography, numeracy and information and communication technology through the production of graphs, for example about how parents travel to work, and by research on the internet about different locations.
120. The curriculum is broad and balanced but is not closely enough matched to individual needs. Since the last inspection, the school has adopted a nationally recommended scheme of work to support teachers in their planning. However, teachers' planning, especially in Years 2, 3 and 4 still does not clearly identify what different groups of pupils are expected to learn and there is little assessment data to help teachers decide what needs to be taught next.
121. Work in geography makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development by extending their knowledge of the world and its peoples. The study of Kenya has been further enhanced by links that have been established with a school in that country. Pupils have written to the school and received letters back. They talk enthusiastically about their pen pals, explaining clearly what the letters have taught them about life in Kenya.

## **HISTORY**

122. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Standards of attainment are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, continue to make sound progress.
123. Pupils in Year 1 are beginning to develop a good sense of chronology by thinking about their own lives and by studying the stories of different famous people or events, such as the Great Fire of London. They understand that different sorts of evidence help to tell us about the past, for example understanding that, although there are no photographs of the Great Fire of London, pictures, painting and contemporary diaries help to explain what actually happened at that time. They know that some buildings are old and some are new, and relate this to buildings that they have visited such as the church in a nearby village.
124. In Years 2, 3 and 4, pupils develop a more detailed understanding of different periods of history. They have studied the Anglo-Saxons and know some key facts about that period. They explain how Anglo-Saxons lived and describe some of their clothes and food. They write about the artefacts found at Sutton Hoo, and try to use that evidence to draw conclusions about the life style of the person who was buried there. Pupils are beginning to understand how things change over time. They compare their school now with how it was when it was first built, using photographs and evidence from the school logbook. Pupils explain clearly what it would have been like to have been taught in a class of 64, as happened when the school first opened 125 years ago.
125. The quality of teaching is good in Year 1 and satisfactory in Years 2, 3 and 4. A significant strength of teaching in both classes is the teachers' own enthusiasm for the subject, which helps to keep pupils involved and keen to learn. This is reflected in the good attitudes to learning



shown by pupils of all ages. Teaching is most effective when planning clearly identifies what pupils of differing ability are expected to learn. In the best lesson, in Year 1, the teacher made good use of a learning support assistant to work with younger or less able children, and she had prepared different tasks for pupils of differing ability. Higher attaining pupils worked on the computers writing a short diary as if they were Samuel Pepys, whilst other pupils completed less complicated worksheets where they completed sentences about the Great Fire of London. This lesson was also very effective because of the way the teacher related learning to her own experiences by explaining how her diary helps to keep a record of events.

126. In Years 2, 3 and 4, very good use of ICT is a strong feature of teaching. For example, lower attaining pupils worked on the computers, adding text to old pictures of the school. They were well supported in this task by a learning support assistant. In this lesson, pupils were successfully encouraged to think as historians as the teacher asked them to devise questions they might try to answer using photographic evidence. Pupils responded well to this, making lots of good suggestions such as 'Has the building always been used for the same purpose?' However, a scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that on too many occasions, all pupils do the same piece of work, whatever their prior attainment or age. This is a weakness of teaching, caused by the lack of detailed assessment procedures that would enable teachers to match work more closely to individual needs. Although pupils with special educational needs are well supported by adults in lessons, the work they are given is not matched closely enough to their ability, which means that work is sometimes unfinished because it is too difficult.
127. Teachers make good use of resources, including a selection of computer programmes. The local community is a good source of historical evidence, used effectively by teachers. For example, pupils in Year 1 have visited a local village to look at different buildings. Visits to places further afield are carefully linked to what is being taught in lessons, and successfully extend learning.
128. Teachers give pupils limited opportunities to use their literacy skills by carrying out research or writing about their findings. This is because much work is worksheet based, especially in Years 2, 3 and 4. There is a well-resourced library but its location away from the classrooms means that pupils cannot easily go there to carry out research.
129. The curriculum is broad, balanced and carefully planned, using a nationally recommended scheme of work. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. However, a weakness in teachers' planning is that it does not identify expectations for different groups of pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

130. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and in line with national expectations by the end of Year 4. Since the last inspection, the school has improved resources and introduced a suitable scheme of work to support pupils' learning. Teachers are more confident about teaching the subject, making very good use of computers in lessons. The school is also benefiting enormously from the recent appointment, as part of a small schools project, of a very skilled learning support assistant who works with pupils once a week. All of these factors have had a very positive impact on standards, especially for younger pupils.
131. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are now making good progress in lessons. Past weaknesses in provision mean that older pupils are currently achieving only satisfactory standards, although their attainment is good in areas of the curriculum covered since improved resources have been in place. This is particularly evident in their word processing skills and their ability to use clip-art to make their writing interesting or to produce greeting cards. For example, pupils made Christmas cards showing good word processing skills and using pictures that had been downloaded from the Internet. The card also included a picture of the pupil taken by a classmate using a digital camera. The quality of this work was very good.
132. Throughout the school, pupils are becoming confident about using their computing skills for a range of practical situations. By the end of Year 2, pupils are becoming very familiar with the

layout of a keyboard and confidently type simple texts. They successfully play a range of language and mathematical games using the keyboard and mouse. They produce simple graphs, such as those showing how their parents travel to work. By the end of Year 4, pupils can change font-type, colour and size of their text, and they present their work in a way that is attractive to an audience. This is seen to good effect in 'colour' poems written by the pupils. In these, they used different colours and font styles to make their writing fit in with the theme of the poem. They understand how computers can be used to present information in different ways.

133. Pupils are beginning to develop good knowledge of the many applications of ICT, and understand that it involves more than just working on the computer. Pupils understand that the internet can be used to find information, and the school reports that they do this confidently, although no use of the internet was seen during the inspection.
134. The quality of teaching is good. A significant strength of the school's work is the very effective way that teachers ensure that the use of ICT is built into different curriculum areas. Teachers take care to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to the curriculum, and the use of computers and other resources is carefully planned into everyday work. Pupils were observed developing their skills in a range of subjects, including literacy, numeracy, science and history. Good quality displays of pupils' work show how skills are used in different subjects. These displays help to make learning purposeful to the pupils and show the progression of skills across the school.
135. The school has significantly improved resources since the last inspection, and each classroom now has a bank of computers, which are used very effectively to teach specific skills to pupils. Much of this teaching is carried out by a well-qualified learning support assistant, who visits the school for one day each week. This teaching takes place on a day outside the inspection period so there is no evidence to judge the quality of this teaching. However, it is very evident from the skills that pupils show in class that they are learning quickly from this additional support.
136. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. The school carefully records what has been taught to pupils, and is beginning to link this to planning to help decide what need to be taught next. A range of activities is assessed in more detail, with useful annotation showing exactly which skills pupils have used.
137. Resources are now very good. The purchase of new hardware and software has considerably improved the profile of the subject throughout the school, and pupils are benefiting from these new resources. Good use is made of the computers on a day-to-day basis to teach specific skills and to give them opportunities to practise them in lessons.

## **MUSIC**

138. It was not possible to form judgements on teaching and the attainment and progress of pupils because no lessons were on the timetable during the inspection. In assemblies, children sing enthusiastically, keep in time with the accompaniment well and listen carefully to pre-recorded music. Attainment and progress were good at the time of the last inspection.
139. Teaching was satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 and 4 at the time of the last inspection. An unqualified music specialist who taught older pupils at that time no longer works at the school.
140. A suitable commercial scheme of work is available to support teachers in their lesson planning and enable them to cover an appropriate curriculum. There are no procedures for formally assessing pupils' work, and reports to parents concentrate on attitudes to the subject rather than knowledge gained.
141. Violin lessons and a recorder club continue to be effective in increasing the knowledge and understanding of several older pupils in learning to read music and perform simple tunes together. Effective use is made of visitors, such as a professional string quartet and a percussionist to

make the subject meaningful. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to perform in public at end-of-term concerts.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

142. During the inspection, lessons in gymnastics only were on the timetable. Judgements on the attainment of pupils have been based on the work seen in the available lessons and discussions with pupils and members of staff.
143. The school has maintained the standards found at the time of the last inspection, with pupils making sound progress in developing skills in gymnastics. By the end of Year 2, pupils perform simple sequences of movement, using different body shapes with good co-ordination. They are sensible in climbing on fixed apparatus such as wall bars and make interesting balances on benches and floor mats. By the end of Year 4, pupils show a wider range of skills and a greater degree of control and agility when they move around the hall. They develop complicated sequences involving rolling, turning and balancing. They successfully follow the balances of a partner, copying different shapes to produce 'mirror' patterns. Pupils are developing a good understanding of the effects of exercise on their body, for example explaining why their heart beats faster after they have been running.
144. The quality of teaching is good. Activities are carefully planned so that skills are developed at a rate appropriate to their prior learning. Teachers give good levels of individual support as pupils practise and consolidate skills. This means that the needs of pupils are met well, despite the wide age range in each class. An especially good feature of teaching is the way that teachers give pupils opportunities to show the rest of the class examples of their good work. Pupils respond well to this. They watch carefully and then make sensible comments about what was good and what could be changed. This helps pupils to improve their work. Behaviour is managed effectively, and pupils respond well to the sensitive way in which the teachers help them as they work. In Year 1, a learning support assistant gives good support in lessons, ensuring that lower attaining or younger pupils are given individual help so that they too can improve their skills.
145. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and carefully planned to include all aspects of the National Curriculum. It includes swimming lessons for older pupils in the summer term. Pupils in Year 4 are able to take part in a weekend residential visit where they are able to practise a range of outdoor and adventurous activities such as orienteering and abseiling. Good use is made of a commercial scheme to support teachers in their planning. It shows clearly how pupils are to develop skills over time.
146. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory. In Year 1, a useful record sheet is used to show pupils' learning in gymnastics. This helps the teacher to identify what needs to be taught next. However, this good practice is not consistent throughout the school. In Years 2 to 4, the teacher relies on observations of pupils at work to help identify what has been learnt. There is no evidence of these observations being recorded to help with the planning of future work.
147. A good range of extra-curricular provision for the size of school enriches learning opportunities. There is a gymnastics club and pupils are able to pay to take part in a lunch-time football club. These are well attended and give pupils good opportunities to practise and develop skills outside lessons. Pupils are able to compete against each other in lessons and at sports days, and take part in an annual country dancing festival. However, there are no other opportunities for competitive sport. In the past, the small size of year groups has made it difficult to have football or netball teams. The headteacher has identified this as something that could be improved in the future now that pupil numbers are rising.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

148. No lessons were on the timetable during the inspection. Judgements on pupils' attainment and progress have been made by scrutinising work, looking at photographs and talking with pupils in Year 4.
149. By the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment does not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make unsatisfactory progress in increasing their knowledge in Years 2, 3 and 4. There is little evidence in the pupils' books to show the extent of work covered, and they remember little of what they have been taught. However, pupils write thoughtful prayers and reflect on special places where they can go to be quiet. They have some knowledge of places of worship and festivals from major world religions, although some of this information is muddled. For example, they were unsure which faith used a mosque as a place of worship. Attainment and progress are not as good as at the time of the last inspection when they were above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
150. At the time of the last inspection, a teacher with specialist knowledge taught both classes, and this successfully contributed to the good standards achieved. In the Years 2, 3 and 4 class, there has been some lack of continuity in the teaching this academic year, and lesson planning does not show what is expected of differing ability groups. As a result, supply teachers are unclear about what to expect of individuals, and pupils all complete the same work. This means that tasks are not suitably challenging to capture the interest of all pupils and there has been insufficient opportunity for pupils to record what they have learnt in such a way that they are able to retain this knowledge. Limited use is made of pupils' literacy skills to support their learning in the subject.
151. Medium-term plans for Year 1 pupils show clearly what pupils are expected to learn each term, and suggested activities and resources are also outlined. In the class for the older pupils, there is one plan for all three age groups, and this does not show what different year groups are expected to learn. As at the time of the last inspection, there are no formal methods for assessing and recording what pupils have learnt. Reports to parents on their children's progress show work covered and their attitudes towards the subject, but not their individual strengths and weaknesses in skills and knowledge learnt.
152. There are good resources for the subject enabling members of staff to provide some interesting lessons. For example, pupils dressed up and shared food together when learning about Rosh Hashanah. There have been some worthwhile opportunities for pupils to visit places of worship, such as the village church. There has not been enough time for the subject co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.