

INSPECTION REPORT

PEN MILL INFANT SCHOOL

Yeovil

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123725

Headteacher: Mrs M House

Reporting inspector: Mr L Lewin
22330

Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th January 2002

Inspection number: 194170

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St Michael's Avenue Yeovil Somerset
Postcode:	BA21 4LD
Telephone number:	01935 474224
Fax number:	01935 414794
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Sibley
Date of previous inspection:	May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22330	Mr L Lewin	Registered inspector	Science, information and communication technology, design and technology, music, special educational needs, equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9880	Mr A Comer	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with the parents?
10355	Mr J Vipond	Team inspector	English, history, geography, physical education	
26519	Mrs M Hatfield	Team inspector	Mathematics, art, religious education, foundation stage	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Full Circle
The Brow
35 Trewartha Park
Weston-Super-Mare
North Somerset
BS23 2RT

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Pen Mill Infant School is situated on the south-eastern side of Yeovil, close to the A30. It is an average-sized school with 214 boys and girls on roll aged from three to seven years taught in eight classes by one part-time and nine full-time teachers. The number of pupils attending the school has risen since 1998, but there has been a drop in numbers this year. Most pupils come from the immediate locality, which comprises a mixture of private and local authority housing. In recent years, the number of pupils entering the school with special educational needs has been rising. The school has a Nursery attended by 20 children in the morning session and 20 children in the afternoon session. Also, it has a unit for hearing-impaired pupils, although no pupils currently attend this facility. At 10 per cent, the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is slightly below average. Twenty-seven per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, which is higher than the national average (23.7 per cent). There are an above average level of pupils moving in and out of the school (20 per cent) - last Year 18 pupils joined during the year other than at the usual admission times and 25 left other than at the normal time of leaving. All pupils attending the school are of white U.K. heritage, and none have English as an additional language. The great majority of children attend local play-school facilities before starting school. The attainment of children on entry to the nursery is generally well below average. The school is accredited through the Investors In People Scheme.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that is improving at a good rate. It is well led and managed and provides consistently good teaching for its pupils, who as a result achieve well by the time they leave. The classrooms project a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which pupils enjoy learning. Overall the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is well led and managed. Staff work together as a highly effective team.
- Because of good teaching and very good provision for supporting pupils with special educational needs, pupils progress well and most attain above average standards in information and communication technology, art, geography and physical education.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good.
- The provision for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Procedures for tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school are very good.
- Overall care and protection of the pupils are very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English – particularly in writing.
- Standards in mathematics.
- The roles of the subject co-ordinators in monitoring lessons.

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 improved at a good rate since its last inspection in May 1997. All of the key issues from that time have been well addressed. In particular, the school has made significant progress in improving its resources for information and communication technology and has raised standards in this subject to a good level. Also curriculum planning has improved substantially and the quality of teaching is better. Provision for promoting pupils' multi-cultural awareness, criticised during the last inspection, is now very good. Standards in geography and physical education, which are now above average, have also improved since the last inspection. Improvements to the buildings have been made recently; to further enhance facilities – including the establishment of a new room for special educational needs. All of the areas identified for improvement highlighted by this report have already been recognised by the school and initiatives have been put in place to help bring about this improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
Reading	D	C	E	E
Writing	C	B	E	E
Mathematics	E	E	E	E

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

The table above shows that in the 2001 tests the schools results were well below average for all schools nationally and also for other ¹similar schools. In a school of this size, results tend to vary from year to year depending upon the number of pupils identified as having special educational needs. In 2001, results were lower than usual because 43 per cent of pupils taking the tests had special educational needs. Despite the low results for last year, the school's results over recent years have been generally improving in line with the national trend. Also, the school's records of pupils' attainment show that they have mainly made good progress since entry to school. This year's cohort of Year 2 pupils are on course to improve on the 2001 results, with more likely to reach average and above average levels in reading, writing and mathematics than last year. However, given this improvement, standards in English and mathematics are still below average and the school has rightly identified the need for further improvement in these subjects. In English, writing is a particular weakness, and in mathematics pupils have difficulty with writing down calculations and do not have a secure knowledge of shape, space and measure. Pupils attain above average levels in information and communication technology, art, geography and physical education. In science, religious education, design and technology, history and music pupils attain levels that match the national expectations.

When children enter the nursery, their levels of attainment are mainly well below average. They make good progress in their learning in the nursery and reception classes so that standards by the end of the ²Foundation Stage, although still below average overall, and in a few cases well below average, have improved markedly. The school carefully sets targets for pupils' future performance and is generally successful in getting them to reach these targets. Overall, all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in most subjects as they move through the school and achieve well by the time they are seven years old in Year 2.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils show positive attitudes and great enthusiasm for school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good. Pupils move around the school in a sensible and polite manner.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good. Pupils show good personal development and carry out tasks they are given conscientiously.
Attendance	Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory. However, the school makes significant efforts to encourage regular attendance and punctuality. The co-operation of some parents in ensuring regular attendance is below expectations.

¹ Similar schools are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals; this level has been found to relate to the levels of attainment normally found in schools nationally.

² The Foundation Stage applies to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	N/A

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

Teaching throughout the school is consistently good. Lessons generally run at a good pace. Lesson objectives are set very clearly so that pupils have a clear idea about what they are expected to learn. Teachers' planning and preparation for lessons are very good. Teachers set high expectations for behaviour and manage the behaviour of their pupils well. The approach to this area is consistent across the school and results in very well behaved pupils who work well with each other and with staff. It also results in calm and purposeful atmospheres in all rooms, which helps all pupils to maintain their focus on the areas being taught and progress well with their learning. Teachers show confident subject knowledge in all of the areas they teach. National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been effectively implemented across the school and teachers have adapted these where necessary to suit the needs of the pupils they teach. However, within English the school has identified the need to further improve the teaching of writing. In mathematics, not enough emphasis is currently placed upon pupils learning about shape, space and measure and learning to write simple calculations with greater competence. Similarly, in science not enough emphasis is given to pupils recording the results of their science investigations. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school benefits from having a strong team of classroom assistants. They work very closely with the teachers, are particularly well briefed and provide very effective guidance for individuals and groups of pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and meets statutory requirements. It provides pupils with a good education that promotes their intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares them effectively for the next stage of education. The school has a clear policy for equality of opportunity, and the principles of equality and inclusion are clearly ingrained in all lessons and school activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Work in all lessons is carefully tailored to the needs of the individuals concerned.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Provision is very good for moral, social and cultural development and good for spiritual development. There has been significant improvement in these areas since the last inspection.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The support and guidance which pupils receive are very good. The teaching and support staff know the pupils well and cater sensitively for their needs. Very good procedures are in place to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils. Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress are also very good.

The school makes significant efforts to encourage parental involvement in the life of the school. The school's partnership with the parents is satisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The school is well led and managed. The headteacher is successful in getting the staff to work together as a highly effective team. She is very well supported and assisted by the deputy headteacher and, together, they ensure that all of the school's development initiatives are kept on track. The aims of the school are very clear and staff work hard to achieve them.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are fully supportive of the headteacher and staff and are suitably involved in the overall strategic management of the school. They are kept well informed and many of them visit the school on a regular basis. Governors fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. All staff and governors are fully involved in reviewing the progress of the school improvement plan. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher monitor lessons regularly, but subject co-ordinators are insufficiently involved in this process and do not therefore gain a full view of the quality of teaching and learning across the school in the subjects for which they are responsible.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school has full and detailed procedures for managing its finances. Governors monitor the outcomes of all spending and take careful account of the school's performance – in this way they show a suitable awareness of the 'best value' principles within all discussions and decisions that relate to the allocation of the current budget.

The current staffing levels are good. The teaching provision for children with special educational needs is most effective. There is good provision for classroom support assistants, who make a valuable contribution to the effectiveness of the school. Resources to support teaching and learning are generally good, with good provision for information and communication technology. The school accommodation is generally of a good standard. However, reception pupils do not currently have access to a secure outdoor play facility of their own.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Responses to the parents' questionnaire and views expressed at the pre-inspection parents' meeting indicate that the parents have a high regard for the school. In particular parents felt that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school expects pupils to work hard. • Children like school • Teaching is good • Children make good progress. • Staff are approachable. • The school is helping pupils to become mature and responsible. • Behaviour is good. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents do not agree that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lesson time.

The inspection team agrees with the very positive views expressed by the parents. In recent times the school has set up a good programme of extra-curricular activities for pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children enter the nursery, their levels of attainment are mainly well below average. The spread of attainment in most years is quite wide and, although the overall percentage of pupils having special educational needs is just above the national average, this varies from year to year and in some year groups is much higher. Children make good progress in their learning in the nursery and reception classes so that standards by the end of the ³Foundation Stage, although still below average and in a few cases still well below average, have improved markedly. In most subjects this pace of learning continues throughout Key Stage 1 so that by the time pupils reach the age of seven they have attained average standards in many subjects, and in a few areas their work is of above average standard. There are particular strengths in information and communication technology (ICT), geography, art and physical education. Notably, attainment overall in English and mathematics is still below average at the age of seven, although more pupils are now attaining average and above average levels than previously. It is also important to note that some pupils who began school showing below average attainment have reached above average standards – representing particularly good progress. The school recognises that more improvement is needed in English and mathematics standards and is working hard to achieve this. Overall, pupils achieve well by the age of seven.
2. The nursery and reception classes provide children with a wide range of experiences that enable them to make good progress towards attaining the Early Learning Goals. This is particularly the case in their personal, social, emotional creative development, so that attainment in these areas of learning is average by the end of the Foundation Stage. In most other areas of learning, although good progress is made from a very low starting point, standards remain below average by the end of the Foundation Stage. On entry to nursery and reception classes, a significant number of pupils display speech and behaviour problems that delay their progress. As a result, attainment in communication, language and literacy is still well below average by the end of the Foundation Stage.
3. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests taken towards the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' results were well below average in comparison with schools nationally and with similar schools. However, 43 per cent of this cohort were pupils with special educational needs. Also, the school's detailed tracking information shows clearly that the majority of these pupils had made good progress since starting school. Much caution is also needed in interpreting the school's results due to the high ⁴pupil mobility rate as well as the high level of pupils with special educational needs. Overall, and given the inevitable fluctuations caused by these factors and despite the drop in results in 2001, the school's results have improved in line with the national trend in recent years.
4. Staff have worked hard to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies – in a way that best suits the kind of pupils in the school. For example, the strategy of streaming the pupils by ability has helped teachers to tailor work to suit the needs of pupils more precisely. Whilst these initiatives have clearly brought about improvement, the full impact of this work upon raising standards is yet to be fully realised. Through an analysis of results, on-going assessment, discussion and monitoring of work across the school, staff have carefully identified areas such as creative writing that are not currently given sufficient time and are wisely looking at ways to refine strategies to help facilitate such areas better.

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

⁴ The pupil mobility rate is an indicator of the number of pupils who join or leave the school during the year other than at the normal times for admission or leaving; eg. 18 pupils joined and 25 left during last year, which amount to a mobility rate of 20 per cent, which is higher than that experienced by most schools.

5. In the 2001 tests, boys and girls achieved similar results in mathematics, and girls achieved better than boys in reading and writing. These differences have varied from year to year, but overall across recent years the differences have been broadly in line with the differences noted nationally. The school is aware of these differences and monitors each pupil's progress very carefully, setting individual targets for improvement. There was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls seen during the inspection. Standards seen in the school during the inspection were generally better than those reflected in last year's national tests and, although pupils are on course to attain below average results in English and mathematics overall, this will be an improvement upon the well below average results registered last year.
6. During the current inspection, evidence shows that Year 2 pupils are on course to attain below average levels overall in English by the end of the year. Teachers place a suitable emphasis upon speaking and listening, and pupils are set to reach the expected level in these areas. Through frequent discussions and strong encouragement by teachers and classroom assistants, pupils become confident speakers and improve their vocabulary at a good rate, but this knowledge is not yet evident in their written work. Pupils progress well with their reading overall and most become suitably fluent and read with satisfactory understanding by the age of seven. Year 1 pupils in particular use their knowledge of phonics well to help them read, but Year 2 pupils are noticeably weaker in this respect and sometimes have difficulty working out new words.
7. Progress in writing is currently unsatisfactory. Most pupils are on course to attain a below average level by age seven. Pupils experience difficulty with spelling and handwriting, which is slowing down their overall progress. By the end of the key stage, most pupils produce short sentences when required, but the writing is often uneven and poorly formed, and the use of vocabulary is limited. Few Year 2 pupils reach a stage where they are able to join their letters. The work by teachers with spelling and handwriting programmes is beginning to make an impact, but the school rightly recognises this as an area for more development in the future.
8. In mathematics, pupils make good progress and are on course to attain below average standards by the age of seven. Pupils learn to count in twos, fives and tens with reasonable confidence and have an appropriate knowledge of odd and even numbers. Most understand simple place value up to 100 and a few show understanding up to 1000. However, pupils struggle in particular when they are asked to record simple calculations and most do not have a secure knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measurement. These areas are recognised rightly by the school as in need of improvement.
9. Pupils progress well in science and are set to reach levels that match the national expectation by the age of seven. Teachers provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to investigate and explore concepts. Within their investigative work pupils gain an appropriate understanding of the principles of fair testing. They acquire a suitable knowledge of materials and their properties, life processes and living things, and physical processes.
10. Pupils make good progress with ICT and are currently on course to attain above average standards by the time they are seven years old. They are currently tackling many facets of the Key Stage 2 Programmes of Study for this subject. For example, they are familiar with sending E-mails and making use of the Internet and CD ROMS to research for information. Most pupils use the equipment in the classroom and the computer suite with confidence. Pupils use the computers well to aid their learning in other subjects – notably literacy, science, history and geography, but this is not yet happening in all subjects.
11. In religious education pupils progress well and are on course to attain standards that match the expectations laid down in the locally agreed syllabus by the time they are seven. They acquire appropriate knowledge of Bible stories and other faiths. The lessons they receive also help to promote their spiritual and cultural development. They gain appropriate understanding of Christian traditions such as Baptism.

12. Pupils make good progress and do well in art, geography and physical education by the time they reach seven years of age. In art pupils work with a wide range of materials and use a wide variety of techniques. For example, they make meticulous observational drawings. The school has high quality art displays. Pupils become involved in in-depth projects in geography. For example, they study local maps and link this to the identification and examination of 'danger spots' in the locality. The adoption of country names by all school classes has led to pupils gaining useful background knowledge of a range of different countries.
13. Pupils make good progress in design and technology, history and music and cover the appropriate areas of work in these subjects. Much of the whole-school singing seen during school assemblies was good.
14. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the high level of expertise offered by the co-ordinator for special educational needs and other support staff. These pupils make good progress towards the specific targets in their individual education plans. Pupils with special educational needs generally have good attitudes to learning and they work with concentration, both within small groups and with individual support.
15. The school sets targets for pupils throughout the school. These are reviewed on a regular basis and teachers are usually successful in getting pupils to reach these targets. A meticulous approach is adopted towards analysing data from previous testing to help with setting targets for the future. The school was successful in reaching the targets set for the national tests in 2001.
16. Since the last inspection, standards have either been maintained or improved, with notable improvements in information and communication technology, art, geography and physical education. Overall, the rate of progress of pupils as they move through the school is better than that reported previously. However, the school has itself identified the need for further specific improvement in English and mathematics and has already put initiatives in place to help bring about this improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

17. The pupils' attitudes to school are very good and this is an improvement since the last inspection, when attitudes were noted as good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastically involved with the life of the school. In nearly all lessons seen pupils displayed very positive attitudes to their work. Generally, they are eager to progress and therefore try hard with all assignments. Most pupils show very good concentration. They respond very well to encouragement from teachers and classroom support staff and develop a confident approach towards joining in with class discussions and activities.
18. Behaviour is very good, which is better than reported last time, when it was good. Pupils move around the school in a sensible and thoughtful manner. They are generally very friendly and keen to support one another. They play very well together in the playground and respect each other's feelings. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour and there have been no exclusions during the past year. In the classrooms they listen very attentively to their teachers and follow instructions carefully. Pupils respond very well to the high behavioural expectations that are set for them by their teachers and, as a result, classrooms project a calm and purposeful atmosphere where pupils enjoy their learning.
19. As at the time of the last inspection relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are very good and teachers work hard at establishing these relationships and improving pupils' self-esteem. The range of educational visits, visitors and after-school activities, and the emphasis that the school places on personal, social and health education contribute to pupils' personal development.
20. As at the time of the last inspection pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils show initiative and carry out their responsibilities as classroom helpers and helpers in assembly very sensibly and

conscientiously. Pupils collaborate very well with each other so that in practical activities where co-operation is called for they get on well, mostly sharing and supporting each other without fuss.

21. Overall, the attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils make a very positive contribution to learning; standards having improved since the last inspection.
22. Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory. However, the school makes significant efforts to encourage regular attendance and punctuality. After a period of declining attendance between 1998 and 2000, it has improved during the past year and a half, but is still below the national average. The co-operation of some parents in ensuring regular attendance is below expectations.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

23. The quality of teaching is good overall. This is a consistent picture across the school, with more than three quarters of the lessons observed being good. This marks an improvement in teaching since the school was last inspected.
24. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good and occasionally very good. Teachers have a very good rapport with the pupils and a good understanding of their individual needs. They are especially good at instilling in the children positive attitudes towards school and towards working well with one another and the staff. Strategies such as the 'Kindness Tree' in the nursery where individuals are identified as being 'special helpful people' successfully promote pupils' attitudes. In addition, teachers develop pupils' ideas of responsibility through involving them in a range of classroom 'jobs' such as tidying up or dealing with the register. As a result of these strategies, children make very good progress with their personal, social and emotional development. Teachers also usefully put an emphasis upon developing children's speaking and listening skills, and individuals are given a lot of encouragement and help to develop confidence in joining in activities and discussions. Teachers liaise very closely with one another so that there is a consistent approach towards planning and they focus carefully upon ensuring that work provided matches the needs of the pupils. Sessions are very well prepared with all resources laid out and ready for use. For example, one session for reception children incorporated six different activities happening simultaneously, including: making small booklets, studying items about a country, cooking, recording cooking experiences and drawing on a computer program. In particular, teachers have very high expectations of children's behaviour and involvement and, as a result, children generally behave well and most of them, including those with special educational needs, feel confident to join in and therefore progress well with their learning.
25. At Key Stage 1, teaching is consistently good. Lessons generally run at a good pace. Teachers usually judge this well and move on to new ideas or themes at just the right stage – ensuring that pupils have understood the main points. They also judge the pace well in terms of sustaining pupils' interest and moving discussion along; for example, before pupils have a chance to get bored.
26. Teachers make a clear point of introducing pupils to the main objectives at the start of a session and review these again at the end of the session to check on understanding and set future targets. This was noted, for example, in the science lessons observed, where, due to this approach, pupils had a clear idea of what they were going to try and find out in their investigations and therefore worked in a motivated way.
27. Teachers' planning is comprehensive and gives a detailed picture of what they hope to achieve in sessions as well as containing facilities to assess how well individual lessons went. This helps them to review the success of each session carefully. Preparation for lessons is very good and many sessions were seen where the teacher and classroom assistant went to much trouble to ensure that all items were readily available. For example, in one Year 1/2 music lesson seen, the teacher provided a lesson introduction to pupils seated with her on the carpet. For the next part of the session, pupils continued the practical work at their tables, where all sheets of paper and instruments had been arranged before

the lesson. This meant that the lesson flowed seamlessly from one part to the next, enabling pupils to sustain their concentration on the work without the distraction of having to fetch items.

28. Teachers manage the behaviour of their pupils well. They set high expectations for behaviour and, where necessary, rightly halt proceedings to remind pupils about what is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour. The approach to this area is consistent across the school and results in very well behaved pupils who work well with each other and with staff. It also results in a calm and purposeful atmosphere in all rooms and helps all pupils to maintain their focus on the areas being taught or the activities underway. This also helps lessons to flow smoothly, with only a limited need for teachers to deal with any behaviour problems. Discussions work well in such an atmosphere, where pupils listen to each other carefully. Teachers make full use of such occasions and often follow up pupils' ideas. For example, in one history-lesson discussion, where one pupil asked where a particular picture came from, the teacher then usefully explained to pupils how museums helped people with historical studies.
29. The relationships throughout the school are very good and teachers have a strong rapport with the pupils they teach. They know their pupils well and use this knowledge to help them judge the right moment to challenge, praise or encourage individuals. This worked well in one science lesson seen, where the teacher used humour very well to motivate her pupils. Having used an amusing theme to start the lesson, she then converted this into a problem-solving situation, which the pupils thoroughly enjoyed and therefore launched into without hesitation. Similarly, another teacher used a glove puppet well (a vowel for each finger) to motivate one pupil – who worked very successfully because of this 'fun' approach to learning.
30. Teachers generally show confident subject knowledge in all of the areas they teach. Particular improvement has been made in this area in connection with ICT. Teachers were seen using the computer suite confidently and making use of the computer projector to accelerate pupils' learning in a successful way.
31. National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been effectively implemented across the school and teachers have adapted them, where necessary, to suit the needs of the pupils they teach. For example, the idea of streaming classes according to ability for literacy is a useful initiative that enables teachers to plan more specifically for pupils of different attainment levels. However, within English the school has identified the need to further improve the teaching of writing. Currently, not enough emphasis is placed on the systematic teaching of handwriting and spelling, too few opportunities are provided for extended writing and the approach towards teaching phonics is inconsistent.
32. In mathematics not enough emphasis is currently placed upon pupils learning about shape, space and measurement and learning to write simple calculations with greater competence. Similarly, in science not enough focus is given to pupils recording the results of their science investigations.
33. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The work provided for pupils with special educational needs is very closely matched to their needs and this helps them make good progress with their learning. Individual education plans are extremely thorough and provide very clear targets for future performance. The lessons for these pupils cater very well for these targets. The co-ordinator for special educational needs and the classroom support staff provide very effective guidance for all of the pupils with special educational needs. Overall, the staff know these pupils well and cater sensitively for their needs.
34. The school benefits from having a strong team of classroom assistants. They work very closely with the teachers, are particularly well briefed and provide very effective guidance for individuals and groups of pupils. Many of them have received training and therefore usefully provide extra expertise and guidance within the school – for example, those who have received training in the new Early Literacy Support strategy and in speech therapy.

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

35. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and meets statutory requirements for the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The quality and range of learning opportunities that the school provides for the pupils have improved since the last inspection and are good. The curriculum provides pupils with a good education that promotes their intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares them effectively for the next stage of education.
36. The previous inspection report highlighted the need to improve planning systems and standards in ICT. The school has worked very hard on these issues and has made good progress and improvements. Planning has been significantly improved and is now detailed and comprehensive. Information gained from assessment is now used effectively to ensure that work is well matched to the needs of all pupils, including those in mixed-age classes. Provision for ICT is now good.
37. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage has been well maintained since the last inspection and is good. It is broad and balanced, and covers all the recommended areas of learning, linking smoothly with the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum. Detailed planning effectively takes into account the small, structured steps in learning that help children to achieve the national Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. The inclusion of all children is well addressed. All Foundation Stage staff work closely together to plan and adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of all children, including those with special needs. They effectively ensure equal opportunity for all, including the reception children in the mixed age class. The school successfully promotes learning through purposeful play and first-hand experiences. Good opportunities are provided to develop children's skills and knowledge through a good balance of adult-directed and self-chosen activities.
38. The school introduced the nationally recommended schemes of work last September to supplement their own schemes, and these provide effective guidelines for staff in planning, continuity and progression. The school has developed a common format for planning, and teachers plan together, so that there is a consistent approach to medium and short-term planning. Comprehensive, detailed long and medium-term plans clearly reflect the schemes of work. They relate effectively to the requirements of the curriculum the school offers, and are translated into appropriate weekly plans. Planning for pupils in mixed-age classes is good, with learning intentions made clear for the different year groups - a notable improvement since the last inspection. For example, clear planning for a science lessons in a Year 1/2 class, fully extended Y2 pupils by involving them in extension tasks, whilst also catering well for lower attaining Year 1 pupils. Effective long-term planning includes topic plans, mostly in a two-year cycle.
39. To help to raise standards, personal targets are set in English and mathematics. Pupils evaluate their work with their teachers, and are suitably involved in setting targets for themselves. This helps them to understand what they are doing, how well they have done and how they can improve their work. Great care is taken in literacy lessons to teach pupils in specific ability groups and this ensures that work is well matched to their needs. The school provides extra support to improve standards and to help pupils catch up by organising Early Literacy Support groups which are well supported by the good number of trained teaching assistants. Pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 are taught numeracy in a separate class by the co-ordinator for special educational needs, so that there is a clear and direct focus on their individual needs. These initiatives are beginning to have a positive effect on standards, particularly for younger pupils, and they are gradually becoming established throughout the school. The school displays curriculum information and sends it home to encourage parents to become more involved in their children's education.
40. The school has responded effectively to the National Strategies for the Literacy and Numeracy. Daily, well-organised literacy and numeracy sessions, which adhere closely to the national framework, are taught in each class. The school gives high priority to the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics.

Although some improvement is indicated and is beginning to raise standards, the impact upon standards is yet to be fully realised. The school recognises the need to provide more opportunities for extended writing and to increase the quality and frequency of opportunities to teach space and measures. Pupils' literacy skills are used appropriately across the curriculum; for instance, in religious education. However, the use of numeracy skills is, overall, under-developed in other subjects, although some good use of numeracy was noted in geography.

41. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Work is carefully tailored to the needs of the individuals concerned. At appropriate times pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn for concentrated support from the co-ordinator. Care is taken in providing such support to ensure that individuals do not always miss the same areas of class-work. Pupils are also streamed for literacy lessons and this ensures that literacy work is very precisely matched to the needs of pupils with special educational needs. The special educational needs room is a spacious, attractive and well equipped area and the pupils that come for lessons in this room thoroughly enjoy attending the sessions and are consequently motivated to try hard with their work. The school has a good level of classroom support assistants who work very well with individuals and groups of pupils. In addition, the school is fortunate in having two assistants who are trained in speech therapy and work in conjunction with the local education authority speech therapist to provide an on-going programme for pupils in need of support in this area. Comprehensive records are maintained in connection with all pupils with special educational needs, and very clear individual education plans are created for pupils. These plans are extremely precise and contain sharply-focused targets for future performance. The plans are regularly reviewed and the co-ordinator for special educational needs ensures that close liaison is maintained with the parents.
42. Special educational needs provision is one example of the strong efforts made by the school to ensure that all pupils are provided for as fully as possible. Full efforts are made within the curriculum to ensure that all groups of pupils and individuals are given chances to participate in all activities. The school has a clear policy for equality of opportunity, and the principles of equality and inclusion are clearly ingrained in all lessons and school activities.
43. The school provides a good range of activities outside the classroom involving sport, music, art, information and communication technology, chess and gardening. A significant minority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire disagreed that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspection evidence does not support this view. All of these activities, together with educational visits and visitors to the school, contribute significantly to pupils' attainment and personal development.
44. The school's links with the wider community are good. The school is regarded as a central part of community life. Pupils are involved in charitable fundraising and the school choir sings at local events. The recent arts week, visits to the local museum and the visit of the Bucklers Mead school band, together with other activities, all contribute to pupils' learning and personal development.
45. Relationships with other schools are also good. The partnership with several pre-school groups, the close working relationship with Foundation Stage staff in two other similar schools in Yeovil and Bridgwater, and the involvement with the local 'family of schools' all have a beneficial effect on teaching and learning. Students from Yeovil College help with the after-school games club. The school also works closely with Five Ways special school and currently accepts one pupil into classes for short periods. There are also some links with the local business community involving staff development and the personal development of pupils.
46. Good provision is made for personal, social and health education, which is now incorporated into the curriculum. Lessons about this aspect and planned 'Circle Time' effectively foster pupils' personal development. Good provision is made for sex education and the awareness of drugs misuse, appropriately addressed through the science and the personal, social and health education curriculum.

The school promotes healthy lifestyles very well through events such as ‘A Healthy Walk to School’ and ‘A Keep Fit for Life’ day. As a result of an ‘Eat for Health’ programme, the school received a financial award to support further developments. Pupils’ involvement in setting personal and group behaviour targets further enhances their personal and social development.

47. Overall, provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Provision is very good for moral, social and cultural development and good for spiritual development. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection, when spiritual development was satisfactory and provision for cultural development was not well developed.
48. Spiritual development is promoted through well-planned acts of worship, which now meet statutory requirements, an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils’ ideas are valued. For instance, in a numeracy lesson on ‘symmetry’ the teacher demonstrated great respect for pupils and their ideas. Pupils learn about different values and qualities. For example, in an assembly about a story that Jesus told, ‘The Lost Son,’ pupils began to understand what ‘forgiveness’ means. In another assembly about ‘Trying hard’, pupils gained appropriate understanding about ‘perseverance’. The school values the individual, and encourages the development of respect, honesty, truth, working together and taking responsibility. Studying other religions, such as Hinduism in religious education, gives pupils an insight into other people’s beliefs. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on feelings. For example, in a circle-time session, pupils talked about times when they felt happy, sad or proud – usefully sharing their thoughts and experiences with the class. Pupils have good opportunities to appreciate beautiful artefacts. In an art lesson, pupils expressed delight and wonder on being shown an intricate, colourful, hand-made woven wall hanging. Most parents are happy with the values and attitudes the school promotes. Foundation Stage children are given good opportunities for reflection in assemblies and lessons.
49. The very good provision for moral development is fostered by the school’s clear and positive approach to behaviour management, through pupils’ involvement in setting their own behaviour targets and by displays of ‘Golden Time’ rules, emphasising individual responsibility. Children usefully build their own class rules, based on the school rules. The school has developed positive strategies to encourage good behaviour, kindness and politeness. For example, children’s achievements of their targets are celebrated through ‘Happy Books’ (which usefully record individual pupils’ curricular targets) and ‘Helping Hands’ in a weekly assembly. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong through sensitive discussion of incidents in the class and playground, and through stories and assemblies. Many activities and stories teach Foundation Stage children to respect others and to know the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.
50. Pupils’ social development is fostered through very good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility; for example, for watering plants, and as milk, register and tidying-up monitors. ‘Job Lists’ identifying pupils’ responsibilities are displayed in classes. Staff are very good role models in the way they relate to pupils and to other adults. Through this, pupils learn to relate well to others. This is evident in their very good relationships with each other and with adults. The school promotes care, concern, respect, self-esteem, and the integration of disabled people, and this has a very positive effect on social development. Pupils’ understanding of citizenship and community awareness is encouraged through, for instance, liaison with the police and local churches. Social development is also promoted through school visits, good extra-curricular provision and focused curriculum weeks, such as ‘Arts Week’ and ‘Science Week’. Pupils work very well in groups, for example, in numeracy and art, developing both co-operation and independence. Foundation Stage children learn to take turns and share equipment. They have very good opportunities to develop independence through, for instance, the provision of a ‘Task Board’ showing work for each group.
51. Children’s appreciation of their own culture is developed very well through literature, music, art, history, religious education, assemblies, stories and the good provision of extra-curricular activities; for example, the ‘Sketch Club’. It is enhanced through visiting musicians, an annual ‘Arts Week’, and visiting places

such as the local library. The school has developed many strategies to provide for pupils' multicultural understanding. It is promoted very well through classes being named after other countries and through pupils learning about the culture of their specific (class name) country. E-mail links have been investigated with a Canadian school. Taking 'Barnaby Bear' to 'report' on life in other places when they go on holiday, motivates pupils to find out about culture in other areas as part of geography work. The use of display drapes with 'Hello' printed in many languages, or with Chinese symbols, adds to multicultural understanding. Foundation Stage children become aware of other cultures through celebrating such festivals as Divali.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

52. The support and guidance that pupils receive, both formal and informal, are very good and have improved since the last inspection. Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions and problems. The teaching and support staff know the pupils well and respond to their needs sensitively. The Foundation Stage children and pupils with special educational needs receive very good support.
53. The procedures for monitoring and recording pupils' personal development are good. Some of the records are informal, but the school recognises the need to develop a greater degree of formality. Pupils' annual reports are good and provide a careful analysis of what they know, understand and can do, as well as setting targets for improvement. Home-school agreements are sometimes 'personalised' to take account of the special needs of some pupils and their families.
54. Pupils with special educational needs receive very effective support and guidance. Their work is carefully monitored by the co-ordinator for special educational needs, the headteacher and the class teachers, and appropriate action is taken to ensure that specific programmes of work are used to accelerate their learning. Learning-support assistants in all classes work very effectively to provide extra support where necessary and full use is made of outside agencies as and when required.
55. Specific assessment procedures are generally used in monitoring pupils' attainment and progress, and are very good. Statutory requirements for assessment at the end of Year 2 are implemented properly. The school uses the Somerset Baseline tests to establish pupils' attainment levels on entry to the school. This information and results of other standardised tests are used to monitor children's progress throughout the key stage.
56. There is a good correlation between teacher assessment of attainment at the end of Year 2 and the results of the National Curriculum tests. Detailed analysis of the results, particularly in mathematics and English, have enabled the school to effectively target pupils who need additional support in their learning and to ensure that groups organised within literacy are well matched to the pupils' needs.
57. In foundation subjects, assessment is usefully based on the national schemes used and in some specifically-set assessment tasks in geography. Work sampling is used effectively to help build up a profile of each child.
58. Short-term targets are set for each pupil in the core subjects of English and mathematics, and also for their general development. These targets are discussed sensitively with children and displayed in target books, which are regularly reviewed. This good practice is established in some classes and developing in others.
59. Assessment findings are used very well to influence future planning in all year groups and make a significant contribution to raising pupils' performance within the school
60. In the Foundation Stage, the very good assessment procedures are detailed and thorough, and cover all aspects of development. They allow for easy tracking of children's attainment and progress.

Assessment is used very well to guide the planning of the next steps in learning. In addition, nursery records of achievement are sent home weekly for parents to complete. Reception class 'profile books' are additional detailed assessment records. Both are used when the children evaluate their own work and set personal targets with their teachers. Staff know individual children very well. Children are assessed on entry to both nursery and reception classes. These assessments are used very well to plan suitable programmes of work for the children.

61. The school policies and procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good. Policies and procedures for promoting health and safety are also very good, including teachers promoting healthy and safe practices in the classroom. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. There is a close working relationship with a variety of outside agencies that further underpins the effective care of pupils.
62. Procedures for recording and monitoring attendance are very good. Efforts to improve attendance and punctuality include individual pupil and class awards, and regular reminders to parents in newsletters.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

63. Overall, the school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. The very small minority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire or attended the pre-inspection parents' meeting have very positive views of what the school provides and achieves. These parents believe that the school works closely with them and that the children get the right amount of homework.
64. As noted in the previous inspection, there is much effective communication between the school and parents, with information provided through regular newsletters, parents' meetings and annual reports. Parents also know that they can discuss issues informally with staff, particularly at either end of the school day in the playground. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory. The school has recently conducted a survey amongst parents and, although the number of responses was low, all of the areas of concern raised have been acted upon.
65. Since the last inspection, the school has sustained its vigorous efforts to encourage parental involvement in the life of the school, but parents do not always respond fully to these efforts. The use of homework diaries has improved the communication between home and school for the majority of families, and the school plans to extend their use in the future. A small number of parents provide support in the classroom and with reading, and there is a small but supportive parent-teachers association. One parent has brightened the school interior with some excellent murals. Parents with children identified as having special educational needs are well involved in reviewing the individual education plans for their children.
66. Admission arrangements to school are smooth and effective. Home visits are made by staff in the nursery and this has a very positive impact on the children's smooth entry into school. Parental involvement is welcomed and a number of committed parents are well briefed as classroom helpers and give very good support in the Foundation Stage. Parents are usefully involved in completing their children's records of achievement, which are sent home weekly to be updated. Foundation Stage leaflets and brochures provide helpful information for parents. Staff send books home to share with parents, to further involve parents in their children's learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

67. As noted at the time of the last inspection, the school is well led and managed. In particular the headteacher is successful in getting the staff to work together as a highly effective team. She is very well supported and assisted by the deputy headteacher and, together, they ensure that all of the school's development initiatives are kept on track. The aims of the school are very clear and staff work hard to achieve them. The vision for the school's future educational direction is also very clear

and expressed fully in the very good school improvement plan. This plan lays out all areas of intended development in a strategic and prioritised way. The rationale behind this plan is thoroughly thought through and discussed with all members of staff, who produce detailed action plans for the areas for which they are responsible. Governors are fully involved in discussion about and the development of initiatives within the plan. Staff and governors regularly appraise progress with actions, and review and redefine them where necessary. In this way, the school improvement plan is a well-used 'working' document.

68. Through pursuing a programme of action to retain its Investors in People status the school also makes an extra effort to ensure that its policies and procedures are in line with good practice.
69. Governors are fully supportive of the headteacher and staff and are suitably involved in the overall strategic management of the school. They are kept well informed and many of them visit the school on a regular basis. The chair of governors, in particular, provides especially strong support and liaises with the headteacher on a frequent basis. Through detailed regular reports the headteacher ensures that all governors receive full information and are kept up to date. The governors fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities.
70. Overall, management and co-ordination of most subject areas are good. In particular, teachers have worked very hard to develop curriculum planning and this is a specific area of strong improvement since the last inspection. In carrying out their responsibilities, staff liaise very closely with one another. The Foundation Stage is particularly well co-ordinated. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and has worked very hard with the staff to develop Foundation Stage provision. Similarly, the school's special educational needs provision is very well managed. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has put in place systems to ensure that individual pupils with special educational needs receive support that is precisely tailored to their individual needs and she liaises closely with all teachers, staff, parents, the governor with responsibility for special educational needs and, where necessary, outside agencies.
71. The systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the teaching are effective. The head teacher regularly monitors planning and she and the deputy headteacher also regularly monitor lessons. The headteacher, in particular, frequently spends time in classrooms monitoring the progress of pupils and the quality of teaching.
72. There are good links between the school improvement plan's priorities for improvement, assessment information and school action plans. These plans are developed with coordinators, teachers and governors, and reflected within set targets for pupil progress and professional development in line with the school performance management policy, which has been properly implemented. The head teacher uses her observations to monitor the progress of the school and to feed back to teachers, both individually and in staff meetings, features that are effective and areas where improvements are needed.
73. The monitoring of planning and school development is shared with the subject coordinators and governors who are kept well informed both through regular meetings of the governing body and on their visits to the school, when they have opportunity to spend time in classrooms talking to staff and children. Monitoring of lessons has usefully focused on literacy and numeracy. However, most subject coordinators have not yet had the opportunity to develop their role further by becoming involved in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in other classes. This imposes limitations on their ability to form a complete overview of the subject for which they are responsible, particularly with respect to how well planning in their subject is put into practice in lessons. This area is recognised for future development within the school improvement plan.
74. The current staffing levels are good. There are appropriate numbers of staff and they are suitably qualified to teach the children. Staff regularly update their professional knowledge, particularly in the

teaching of literacy and numeracy, and demonstrate commitment to continued improvement. All teaching staff are suitably involved in reviewing their own performance and setting new objectives in line with the school's performance-management policy. There is good support for newly qualified teachers, and the induction process for new teachers to the school is very good. The teaching provision for children with special educational needs is most effective. There is a considerable investment in learning-support assistants, sufficient to enable all classes to have the equivalent of full time support. These staff have undertaken additional professional training in a range of classroom skills, including helping pupils with literacy and numeracy, and make a valuable contribution to the effectiveness of the school.

75. The quantity of materials, books and equipment available to teachers and pupils is generally good and has been enhanced since the last inspection. Art resources are very good, as is the provision made for physical education. There is good access to teaching resources, which are well managed by curriculum coordinators.
76. The school accommodation is good. The interior is clean, warm and light, and the quality of displays throughout the school is impressive. The buildings are well maintained and the new cleaning arrangements are proving successful. Outdoor facilities are also generally good. The outdoor secure play area for nursery children is a very good resource to encourage the development of children's physical skills. However, reception children do not have access to such a facility and this has been identified as a priority in the school improvement plan, as has the need to replace some of the nursery furniture and large play equipment. There have been significant improvements in the accommodation since the last inspection, particularly the addition of a computer suite and the provision of a special classroom for pupils with special educational needs. These improvements enhance the opportunities available to boost pupils' skills.
77. The school has full and detailed procedures for managing its finances, through which roles and the delegation of financial responsibility are clearly defined. The headteacher ensures that all available grants are procured and great care is taken to allocate money available. For example, the school produces a detailed report to show how various amounts of money have been transferred to different budget headings. Budgetary systems and procedures run very efficiently. This was confirmed by a recent audit report, which commended the school for its efficiency in the area of financial administration. The school administrative officer works closely with the headteacher and staff to ensure the smooth running of the school on a day-to-day basis. The governors have a good understanding of the principles of best value. They compare prices very carefully, and consider the value for money of different purchases and contract awards. Arrangements such as the leasing of computers for the computer suite show that the governors have adopted a creative approach towards seeking budgetary solutions. The school also considers best-value principles in terms of canvassing parents' views; for example, the recent questionnaire to parents. Additionally, governors and staff compare the school's test results with those in other schools and constantly look at ways of further improving standards and the quality of education. The school improvement plan has full detail to show cost implications over the coming years. The current budget shows a larger than average figure for the financial carry forward to next year. However, this amounts to prudent budgeting in the light of changes in the school roll, and takes into account the need to safeguard current staffing levels as far as is possible. The 'apparent' budget under-spend figure reduces to below average in the forecast for the coming year.
78. The school's expenditure per pupil figure is high compared to the national average. However, balancing this against the good teaching, leadership and management, numerous other strengths in the operation of the school, and the fact that, overall, pupils achieve well by the time they leave, it is judged that the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

79. The headteacher, staff and governors have worked hard over recent years to bring about improvement in the school. Areas that require further improvement are listed below – the majority of these already feature within the school's current improvement plan.

- o Raise standards in English – particularly in writing by:
 - placing a greater emphasis upon the systematic teaching of handwriting and spelling;
 - providing pupils with more opportunities for extended writing, including lessons in other subjects;
 - ensuring the application of a universal and consistent programme of phonics teaching in all classes. (*Paragraphs 4,7, 31, 97, 98, 100, 102 and 104.*)
- o Raise standards in mathematics by:
 - ensuring that work set for average-attaining and lower-attaining pupils matches their needs precisely;
 - planning more systematically for opportunities to use mathematical skills in challenging ways in other subjects;
 - increasing the quality and frequency of teaching and learning in shape, space and measure;
 - providing more opportunities to share good practice. (*Paragraphs 8, 32 and 113*)
- o Enable the subject co-ordinators to broaden their awareness of the effectiveness of the teaching and learning in the subject areas for which they are responsible by creating opportunities for them to monitor and evaluate the quality of lessons across the school. (*Paragraph 73*)

Other less significant areas that the school should also consider for inclusion in its future action plan:

- o Ensure that reception-age group children have access to an appropriate outdoor secure play area. (as already identified in the school improvement plan) (*Paragraph 76*)
- o Ensure that all physical education lessons are of sufficient length to enable pupils to develop their learning. (*Paragraph 165*)
- o Review the current one-year cycle of planning in religious education to ensure that Year 1 pupils do not repeat coverage of areas of work. (*Paragraph 175*)
- o Further improve standards in science by ensuring that pupils have full opportunities to record the outcomes of their investigations. (*Paragraphs 32 and 119*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	57
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	37	11	1	0	0
Percentage	0	14	64.9	19.3	1.8	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 one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20	194
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	10	57

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	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	25

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.0
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	38	27	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	26	31
	Girls	23	23	25
	Total	50	49	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (82)	75 (90)	86 (88)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	32	31
	Girls	23	24	23
	Total	51	56	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (82)	86 (92)	83 (85)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	194
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: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.3
Average class size	27.7

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	224

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	40
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6.7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	501885
Total expenditure	471216
Expenditure per pupil	*1947
Balance brought forward from previous year	27284
Balance carried forward to next year	57953

**based on a roll of 242 when the budget was set.*

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	214
Number of questionnaires returned	47

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	26	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	32	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	38	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	51	9	0	0
The teaching is good.	70	26	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	40	11	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	34	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	23	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	49	45	2	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	57	43	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	34	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	17	15	6	32

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

80. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. It has been well maintained since the previous inspection and is a strength of the school. Children receive a good start to their education. The quality of teaching is at least good, with some very good teaching in both the nursery and reception. As a result, children achieve well and occasionally very well in all areas of learning.
81. Forty children attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Fifty-five children attend two reception classes full-time and twelve of the oldest reception children attend full-time in a mixed-aged class of reception and Year 1 pupils. All Foundation Stage classes are very effectively supported by nursery nurses and teaching assistants. All staff work very well together.
82. Children start school with very wide ranging standards that, overall, are well below average in all areas of learning. This is confirmed by initial assessment carried out on entry. Children achieve well, but are not on course to reach expected levels by the end of the Foundation Stage in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. In personal, social, emotional and creative development pupils progress very well and most are likely to attain the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. A significant number have serious speech and behaviour problems and other special needs which affect not only language development but also development in all areas of learning. The children in the nursery go on not only to the reception classes in this school, but also to other local schools.

Personal, social and emotional development

83. Almost all children enter the nursery with immature skills in personal and social development. By the end of the Foundation Stage the majority attain most of the Early Learning Goals in this area. They progress very well as a direct consequence of skilful teaching and high expectations in both the nursery and reception, where staff strongly encourage them to feel confident about what they can achieve.
84. Nursery staff create a 'Kindness Tree', labelled with the names of 'special helpful people', from amongst the children so that children become aware of the effects of their actions on others. Nursery and reception children become aware of the difference between right and wrong through stories and through sensitive handling of incidents by staff. Children's behaviour and attitudes to learning are very good. They enjoy school and are beginning to play and work well together. For example, they share constructional apparatus fairly, and learn to take turns when playing 'shape' games.
85. Nursery and reception children respond very positively to well-established daily routines, giving them confidence and a sense of security. A great deal of thought goes into providing for the needs of others, particularly for children with disabilities, who are very well supported. Adults are excellent role models, always treating each other and children with respect and courtesy, leading to the development of very good relationships.
86. Staff provide very good opportunities for children to develop responsibility; for example, clearing away equipment and as register and milk monitors. Adults ensure that equipment is easily accessible to help children become independent. In one reception class, the teacher devised an excellent strategy in the form of a 'task board' to encourage children to organise themselves independently.

Communication, language and literacy

87. Teaching is never less than good, with some very good teaching seen in both nursery and reception classes. Provision for language development is good. Many nursery children use body language to communicate, and gain confidence through very good adult support. Playing in the class 'Telephone Box' encourages children to 'talk' and, with good adult intervention, contributes effectively to the development of speaking and listening skills. Reception children are willing to talk about their 'news' and are keen to respond to teachers' questions, using a growing vocabulary. Nursery and reception children enjoy listening to stories and sharing books. Adults skilfully engage children in conversation and clearly value what they have to say. At the end of the Foundation Stage, most still attain well below expected levels but have made good progress from a low starting point.
88. Nursery children enjoy 'reading' books with an adult, showing interest in pictures, although many are unable to recognise details. They become aware of story structure and sequences of events through listening to stories such as 'The Train Ride'. Elements of the National Literacy Strategy are used very well in the reception classes. For example, through the effective use of the book 'A Very Hot Day' some children understood 'rhyming words' and 'sounds'. More-able children begin to understand that print tells them what the story is about and some know what 'title' means. In a very effective reception-class plenary session, the teacher used very good strategies for teaching rhyming words, giving out some cubes of cheese, effectively reinforcing the fact that 'cheese' and 'please' rhyme. Children recognise some initial sounds, through using 'word' and 'sound' cards, with very good support. Through sending books home to share with parents, staff involve them in children's learning.
89. Nursery staff encourage children to draw, paint and 'make marks'. Reception children develop confidence in writing over and under teachers' writing. Some higher attainers write their names and understand that marks carry meaning. A few develop sound pencil control, practising letter formation with increasing skill, but most still find this difficult.

Mathematical development

90. Teaching of the basic skills is clear and accurate in all the Foundation Stage classes. As a result of good or very good teaching and very good support, children achieve well from a low base on entry, but a number still attain well below expected levels by the end of the Foundation Stage. Staff plan work in a structured way, building effectively on children's previous learning. Work is well matched to differing levels of attainment, and support staff and helpers are well briefed about what children are expected to learn. All are included in, and enjoy challenging, yet achievable, activities. Adults constantly assess children's understanding, checking what they know, to guide the planning of the next steps in learning.
91. Nursery children show interest in numbers and attempt to sort, compare, order, match and count objects, through the good provision of number games and activities. Through singing and acting number songs, such as 'Five little speckled frogs', a few become aware of 'one less'. In reception classes, elements of the National Numeracy Strategy are very effectively used. The part of the lesson where all of the children are taught together, before splitting into group or individual activities, is just the right length and teachers vary activities well to maintain interest and concentration. Most reception children count to five reliably, and to ten or more as a group. Higher attainers recognise the numbers one to nine and, with support, those beyond ten. Through very effective use of large domino cards, children begin to understand the idea of adding two numbers together and they try hard to do well. Staff in all classes provide children with a good range of purposeful, practical activities to help them understand space, shape and measures. For example, very good use of a 'Shapes' tree helps reception children to recognise common shapes and some of their properties. Playing with water, and wet and dry sand, raises their awareness of capacity.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

92. Children enter nursery with a low level of general knowledge. Most achieve well as a result of consistently good teaching. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most attain below expected levels. All staff plan a very good range of activities to build on children's knowledge to help them understand more about the world. Nursery children experience a 'listening walk', encouraging them to listen to and observe the world about them. Reception children observe how ice cubes melt in the warmth of the classroom. Many find it hard to concentrate and staff maintain their interest and curiosity by good use of resources.
93. Good use of a wooden railway helps nursery children to develop a sense of place and direction. Classes are named after countries, and children become aware of places beyond their locality through studying the life and culture of their 'class country'. Older reception children carry out cooking activities and learn about life in other countries. Foundation Stage children become aware of time passing in the celebration of birthdays. Displays, such as 'Our Birthday Train', days of the week and months of the year, add to their sense of 'time'.
94. Nursery children explore constructional equipment with increasing confidence and show interest in the computer. Reception children use apparatus safely to construct and build, with growing skill. Good opportunities to use computers encourage them to develop appropriate information-technology skills. Very good use of visitors, such as a dentist, and visits; for instance, to 'Tropiquana', help Foundation Stage children to become aware of the wider world. They develop multicultural awareness through stories and celebrating festivals such as Divali.

Physical development

95. Teaching is good overall, with some very good teaching observed in the nursery. Children achieve well and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, physical development is slightly below expectations. Nursery children run, jump, climb and move safely, with growing co-ordination. Most lack imagination, but adults talk to them and help them to find various ways of moving, with very good use of vocabulary that helps children understand how to move to different positions. Staff organise a very good range of activities to encourage children's awareness of others and of space around them. Very high expectations of children's behaviour and involvement result in the development of very good attitudes and response. Teachers build very well on children's physical skills, and reception children move more imaginatively, with improving control. They develop an awareness of space and of others and show respect for others when playing outside. They enjoy movement and exercise. The secure nursery play area outside is a very good resource to encourage the development of their body skills. However, reception children do not enjoy a similar facility and cannot therefore consolidate their skills to the same extent. This is a target in the School Improvement Plan. In all classes staff teach skills, such as handling small tools, paintbrushes, writing tools and scissors, to help children gain safe control of their finer movements and, although many find this difficult, they are very well supported by staff.

Creative development

96. Teaching is good overall and children achieve very well from a low starting point. Many attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. To encourage creative development and independence, staff plan a good balance of activities and where possible provide activities that children choose themselves. Very good group work ensures that all are included and have equal opportunities to work at all activities. Nursery children begin to differentiate colours, and investigate printing and painting patterns to make a large class picture of a railway station. Reception children explore colour mixing and texture to create collage pictures of spiders' webs, leaf prints and a large 'Snowman' picture. Nursery children learn about sounds by experimenting with musical instruments. Reception children explore playing musical instruments, perform simple rhythms and sing songs, such as 'Jack and Jill', with enthusiasm and confidence. Older reception children make appropriate sounds to match the

weather to accompany such songs as 'I hear thunder'. Acting the story of 'The Sun King' stimulates children's imagination, as well as their language and personal development. The nursery 'Pen Mill Booking Office' and the 'Sailing Ship' in reception encourage role-play, but there is less intervention by adults than in other creative areas, and opportunities to develop children's imaginative play and sustained conversation are missed.

ENGLISH

97. With the exception of the test results for 2001, the scores for the last four years indicate that pupils' overall attainment in the National Curriculum reading and writing tests at the end of Key Stage 1 has stayed close to national averages, although always a little below. The attainment is comparable to that achieved by pupils in similar schools. The most recent results for 2001 have shown attainment to be well below national expectations but reflect predictions based upon low attainment on entry and a high number of pupils in that particular cohort with special educational needs. There was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
98. Inspection findings indicate that pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining below average standards in English. While writing standards are below average, in reading, speaking and listening standards are in line with national expectations and therefore better than in last year's tests. Overall, standards in English towards the end of Key Stage 1 are improving and pupils make good progress.
99. Standards in speaking and listening benefit from the early emphasis the school places on their development in the nursery and reception, and pupils continue to develop their skills at a good pace. By the end of the key stage, pupils' attainment is in line with national averages. The pace of pupils' learning benefits from the many opportunities that teachers plan for them to talk in small groups and in front of larger audiences, such as the whole class. Pupils listen carefully to each other and their teachers, and usually give responses that are interesting and relevant. One group of pupils were heard discussing life in a medieval castle from the viewpoint of a serving boy. Each child took a turn and built upon the comments of other pupils. Teacher intervention was rarely required to support this discussion. Teachers take every opportunity to broaden pupils' vocabulary by sharing technical language and structuring their questions so that they promote the use of a widening vocabulary. This is successful in enabling pupils to become interesting and confident speakers, although many have yet to use this widening range of vocabulary in their writing.
100. Standards in reading are broadly in line with the national average by the age of seven. In Year 1, the pupils read with growing confidence, discuss the meaning of words and learn to build up words using their knowledge of phonics. There is a newly implemented scheme for the teaching of phonics, which is providing good structure to support growing confidence in letter sounds. Pupils practise using phonics to sound out words as well as making informed guesses at identifying words by their context. In one lesson, pupils were observed being encouraged to think of precise definitions for words; for example, in response to the word 'television' one child suggested it was square, but the teacher encouraged more precision by taking another definition from a child who said it was square and 'You watch it!' The teaching of phonics is less well developed in Year 2 and a considerable number of pupils have great difficulty in reading new words. The school improvement plan has correctly identified this as an area for development. Most pupils enjoy reading and, by the end of the key stage, they read simple texts with expression. They describe the stories they have read and talk about the principle characters in their books. They use non-fiction books well, being able to use contents and indexes to find information they require. The pupils regularly use the school library and are confident in its use.
101. The teaching of reading is well organised. Pupils read together a common text from 'big books'. This is often used as a valuable opportunity to discuss links between different subjects. For example, in one class, pupils were seen looking at a reference book together and relating this to earlier work they had done in science. Groups of pupils frequently read together, both with and without the teacher. Teachers often use interesting texts that introduce the pupils to rich vocabulary that is discussed with

the group. In addition, each class has a wealth of books both within the classroom and in the library, and frequent independent reading sessions are organised. The teachers often use these sessions as an opportunity to promote pupils' interest in books. In one library session with a class of Year 1 and 2 pupils, the teacher was observed discussing non-fiction books with a group of pupils and then helpfully suggesting other books they might wish to read. Teachers encourage pupils to take their reading books home and the individual home-school reading diaries are a further useful tool for monitoring progress in reading. They also make good use of computer resources to help pupils improve their reading.

102. Standards in writing are below average by the time pupils reach the age of seven and they make unsatisfactory progress in this area. Year 1 pupils are beginning to write simple sentences, but these contain many mistakes and are difficult to understand. The pupils struggle to form letters clearly. Similarly, in Year 2, although many pupils are beginning to write more complex sentences, there is a lack of interesting vocabulary and common words are frequently misspelled. Most pupils are beginning to use capitals and full stops, but they often put these in the wrong places. Very few pupils join their writing and the majority do not yet write letters of a consistent size. Letter formation is irregular and many letters are incorrectly formed. However, in Year 2, the writing is beginning to convey meaning to a greater extent than in Year 1 pupils' efforts and pupils are beginning to have an awareness of 'audience'. For example, pupils in Year 2 wrote historical information about life in a castle from the point of view of a servant. Good examples were noted of literacy being used effectively in other subjects. However, overall, not enough examples were seen of pupils writing at sufficient length for their age and a laboured approach to handwriting and spelling is clearly the main factor that slows progress.
103. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and are very effectively taught as a single class for literacy. Teachers and support staff know their pupils well and work hard to promote their independence in writing and reading. Pupils are always encouraged and their successes praised. Support staff were seen giving their pupils quiet encouragement during whole-class discussions and this frequently gave the pupils confidence to make sensible contributions and speak clearly in front of the whole class. Teachers set pupils tasks that are well matched to their learning needs and take careful account of the requirements of their individual education plans, whilst ensuring that the pupils are included in whole-class activities, particularly in the introduction and plenary parts of the lesson. In one lesson, linking literacy and geography, the pupils had the opportunity to listen to a story about a journey to France and to say things in French and English. The teacher ensured that all pupils had the opportunity to contribute in the oral discussion.
104. The quality of teaching is good overall so that pupils progress well and sometimes very well in speaking and listening and in reading. Teachers work very hard to help pupils make progress, often from very low starting points. They have rightly placed strong emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening and reading skills and have been especially successful in this respect. Having improved work in these areas, teachers have correctly identified the next step of improving pupils' writing by laying greater emphasis on developing handwriting and spelling skills and by providing more opportunities for pupils to complete extended pieces of writing. Some accelerated progress in these areas is already apparent. For example, in one lesson seen, the teacher made good use of an ICT projector to model correct letter formation, which pupils then usefully practised on their individual white boards.
105. Teachers plan lessons well and the majority of lessons seen provided pupils with interesting work that matched closely with their attainment levels. This precision was especially noted in respect of lessons for pupils with special educational needs, where, for example, very specific programmes of work were provided for individuals to aid their skills in using phonics. Teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and use it well to fit with the needs of pupils in the school. Teachers are particularly good at improving pupils' confidence and self-esteem through strategies that involve careful use of praise and encouragement. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils were observed writing their ideas on white boards and then discussing their sentences with other pupils before sharing them with the teacher and the rest of the class. Working in this way helped pupils develop the confidence to share

their views and discuss ideas openly. Teachers have a good rapport with their pupils and create a purposeful atmosphere in their classrooms. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes and work enthusiastically in lessons. Many pupils respond well to the strategies mentioned above and, for example, showed confidence in speaking out in assemblies when asked, or in contributing to class discussions.

106. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and provide detailed feedback at the end of lessons about how much has been achieved and what pupils need to do to improve further.
107. The school has very carefully analysed its test scores and other information about pupils' progress in English and has identified which aspects of reading and writing need greater emphasis in order to help pupils improve. This information has also been used to place the pupils in ability groups for English and this, together with the effective implementation of the Literacy Strategy and careful planning, is having a positive impact upon improving standards in English.
108. English is well managed and the co-ordinator provides effective support for her colleagues. The school has a suitable range of resources to support teaching and learning in this subject.

MATHEMATICS

109. Overall, pupils currently in Year 2 attain standards below those expected for their ages in numeracy and all areas of mathematics (number, algebra, space, shape and measures). This is an improvement on the 2001 national test results, which showed that standards were well below average when compared to all schools nationally and below average when compared to other similar schools. This was due to the fact that there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the 2001 cohort. Over the past few years there has been a decline in what pupils can do when they first join the school, and fewer seven-year-olds now achieve the expected, or higher levels. Standards are now improving and since 1999 and the last inspection there has been a steady increase in the proportion of seven-year-olds attaining the higher levels in national tests. Most pupils achieve well and make good, and occasionally very good, progress. This is due to improved teaching and the focused approach brought about by the use of the National Numeracy Strategy. The school's decision to increase the number of teaching assistants to support the work of teachers and pupils in the classroom has also enhanced teaching and pupils' progress.
110. There are no marked differences between the performance of girls and boys. All pupils have equal opportunities and access to the curriculum. To help to raise standards, personal targets are set in mathematics. Pupils evaluate their work with their teachers, and are involved in setting targets for themselves. This helps them to understand what they are doing, how well they have done and how they can improve their work. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well. All Year 2 pupils with special educational needs are taught in a separate class by the co-ordinator for special educational needs. This ensures that there is a very good focus on the individual needs of these pupils, who achieve well and make good progress. At the same time, these pupils do not feel excluded, because others in their classes also carry out numeracy work.
111. By the age of seven, many pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to 100, but a number are unsure about ordering numbers to 100 and of the place value and sequence of numbers such as 14 and 40. Most count in fives and tens to a hundred and some can double and halve to ten, and a few to twenty. Many begin to understand odd and even numbers. Few are confident about the place value and sequence of numbers to 1,000. In one lesson, higher-attaining Year 2 pupils calculate simple money problems; for example, 'Two pears cost 8p. How much does one pear cost?' Many solve these problems but often write them down incorrectly; for instance, $6 = 3 = 3$, instead of $6p = 3p + 3p$. Working in pairs, Year 1 pupils find the difference between numbers by comparing two columns of cubes. Higher-attaining Year 1 pupils count coins and make given amounts up to 20p to put in purses. With adult support, Year 1 pupils list the number of toy bears pupils can hold. In Year 2, higher

attaining pupils solve simple problems by sorting and classifying data collected about pupils' eye and hair colour, recording in simple tables, with some success. Through experiencing effective practical shape activities, some become aware of reflective symmetry. Talking to pupils reveals that many can identify common shapes, but overall they do not have a secure knowledge and understanding of space and measurement.

112. The quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory and is good overall, with two-thirds of teaching being good. This has improved since the previous inspection, when some unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In good lessons pupils are encouraged to solve problems in various ways. They use practical apparatus and the tasks make them think hard. For example, when younger pupils were learning to add coins up to 20 pence, the teacher used a good range of strategies to encourage them to recognise and learn different coin values, count and match coins and make sums of money in different ways, recording their answers in 'purses'. In another successful lesson older pupils were challenged to think about adding on 10, using number fans, and to calculate ways of making 10, mentally or using their fingers. Teaching is less successful when teachers expect too much from average-attaining pupils and tasks are too difficult, so that they take too long to work out answers and lose interest, which hinders progress. Pupils evaluate their own learning and set their own targets with their teachers. This helps them to understand what they are doing, how well they have done and how they can improve their work. Higher attaining pupils are now more appropriately challenged, an improvement since the last inspection.
113. The teachers are familiar and confident with using the National Numeracy Strategy, which they apply effectively. The three-part lesson structure is well established and planning is good. All pupils are involved in all of the activities, with teachers generally targeting pupils of differing attainment levels effectively. Although teachers use correct mathematical terms, such as 'adding', 'doubling' and 'halving', most pupils lack the confidence to use these terms readily. Oral and mental sessions are usually delivered briskly and many pupils learn appropriately, showing developing mental agility. Where these sessions are less brisk, it is because tasks are too difficult for some average-attaining pupils, so that they lose interest, and progress becomes variable. Teachers manage pupils and resources very effectively. They promote very good relationships and motivate the pupils, who, as a result, behave very well, have very good attitudes and enjoy lessons.
114. During the inspection, only limited use was seen of information and communication technology to develop pupils' mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding. Their literacy skills are well enhanced when they read simple problems and develop their mathematical vocabulary. Although one good example of pupils using mathematics in geography was noted, there was little evidence of numeracy being used in other subjects.
115. The school has made considerable improvements in mathematics since the last inspection. Standards are rising in line with the national trend. The curriculum has been reviewed and the National Numeracy Strategy is well established. Planning has been improved significantly, particularly for pupils in mixed-aged-group classes. Assessment procedures are very good. The information gained from assessment is used very well to guide the planning of new work and to track pupils' attainment and progress.
116. Mathematics is very well co-ordinated. The co-ordinator has been involved in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, together with the head teacher and local education authority staff, so that she has a good overview of strengths and areas of development in the subject. An analysis of the results of national tests is undertaken to help identify areas where pupils' performance could be improved.

SCIENCE

117. Inspection evidence shows that most pupils are on course to reach standards that match the national expectations by the age of seven and a few pupils look set to attain above average results. This is better than last year, when teachers' assessment of the pupils indicated that results were well below the national average. Samples of work scrutinised and lesson observations show that pupils make good progress in their work and gain experience in a wide range of science activities.
118. The results of the National Curriculum teachers' assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2001 indicated that standards overall were well below the national average, but with the number of pupils achieving the higher levels only slightly below the expectations for this age group. Inspection evidence suggests that present standards are higher than those indicated by the teachers' assessments in 2001. Standards have been at least maintained since the last inspection, when they were also found to be in line with national averages. The great majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and are supported very well by staff.
119. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 show skills in the experimental and investigative aspects of science that match the level expected for their ages, and a few pupils exceed this level. Pupils retain the knowledge they have learnt and draw appropriate conclusions from their investigations and also make predictions about possible outcomes of their experiments. They discuss how to conduct a fair test and apply the ideas to work in hand. For example, in one class when pupils investigated which material was best to keep a bottle of water warm, they realised that it was important to use the same amount of liquid in each bottle used and to keep the bottles in the same place. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed predicting which material would be the best and waited excitedly for the outcome of the test. In another class, pupils testing the absorbency of different materials by soaking them in water again checked to ensure fair testing and predicted outcomes, and a group of higher-attaining pupils also measured the quantities of liquid absorbed. In much of the experimental work seen in class and in samples of work pupils set out the results of investigations. However, this is an area where many pupils currently experience difficulty and too little detail is recorded to give a clear idea of what happened in the investigations. Teachers are skilful in planning and preparing the work. They ensure that plenty of resources are available so that pupils are given suitable opportunities to select equipment themselves to help set up an investigation. Teachers also encourage pupils to take part in a wide range of experiments in order to make comparisons between the different types of materials. Pupils identify and compare the properties of different materials such as metal objects and plastic objects. They discuss the differences confidently, but again, in one session seen pupils did not record the outcomes of the work in sufficient detail.
120. Pupils gain appropriate knowledge and understanding about life processes and living things. They learn about healthy and unhealthy foods and gain a basic understanding of the parts of the body by drawing detailed diagrams. Pupils have a suitable knowledge of physical processes and, for example, learn how electrical circuits are made. They also learn basic facts about the positions and sizes of planets in the solar system.
121. Pupils are fully encouraged to develop their skills by teachers' challenging and perceptive questioning and the careful monitoring and guidance by the teachers and classroom assistants. Teachers' questions are posed using scientific vocabulary and pupils respond using the appropriate scientific words. Many pupils articulate their ideas with reasonable clarity, with a few offering good explanations to explain scientific ideas. For example, while the teacher in one Year 1/2 class provided a demonstration of the testing procedures for an investigation, many pupils were quick to point out the teacher's 'deliberate' errors that would make the test unfair. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively to help them gain independence in tackling practical tasks. Pupils tackle the activities working in groups where they co-operate and support each other very well.
122. Teaching is good overall. All teachers plan and prepare their lessons carefully, in line with the current scheme of work, and consider the learning needs of all pupils. They ensure that all equipment and materials necessary are readily available. This careful preparation helps lessons flow at a good pace.

Pupils remain very attentive because teachers ensure that they arouse pupils' interest and curiosity by the lively way they introduce new work. In one very good lesson the strong rapport between the teacher and the class, coupled with the very humorous method of presentation, meant that pupils became very enthusiastic about carrying out the work. Teachers ask interesting and challenging questions that engage the pupils' interest. The pace of lessons is good and tasks are planned carefully to build on what pupils know and can do so that they all make progress and learn independently. Pupils learn at a good pace. They maintain a high level of interest and concentration. They listen well to their teachers and each other, respond thoughtfully to questions, and have a go at offering an explanation, even if on occasions they need help with finding the right words. Nonetheless, in this way they feel encouraged and develop their confidence to attempt increasingly difficult tasks. By this means, the teachers are especially good at ensuring that all pupils participate fully and are fully included in lessons. Teachers established good links with speaking and listening in the lessons seen, but work samples scrutinised indicate that not enough emphasis is placed upon pupils recording the outcomes of their investigations through clear written accounts or tables to show the results of tests.

123. The science curriculum has improved since the last inspection and is sufficiently detailed to meet all statutory requirements. Useful links have been established with the local secondary school, with a visiting member of staff from the secondary school working with groups of pupils to help design a 'sensory' garden area for the school. The science co-ordinator manages the subject well and has worked hard with colleagues to provide detailed planning. The planning ensures that all aspects of science are covered, and that there are good opportunities, throughout the school, for practical and investigative work. The co-ordinator liaises closely with all of her colleagues, shares her expertise and supports staff well by assisting in planning lessons. She gains a useful view of work across the school by scrutinising samples of work.
124. The school has a good level of resources. The resources are well organised and easily accessible. The school has made good progress since the last inspection in developing the curriculum for science and meeting the needs of all pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

125. It was only possible to observe two art and design lesson during the inspection. Therefore no judgement can be made about the overall quality of teaching. Judgements about attainment and progress are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, displays, teachers' plans and discussions with pupils and teachers.
126. The attainment of seven-year-olds is above that expected for their age, especially in observational drawing. These standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.
127. Pupils explore ideas, working with a wide variety of materials, tools and techniques, recording work with increasing confidence, in a range of media. For example, they use paint, chalk, pastels, pens, pencil and charcoal, demonstrating good use of art elements, to create landscapes, portraits and still-life pictures. They work with textiles and make a series of collages depicting different times of day. They have used screen-printing to create an effective 'Magic Carpet'. Year 1 pupils investigate materials and make many kinds of puppets, demonstrating good use of colour, texture and pattern. Year 2 pupils were seen to be very enthusiastic about observing a large, woven wall-hanging. Very effective use of this high-quality resource motivated them well to explore a range of threads and materials to successfully create their own weavings. They have studied paintings of Vincent Van Gogh and Claude Monet, and produced work in their styles. Pupils make meticulous observational drawings of plants, bicycles and buildings, with developing detail and accuracy, showing good understanding of line, form and shape. High-quality displays of Aboriginal pictures, patterns and masks created by pupils contribute very well to their multicultural development. Some appropriate three-dimensional work was seen in recyclable materials, and work with clay is planned for later this term.

128. In the two lessons seen, teaching and learning were good and pupils achieved well. Teachers' planning is effective. They present good levels of challenge in stimulating activities, enabling pupils to make good, and often, very good, progress. Teachers build successfully on the skills and techniques acquired by younger pupils. Many older pupils are gaining confidence in their ability; for example, in sketching. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and drawing skills are taught in a systematic way, and pupils are encouraged to take pride in their work presentation. Effective group organisation helps pupils to work well together and ensures that they are all included in all activities. Teachers use art well to support learning in other subjects; for example, to illustrate Victorian life in history. Good use of language; for instance, 'we scrunched, tore, crumpled paper', enhance pupils' literacy skills well. Good links with information and communication technology help pupils to use their computer skills well in developing artwork. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and they enjoy art.
129. The co-ordination of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has worked hard on subject planning. The very good resources are accessible and well used. A very good initiative is the development of an annual Arts Week, which involves visiting artists working with pupils, who benefit from a wide variety of art experiences. A member of the teaching staff runs an extra-curricular Sketch Club. It is well attended by both boys and girls and supports the art and design curriculum very well. The high-quality displays around the school effectively celebrate pupils' achievements.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

130. Pupils make good progress in design and technology and those in Year 2 are on course to attain standards that match the national expectation by the time they are seven years old. Attainment was also reported as being in line with national expectations at the time of the last inspection and standards have therefore been sustained. During this inspection it was only possible to view one lesson. No judgements about the overall quality of teaching and learning are therefore made in design and technology.
131. Pupils in the Year 1/2 classes have an appropriate range of opportunities for designing, making and evaluating items. Teachers skilfully weave activities into the curriculum to fit alongside other subject areas. For example, all classes are currently involved with work on materials in science and, alongside this work, pupils are engaged in evaluating different puppets to find out which materials are used and how they are joined together. Similarly, in some classes pupils have used different materials to make small collages to show the properties of the items used - identifying 'twisty' and 'bendy' materials. They develop suitable skills in cutting a variety of materials and understand how to join materials together using glues and pastes.
132. Pupils produce ideas and sketch plans for their models and select appropriate materials for the making part of the process. For example, in the one lesson seen in a Year1/2 class, pupils wrote a list of materials for making their puppets and drew suitable labelled pictures for the proposed model. A scrutiny of work around the school also indicates that pupils competently evaluate other designs of puppets as a means of producing and modifying their own ideas. Displays in classrooms and around the school incorporate strong elements of designing and making, where the work has overlapped into art and design as well as science. For example, friezes and collages are made using a wide range of materials including, cloth, tissue, card, felt, foil, coloured papers and many other materials. Much thought has gone into considering different ways of joining these materials and items have been carefully cut out. Puppets have been made, using lollipop sticks, cardboard clocks with hands fitted using a split pin and models of monster figures all show care in making the final product. Pupils also have useful experiences of evaluating other designs; for example, looking at Aborigine paintings and then making similar very attractive designs of their own.
133. The quality of teaching in the one Year 1/2 class design and technology lesson seen was satisfactory. Pupils were set an appropriate design task and well led discussion from the class teacher and teaching assistant helped them to develop their ideas. However, a few of the pupils did not concentrate fully at

times and progressed slowly because and they did not have enough support to help them with writing down their design ideas. The plenary at the end of the lesson was effective in helping pupils to review all of their ideas.

134. Planning for design and technology is good and, as mentioned above, teachers skilfully interweave design and technology tasks to link with other subjects – especially science and art. No use of ICT was seen to support work in this subject. The co-ordination of this subject is satisfactory with the co-ordinator maintaining an overview of work throughout the school by regularly looking at teachers' planning. The resources for the subject are adequate, well organised and accessible.

GEOGRAPHY

135. Since the last inspection attainment in geography has improved. Standards are better than nationally expected for pupils of this age and pupils make good progress.
136. All the classrooms are named after a country and, during the year, pupils learn to identify that country on a map, its main features, foods produced and something of the way of life. This is highly effective in promoting interest in other countries and knowledge of maps. In addition the school has developed a two-year rolling programme that ensures coverage of national curriculum areas. The limitations of time to study geography are addressed by an additional focus upon the subject during the summer term.
137. The school is careful to ensure that pupils develop geographical knowledge in a progressive way as they move through the school. The Year 1 pupils draw simple maps that they relate to their environment, whilst older pupils use maps for information. In one very good lesson, pupils were observed preparing a questionnaire to ask people about how the safety on the approach to the school could be improved. In the same lesson, Year 2 pupils were addressing specific questions related to mapped danger points around the school. Some of the more able pupils had produced a map with coordinates drawn to identify the position of the main features.
138. Through their study of specific countries pupils know considerably more information about other lands than is expected for their age. In one class, the pupils were able to identify various spices that come from Jamaica. In another class, pupils had studied materials used for house building in India.
139. By the end of Year 2, pupils know about a wide range of geographical features and about weather conditions around the world. They understand the needs of people in different parts of the world and are able to make comparisons with their own locality. They understand the concept of distance and reading postcards sent from friends who travel abroad widens their knowledge.
140. Teaching is good. Lessons are planned that cater well for all pupils. Teachers use resources effectively to interest pupils and good use of questions helps them explain their ideas. The school has accumulated some very useful resource books, which contain maps, artefacts and software to support teaching. The pupils have opportunities to use the school CD ROMs and the Internet as well as a good supply of books to find out information for themselves. Lessons are well planned with interesting content and appropriate extension activities for the pupils. Teachers provide a school environment that is rich in geographical stimuli. For example, the classrooms have large national flags hanging around their entrances. Often opportunities are used in literacy to read about other countries. Teachers develop interesting projects in which pupils have good opportunities to become practically involved.
141. Pupils' attitudes are good and, together with very good behaviour, this aids learning. They work well together and are able to discuss and plan their investigations.
142. The subject is well managed. The geography policy and schemes of work ensure proper coverage of the subject as well as extending interest beyond the national curriculum. The coordinator is proactive in planning and organizing resources to support teaching and learning.

HISTORY

143. During the inspection it was only possible to observe a very small sample of lessons. However, through talking to pupils and observing work around the school, it is clear that standards at the age of seven are broadly in line with those expected. This matches the finding of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
144. Because only two classes were working on a history-based topic at the time of the inspection, insufficient teaching was seen during the inspection to make an overall judgment as to its quality. Judgments are based largely on scrutiny of pupils' work and on conversations with pupils and staff. Pupils enjoy history and are keen to talk about the projects they study.
145. The school has adopted a rolling two-year programme that addresses the national curriculum. As in geography and science, the school gives an additional focus to the subject on a termly basis.
146. By the age of seven pupils demonstrate the expected knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past and the prevailing conditions at the time. Pupils' historical knowledge and understanding are further developed through making comparisons. From a display on Victorian artefacts the pupils were able to make comparisons with present day life. Younger pupils had completed work on family trees and had some emerging understanding of past and present. Year 1 pupils were knowledgeable about castles and were observed examining a picture of a castle and discussing its various attributes. Earlier, they had constructed a model castle in the corner of the classroom. Older pupils had extended their knowledge and wrote competently about life in a castle. Other pupils knew appropriate facts about the Norman Invasion.
147. Teachers are careful to plan activities in such a way as to promote the full involvement of pupils with special educational needs. The whole school history units selected by the school are designed to extend pupils' thinking and ensure that assignments build successively upon the skills pupils have acquired in previous years. The teachers have access to well organised resources within the school. This is supplemented by loans of artefacts from the local education authority and also from the local museum and these serve to provide pupils with a wide range of realistic evidence to consider. Some pupils have had the opportunity to visit the museum in the past. The teachers are making increasing use of the opportunities in writing and reading in literacy lessons to support learning in history. They also make good use of computers for pupils to research information stored on CD-ROMs. Teaching motivates the pupils, who work hard and show interest in their work.
148. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The coordinator monitors the school's resources effectively and supports teachers with their planning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

149. There has been a significant improvement in this subject since the last inspection where standards were judged to be below average. Current inspection evidence shows pupils now make good progress and reach above average standards in Year 2. All round curriculum provision for ICT and the resources have been upgraded to a good level. Central to this upgrade is the provision of a well-equipped and well-maintained computer suite.
150. Pupils gain a good knowledge of the wider uses of ICT. For example, in one Year1/2 lesson seen, pupils learned about the storage of information on CD ROMs and practised accessing and researching this information. All pupils have experience of using the Internet to access information and they have used the Internet to send Email. Pupils were also seen practising interrogating a database of information – framing simple questions to explore and find out more about previously stored information. The work in this, and other ICT lessons, usefully linked to other subject areas. For

example, in this lesson, some of the CD ROM research was linked to work on ‘materials’ in science. As well as enabling pupils to improve their ICT skills, the work helpfully expanded pupils’ knowledge and understanding in science.

151. Most pupils show good co-ordination when using a mouse. They access icons and menus appropriately and show familiarity with navigating their way around the different programs used. They know the functions of keys such as the enter, delete and space bar and the majority confidently save and retrieve work from personal storage folders and print out their work when required. Although they show overall good skills, for many pupils, their keyboard speed is often slow because they only use one finger for typing.
152. Pupils develop their knowledge and skills well in other subjects through the use of ICT – notably literacy, science, history and geography. Teachers make very effective use of the computer suite to promote such work. In particular, the computer projector is used well to accelerate pupils’ learning. This was seen, for example, in a Year 1/2 literacy/ICT lesson where the teacher used the projector to work through a handwriting module. Pupils enjoyed working interactively with the computer program - following projected instructions, and practised writing on their individual whiteboards at the same time. They made clear improvement in their handwriting through this work and produced well-formed letters as a result of following the very clear computer demonstration.
153. Pupils ‘log on’ and ‘log off’ and most confidently load programs as needed. They know how to use clipart facilities. In two lessons observed, they confidently retrieved images from the clipart menus. They moved, resized and arranged the images and some pupils added extra pictures to the original images, simultaneously adjusting the size of the new additions so that all parts of the resulting picture were in proportion.
154. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are planned carefully, with clear learning objectives, and the staff show confidence and increased expertise in the subject. Learning is moved on well by good questioning by teachers to assess and consolidate pupils’ progress. The good management and control of pupils minimises distractions and focuses pupils’ attention on the lesson task. Teachers plan lessons very well so that activities match the needs of pupils of all levels of attainment. They provide activities that are both challenging and interesting for different groups of pupils. This means that all groups, including pupils with special education needs progress well with their learning and participate fully and benefit from all of the tasks set. Classroom support assistants work very effectively alongside the teacher, often specifically supporting lower attaining pupils. For example, in one lesson seen, the classroom assistant gave very useful support to a boy with behavioural difficulties, to help him retain concentration and interest in the work so that eventually he managed to complete much the same work as the rest of the class.
155. Pupils enjoy the subject and are keen to work on computers. They listen well to instructions and most work with good concentration. Their behaviour is very good, showing respect for equipment and for each other. They co-operate well, and work happily in pairs or individually.
156. The subject is well managed and co-ordinated. Financial resources have been well directed over recent times to help the school upgrade resources and ensure that staff receive a suitable programme of training. A nationally recommended whole-school scheme of work has been introduced, which teachers use effectively to support their planning. Teachers liaise closely and planning is regularly reviewed. Currently, there are no systems in place to assess the quality of pupils’ skills and experience. However, the school has detailed plans to put systems into place in the near future. The school has a good level of hardware and software to support teaching and learning and equipment is well maintained. A technician from the nearby secondary school, who also provides useful support for teachers and pupils during lessons, provides effective help to maintain equipment.

MUSIC

157. As noted at the time of the last inspection, pupils in Year 2 attain standards that match the national expectation in music. The judgements about music are based on the limited evidence of two lessons seen and the musical content of two assemblies observed.
158. Pupils are familiar with exploring ways in which sounds can be arranged and they use symbols to help them arrange and perform simple compositions. For example, in a Year 1/2 class lesson seen, pupils worked in groups filling in the squares on a 16 square chart – with their own symbols. Each symbol represented a musical beat for an un-tuned percussion instrument. The well-organised work was challenging for the pupils and made them think in depth about how to arrange the symbols. In the resulting performances, each group carefully followed their composition chart that they had made together. They listened to each other intently in order to co-ordinate the piece and follow the group conductor. Whilst performing appropriately for their ages – just over a third of the pupils found it hard to play their instrument in time. However, all pupils including those with special educational needs were confident to ‘have a go’ and responded well to the encouragement from their teacher.
159. Pupils mainly sing with tuneful voices and show a good ability to maintain a pulse beat while clapping. This was seen in a lesson for Year 1, where the pupils followed the teacher’s very melodic voice closely and clapped in time to the tunes. Also, in this session, pupils used a range of percussion instruments effectively to accompany the different parts of the ‘I hear Thunder’ song. In this way, they started to gain an idea of how to use instruments to create specific moods or effects within a composition.
160. Pupils also demonstrated their ability to sing tunefully during assemblies seen. In one assembly session where pupils rehearsed a range of assembly songs, the pupils sang very well and with much enjoyment. In several of these songs the quality of the singing was above average with nearly all pupils following the accompaniment carefully, singing in tune and with good expression. They also maintained a clapping beat well where required. The pupils especially enjoyed the songs that incorporated following a series of actions. This work was a good example of the wholehearted way in which pupils in the school are encouraged to join in, and demonstrates that all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, do join in with full enthusiasm. In this way it is clear that teachers are successful in developing pupils’ confidence to perform in front of one another. Pupils collaborate and cooperate very well. This was seen in both lessons observed where pupils shared instruments without any fuss and agreed various ideas that occurred as they worked in groups in one of the lessons.
161. Teaching in the two lessons seen and in the singing practice/assembly was good. In the two lessons, activities were well prepared and planned so that all musical equipment and resources were near to hand, and activities therefore flowed forward without any delays. For example in the Year 1/2 lesson seen, after the teacher had provided a very clear and succinct introduction to the lesson for pupils sitting with her on the carpet, the pupils moved to their tables where all of the equipment and music charts were laid out ready for pupils to move straight on with the activity. This made the most of the time available. Teachers have a good rapport with the pupils and this enables them to have a clear insight into the needs of individual pupils and those that may need extra encouragement. This means that pupils progress well in their learning because they become keen to achieve and do well for their teacher and also because they enjoy the subject. The singing practice in assembly, in particular, was presented well, and in a way that made it fun and stimulated pupils’ interest and enthusiasm. The sensitive piano accompaniment in this singing practice/assembly also helped pupils to sing well whereas, in the assembly where no accompaniment was provided, pupils found it noticeably much more difficult to hold the tune and much of the singing on this occasion was not in tune.
162. The management and co-ordination of this subject is satisfactory. A suitable scheme of work is used alongside the nationally recommended scheme of work to provide effective support for teachers’ planning. Work in music is suitably enhanced through performances at Christmas, Easter and Harvest

time and, in addition, the school usefully holds an 'Arts week' where other musicians come into school to provide a range of interesting extra musical activities for the pupils. Resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory, readily available and well used by the teachers and pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

163. The previous inspection indicated that pupils' attainment in physical education was in line with national expectations. The school has built upon this and attainment is now above average. The school has ensured that regular lessons occur in gymnastic, dance swimming and games and the pupils including those with special needs make good progress throughout the key stage.
164. The youngest pupils show that they have good co-ordination, respond well to instructions and have an enthusiasm for the subject. Pupils in Year 1 are attentive and work hard in their lessons. They show good control and a developing range of gymnastic movements. They enter the hall quietly learn how to warm up correctly before lessons and build upon previous skills so that they were seen in one lesson performing controlled jumps with a good sense of bodily awareness in flight and controlled landings. They work well with each having due regard for safe working and are appreciative of the work of their peers. In Year 2, performance is improved further by opportunities provided to learn good techniques that are demonstrated by the teachers. Pupils work in pairs and successfully integrate basic skills of jumps, rolls and balances into a sequence of movement. They use large apparatus safely and move smoothly from one piece of apparatus to the next, with good awareness of space and the need to develop quality movement.
165. In dance, the pupils were seen showing considerable imagination. They made use of a wide range of movements working at different levels to express themes, which were drawn from music and literacy. One group was seen developing a range of movements to be integrated later into a piece of work interpreting a poem. Other groups had the useful opportunity to take part in country dancing. Sometimes lessons have insufficient time to develop and extend pupils' work because of their short duration.
166. Throughout the school the pupils have appropriate opportunities to gain confidence in water and learn to swim. The school makes good use of a local pool and lessons are conducted safely with good challenge.
167. During the inspection there was no opportunity to observe the teaching of games, but there is a good range of equipment and excellent grounds. The schoolyard is marked with lines to encourage formal and informal games and there is a good field on which to develop athletic and games skills.
168. The school has recently purchased a very good range of large apparatus for use in the school hall and this equipment is used to maximum effect.
169. Teaching is good overall. Lessons are generally well planned and activities match the pupils' levels of attainment. The staff are enthusiastic, well prepared, appropriately dressed to teach the subject and show very good concern for safe working.
170. The subject coordinator leads the staff very well with commitment and enthusiasm. She provides her colleagues with valuable support and advice. The school has developed a clear scheme of work. Pupils' physical education is further enhanced through their attendance at an after school games club that is run by the coordinator with help from parents and students. Physical education has become a strength of the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

171. It was only possible to observe one religious education lesson during the inspection. Therefore no judgement can be made about the overall quality of teaching. Judgements about attainment and progress are based on scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' plans and discussions with pupils and teachers.
172. At the age of seven, pupils' standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection.
173. Most pupils' achieve well. Seven-year-olds become aware of the importance of religious objects, practices and celebrations and relate some of these to their own experiences of celebrating Christmas, Easter, Harvest Festivals, Christenings and weddings. They gain a satisfactory level of knowledge of Christianity and learn about the life of Jesus, for example, His birth, the 'Road to the Cross' and the Easter story. Pupils know Bible stories, for example, the story of 'Zacchaeus' and the miracle of 'The five loaves and two fishes'. They recognise key figures in the Old Testament, for instance, Moses, Noah, Samson, David and Goliath. They appreciate that rules are important and they have been involved in making up their own class rules. Other faiths are suitably introduced. Seven-year-olds display satisfactory knowledge of aspects of Hinduism and are familiar with the story of Prahlad, have learnt about mosques and know that the 'Qu'ran' is an important religious book. This makes a positive contribution to multicultural development. Good opportunities are given for reflection in assemblies. Talking with Year 2 pupils reveals that they are interested in, and have very positive attitudes towards the subject. Pupils take pride in presenting the prayers they composed. Displays, for example, on 'Baptism,' and 'Holy Books' reinforce the pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other religions.
174. In the one lesson seen about 'The Lost Son', teaching and learning were good and pupils responded well to the teacher's expectations. They talked confidently about this story that Jesus told, which was also acted in an assembly by a different class – further supporting religious education effectively. Very good relationships helped provide an atmosphere in which the pupils became well-motivated, interested and eager to talk about the story and especially about how 'forgiveness' relates to their own lives. Effective links are made with literacy. Teachers read stories and encourage pupils to record in writing, practising the skills taught in the literacy hour.
175. The lessons seen, teachers' plans, work displayed and pupils' books show that, in the main, teachers provide a balanced religious education programme based on secure subject knowledge. Subject co-ordination is effective. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has worked hard to ensure that planning corresponds to the locally agreed syllabus. The school has identified rightly the need to review the current system of using a one-year cycle of planning, to ensure work is not repeated for Year 1 pupils in mixed age classes. Resources are adequate. Sound use is made of visits to places of worship, and of visitors, such as the local vicar, to enrich the curriculum and broaden pupils' knowledge and experiences.