

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FERRARS INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL**

Luton

LEA area: Luton

Unique reference number: 109539

Headteacher: Ms Leigh Oliver

Reporting inspector: Mr J White  
17242

Dates of inspection: 12<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> March 2001

Inspection number: 194306

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
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Macaulay Road Luton
Postcode:	LU4 0LL
Telephone number:	01582 573641
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr David Boon
Date of previous inspection:	13 <sup>th</sup> January 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17242	Jeff White	Registered inspector	Science; music; religious education; equal opportunities; English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13526	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector		
23453	Carole Cressey	Team inspector	English; geography; history	
22248	Glesni Thomas	Team inspector	Mathematics; art and design; design and technology; under fives	
17454	Brian Aldridge	Team inspector	Information and communications technology; physical education; special educational needs	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is located on the outskirts of Luton in an area containing privately owned, rented accommodation and local authority housing. Unemployment in the area is above average, the percentage of adults with higher educational qualifications is very low and the percentage of lone parent families is one of the highest in the Borough. The recorded figure for free school meal eligibility is broadly average. About 30 per cent of pupils are of minority ethnic heritage and just under a quarter speak English as an additional language. Forty-eight pupils are on the school's special educational needs register, a broadly average figure. One child, in the nursery, has a statement. Two hundred and eight pupils, with an almost equal number of girls and boys, are in the main school and 53 attend part-time in the nursery. Children are usually admitted part time into a reception class in the term prior to their fifth birthday, before attending full time. However, children who join the reception class in the summer term can attend full time if their parents wish. Children display a wide range of attainment on entry to the nursery but, in general, attainment at this stage is broadly below average. The inspection of the school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs.

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

The school has improved well since its last inspection. Leadership and management are very good and strong teamwork is a key factor in the school's success. Overall standards are improving by the age of seven. Pupils are keen, work hard and behave very well. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and much is good or better. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Pupils make good progress overall in English, mathematics and science.
- By the age of seven, pupils attain good standards in geography, history, religious education and gymnastics.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress.
- The most able pupils are challenged well.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by governors and staff; teamwork is a key feature of the school's improvement.
- Relationships are very good and as a result pupils are keen, diligent and behave very well.
- The commitment to equal opportunities is strong and all pupils are valued.

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

- Overall progress in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory.
- Attendance is below average.
- Day-to-day assessment is weak in the nursery and reception classes; consequently the work does not always build on what the children know and can do.

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

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

The school was last inspected in March 1999 and was taken out of special measures. Improvement over the last two years has been good. Overall standards and the quality of education are better than they were. Pupils now make good, rather than satisfactory, progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Progress in speaking has not improved as much but is satisfactory overall. A significant improvement has been made in investigative work in science and standards are now average. Pupils with special educational needs make better progress and the most able pupils now work at appropriately high levels. Pupils' personal development was sound at the time of the last inspection. It is now very good. Particular improvement has been made in pupils' cultural development, which is also now very good. Provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is much better and they make good progress. The curriculum for pupils in the main school is planned more thoroughly and is appropriate to their ages. Theft of computers has prevented the school from satisfactorily developing information and communication technology throughout the school. Procedures for assessment have

improved and help to set targets in English and mathematics. However, day-to-day assessment of children in the nursery and reception classes is not thorough enough.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	E	D	D	E
Writing	E	C	D	E
Mathematics	D	E	E	E

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

The results show that when compared with all schools pupils' performance has been better in reading and writing than in mathematics. Results have been well below the average for schools with a similar number of free school meals. However, the school's trend is one of improvement particularly in reading and writing. Because of good teaching, and the setting of targets for pupils' learning in English and mathematics, standards are continuing to rise. The current oldest pupils attain average standards in English, mathematics and science. Progress is good overall and very good in geography, history and religious education. As a result pupils aged seven attain good standards in these subjects. Pupils also achieve good standards in gymnastics. Because of the theft of computers pupils have been unable to make satisfactory progress in information and communications technology. Standards are satisfactory in art and design and in design and technology. There was not enough evidence to evaluate overall standards in music. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language achieve well. The most able pupils achieve well throughout the school. Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical development. By the time they enter Year 1 they reach the expected learning goals in these areas. In all other areas of learning they make satisfactory progress and reach many of the expected goals.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very positive. Pupils are enthusiastic and work diligently.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good.
Personal development and relationships	These are significant strengths of the school.
Attendance	Below average.

The very good and often excellent relationships contribute strongly to pupils' quality of learning. Pupils of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds relate very well together. A combination of above average sickness, holidays in term time and a small number of persistent absentees, accounts for the below average attendance rate.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Good

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

No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The teaching in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory overall and sometimes good; eight percent is very good. Thirty -two percent of the teaching is very good or better in Year 1 and Year 2 overall. Literacy and numeracy are taught thoroughly and as a result pupils are making good progress in acquiring basic skills. Significant strengths in the teaching include good questioning, developing pupils' investigative skills, the use of subject terminology and developing very good relationships. Day-to-day assessment in the nursery and reception classes is a weakness. Pupils are interested in their work and are developing good independence. They work hard. The learning of pupils with special educational needs is very good and the most able pupils are challenged well. Pupils whose first language is not English are also taught well.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory in the nursery and reception classes and very good elsewhere.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are very well cared for.

The partnership with parents is good. Good information is given to them on their children's progress. The curriculum in Year 1 and Year 2 is well planned. In the nursery and reception classes the curriculum is satisfactory but does not always build on what pupils know, understand and can do. Provision for equal opportunities is very good. Good behaviour is promoted very well. Procedures for child protection and health and safety are very thorough. Moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives very good leadership and is well supported by staff and governors.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. Governors have very good knowledge of the school's work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Standards, teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated thoroughly and action is taken.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used well and expenditure is linked closely to the overall educational priorities.

Staffing, accommodation and resources are good overall. The provision of staffing is very good. Support staff make a very significant contribution to pupils' learning. The school's direction is strong and teamwork is a key feature of its continued improvement. The governors apply the principles of best value well, for example, they compare the school's performance with that of other schools

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children are making good progress and they behave well.</li> <li>• The teaching is good and children are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• The headteacher and staff are approachable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More homework</li> <li>• More information on how children are getting on.</li> <li>• More activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• The school should work more closely with parents.</li> </ul>

The inspection team endorses parents' positive views. The team's view is that the school works hard to develop its partnership with parents particularly in persuading parents to become more involved in their children's education. The amount of homework is suitable for children of this age. Good information is provided on pupils' progress and their annual reports are informative. Links with the community enhance pupils' learning but the school should consider whether some extra-curricular activities could be provided within the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 Pupils enter the school with a wide range of attainment but it is broadly below average overall. In the national tests since 1998, although pupils' overall performance fell below the national averages, standards have improved. Progress has been best in reading and writing and in the 2000 tests the number of pupils attaining above the expected level was greater than the national average in writing and close to the average in reading. The inspection finds that standards in English and mathematics are continuing to rise and the current pupils in Year 2 attain average standards. Standards are also average in science. Although standards in the three subjects are broadly similar to the findings of the last inspection, in many respects they are better. Attainment in investigative science is higher and in all three subjects the most able pupils are achieving better. In general, progress is good. Better teaching, the setting of targets and the good implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are having a significant effect on the rise in standards. In particular the grouping of pupils across each year group according to their prior attainment (setting) has added sharper focus to the teaching. Regular investigative work is helping the improvements in science. In the national tests for English and mathematics boys performed much better than girls but the inspection found that gender differences in general performance were not significant.
  
- 2 Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 make good progress overall in English and standards are average by the age of seven. However, progress is better in reading, writing and listening than in speaking. Pupils listen attentively to adults and each other. They participate well in class discussions and many pupils in Year 2 make good use of appropriate subject terminology in, for example, science, mathematics, history and religious education. However, progress in speaking is inconsistent mainly because it is not planned as well as other aspects of English. Therefore, in lessons, pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Thorough teaching of letter sounds and strategies to help pupils read unfamiliar words have helped pupils in both year groups to read with confidence. The most able pupils in Year 2 read fluently and express opinions about what they read. Pupils achieve well in writing especially in writing independently. All pupils have good opportunities to write for a range of purposes and in a range of forms. As they become older their confidence in using punctuation improves. High attaining pupils in Year 2 attain above average standards and use a broad range of punctuation. In some of the writing in other subjects apart from English, pupils are not given enough guidance and consequently make too many errors.
  
- 3 Pupils make good overall progress in mathematics and standards by the age of seven are average in number and shape. The setting arrangements have boosted pupils' self esteem and therefore improved their confidence. They are developing their knowledge and understanding of numeracy well. Pupils have good opportunities in science to apply their mathematical skills. The school has worked hard to increase the challenge for the most able pupils especially in investigative work. Consequently, in Year 2 they have developed above average problem solving skills. Progress in the use of measures is particularly good. The work in Year 1 is developed well in Year 2 and standards are above average. For example, pupils measure accurately in litres and millilitres. Good progress is made in science in the areas of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. Because of

better planning, progress in Year 1 has particularly improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be too slow. By the age of seven standards are average overall. In much of the work the most able pupils attain above average standards. For example, in Year 2 they have good knowledge and understanding of plant life. Pupils in both year groups have made discernible progress in experimental and investigative work. They undertake it regularly and communicate their findings in writing, pictures and diagrams.

- 4 The last inspection report stressed the need for the good work seen in information and communication technology (ICT) in the early years to be built on in Year 1 and Year 2. This has been achieved successfully where the school has sufficient resources. For example, in the work seen, attainment was above average in control technology and average in word processing. However, the school has suffered from regular theft of equipment and this has meant that pupils have had insufficient opportunities to develop the full range of required skills within the whole curriculum. Consequently, overall progress is unsatisfactory
- 5 Pupils make very good progress in religious education and by the age of seven broadly exceed the expectations for their age. They are developing good understanding of some of the practices of major faiths, for example, ceremonies associated with the birth of babies. They talk well about books and people that are special to particular faiths. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils to write and talk about their feelings. The sensitive approach of the staff is helping them to grow in confidence.
- 6 Pupils make very good progress in geography and history and attainment in Year 2 is above expectations for pupils' age. They are developing good skills of enquiry. Pupils in Year 2 have developed good knowledge and understanding of physical and human factors of different locations. They also discuss important issues, such as pollution, with growing confidence. An imaginative and well-planned curriculum and teachers' enthusiasm excite pupils' interest and curiosity in history. They use a good range of sources of evidence to develop their sense of chronology and knowledge of the past. Pupils in Year 2 have good awareness of historical figures and events such as the Fire of London.
- 7 In art and design and design and technology pupils make satisfactory progress and in Year 2 standards are as expected for pupils' age. Some of the work is good, for example, the portraits in Year 1 and the making of masks in Year 2. Some Year 2 pupils have above average making skills. Pupils make very good progress in gymnastics and by the age of seven standards exceed expectations for their age. Pupils in both year groups show good sequences of movements, poise and good control of their bodies. Only two lessons were observed in music and there was not enough evidence to evaluate progress and attainment overall. In the better of the two lessons pupils in Year 2 used percussion instruments well to accompany a song. Whenever pupils were heard singing they did so tunefully and with enthusiasm.
- 8 Children in the foundation stage make good progress overall in language, communication and literacy, and in mathematics. Teaching is generally good in these areas of learning. By the time children enter Year 1 they attain the learning goals expected for their age. In other areas of learning, progress is mainly satisfactory and by Year 1 many goals are reached. However, there are relative strengths and weaknesses in several areas of learning. Development of children's independence is good and consequently by Year 1 they have positive attitudes to learning and behave well. However, children do not have enough opportunities to relate to one another in

small groups and this also means that most children do not progress in speaking as rapidly as they do in reading and writing. In ICT good progress is made in the nursery because of the teacher's expertise. Children in the nursery are unlikely to attain the goals for moving with control and co-ordination because the inadequate outdoor play area restricts what can be provided. In creative development the provision for role play is particularly good in the part-time reception class.

- 9 Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make very good progress towards meeting the targets in their individual education plans. There are a number of key factors that support the very good rates of progress. The first is the close and effective working relationship between teachers and learning support assistants. They work very closely to write weekly plans based on the long-term plans. The plans clearly set out what pupils need to do to make progress. Teachers and learning support assistants also work very well together in lessons to help pupils achieve their targets for learning. The second factor is the setting of pupils into ability groups for literacy and numeracy. In the lower sets a fairly high proportion of the pupils experience SEN and the standards achieved are average in writing and mathematics. Pupils' very good rates of progress help them to feel good about their work and encourage them to work even harder.
- 10 Pupils receiving specific support funded by the Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Grant (EMTAG) make good progress overall. Those who are learning English as an additional language make good progress in English and are well supported in all subjects. Strong teamwork is a significant factor in helping to raise pupils' achievement. Targets for EMTAG pupils have helped to give greater focus to the planning and teaching. The restructuring of the EMTAG support has also helped all teachers to be aware of their responsibilities for helping all pupils.
- 11 One of the last inspection's issues was to ensure that pupils capable of higher attainment were given greater challenge. Target setting for individual pupils and setting in mathematics and English are key factors in helping to raise standards. The inspection finds that the most able pupils achieve well especially, but not exclusively, in numeracy and literacy.
- 12 In the last inspection, when the school was taken out of special measures, not all subjects were inspected. Consequently, the current inspection only makes comparisons with those subjects that were reported on.

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

- 13 Pupils' very good attitudes to school, very good behaviour and personal development have a very positive impact on their achievements and have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is clearly evident in their attitudes throughout the school day. Children in the nursery and the reception classes show good attitudes to learning and these attitudes improve as pupils progress through the school. The youngest children work well independently and their behaviour is good. They also enjoy working together, for example, in role play in the part-time reception class. However, in the nursery they do not have enough opportunities, in small groups, to relate to adults and to each other. Throughout the school pupils show very good enthusiasm for and involvement in their work and this is reflected in their achievements. For example, in a Year 1 science lesson pupils showed terrific enthusiasm for their work and this had a very positive impact on their learning about objects that are magnetic or non-magnetic.

- 14 Pupils' behaviour in lessons, at lunchtimes, around the school and in the playground is very good. There have been no permanent or temporary exclusions over the past two years; a figure well below average for primary schools. No bullying, over aggressive or oppressive behaviour was observed during the inspection. Racial harmony and the absence of any sexist attitudes are particular strengths. Pupils know the school rules well and have an increasingly good awareness of how their behaviour affects others. For example, one pupil was observed politely apologising to another after accidentally bumping into him in the corridor. Pupils have very good manners and show good respect for the feelings and needs of others. Relationships are very good throughout the school. Pupils work and play together very well; the positive relationships between the staff and pupils make a major contribution towards pupils' learning. This gives pupils confidence to contribute in lessons and ask questions of staff. Co-operation in lessons, especially in group work, has a very positive effect on learning. In a Year 2 music lesson a very high degree of co-operation allowed pupils to devise and perform musical patterns in sequence very well.
- 15 Pupils' personal development is very good. They undertake a good range of tasks willingly and show very good initiative. They carefully return registers to the office, help distribute and tidy up resources sensibly and hold doors open for others. They express their feelings very well in relation to moral and social issues, and are proud and confident when contributing in assemblies. Their faces showed delight and appreciation when observing traditional Irish dancing and music at an assembly celebrating St Patrick's Day. Pupils with special educational needs behave well and have very positive attitudes to their work. They are keen to get on with their tasks and work very well together when placed in small groups. They listen to the adults who help them and grow in self-confidence as they achieve their targets.
- 16 Attendance levels are below the national average. The main reasons for the poor level of attendance are an above average level of sickness, a high number of pupils taking holidays in term time, and a small but significant number of pupils with a high level of absences many of which are unauthorised. Many of the same pupils are regularly late for school. Poor attendance and punctuality are having a detrimental effect on the achievement of this small group of pupils.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

- 17 Teaching is satisfactory overall in the nursery and reception classes. It is good overall in the rest of the school and almost a third is very good or better; sometimes the teaching is excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The teaching has improved since the last inspection especially in giving high attaining pupils more challenge and in the use of investigative work in science.
- 18 Children in the nursery and reception classes are taught well in literacy and mathematical development. Letter sounds are taught thoroughly and this is helping children to make a good start in reading and writing. Children's understanding of number is developed well in planned activities and also in daily routines such as counting how many children are present. Expectations for children working independently are high but in the nursery there are often too many children with only one adult. Consequently, opportunities are missed to develop children's oral English and social skills in a small group. The provision for role play is a strength of the teaching in the part-time reception class. A very well organised role play area excites children's imagination as they become "doctors" and "patients". Day-to-day

assessment is weak and as a result children's work does not always build on what they know and can do.

- 19 In Year 1 and Year 2 the overall teaching is good in English and mathematics. Literacy and numeracy are taught thoroughly and lessons in the setting arrangements are invariably well structured to take account of pupils' abilities. Pupils' investigative skills are being developed well in mathematics, science and history. The use of well-focused questions is a feature of the good or better teaching. Often teachers start a lesson by checking what pupils remember from the previous lesson, for example in history and religious education. In a good lesson in Year 1 the teacher asked; "What special people have you been learning about?" The pupils instantly replied "Guru Nanak" and "Jesus". Careful questions are also used to make pupils think. At the start of what proved to be a very good lesson the teacher's question; "What is history?" fired Year 2 pupils' interest and their responses showed how much they had previously learned. Brisk pace and high expectations are key features in the most effective teaching. In an excellent history lesson Year 2 pupils were kept on their toes as they acted as "historians" when using a range of sources of evidence. In an equally excellent lesson in gymnastics in Year 1 pupils knew they were expected to improve their performance and as a result they made significant progress. The development of very good and often excellent relationships contributes significantly to pupils' learning, attitudes and behaviour. This was exemplified in a design and technology lesson in which pupils felt confident enough to applaud their teacher's demonstration of printing techniques. The teachers make good use of subject terminology and in much of the work give clear and explicit instructions of what pupils are to do. In English and mathematics pupils are reminded of their targets and this helps them to see what progress they are making. In English and mathematics teachers make good use of assessment in planning pupils' work. A relative weakness in the teaching is the inconsistent help for pupils when they write in other subjects apart from English. In addition, planning for developing pupils' speaking skills is less thorough than in other aspects of English; consequently, they could be making better progress.
- 20 Teachers and support staff work very closely together and are generally effective in the support they give to individual pupils. They are well aware of the individual education plans for pupils with SEN. These are carefully drawn up by class teachers and the co-ordinator for pupils with special needs. The assessments, plans and records kept by all those who work with pupils with SEN, are of good quality. The process of transferring targets from individual education plans into pupils' exercise books is good and helps pupils keep in mind their targets. Learning support assistant teach pupils the letter sounds which will help them read or the simple calculations to help them in their mathematics work. This support is successful and builds well on pupils' prior learning. Support for EMTAG pupils is similarly well organised and guided by pupils' targets for learning. Bilingual help is given where possible. For example, in a Year 1 class the teacher used Gujarati to help a pupil learning English as an additional language to participate in a science lesson.

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

- 21 In the last inspection the curriculum in Year 1 and Year 2 was broad and balanced although the investigative aspects within science needed improving. This issue has been addressed and pupils now undertake regular scientific investigations. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good but particularly for pupils in Year 1

and Year 2. Learning opportunities are satisfactory overall for children in the foundation stage. A broad curriculum is provided. All areas of learning are taught and planning takes account of the learning goals expected of pupils when they enter Year 1. The school is aware that the plans now need to take better account of assessments in order to ensure all children make progress.

- 22 In general, the curriculum in Year 1 and Year 2 meets the needs of pupils very well. It is well-planned and ensures that all aspects of all subjects are taught. Considerable thought has been given to the planning of the timetable to ensure that pupils' interest and levels of concentration are catered for. For example, the morning session is split into three lessons with a more active lesson such as history, physical education or art and design being sandwiched between the more structured lessons in literacy and numeracy. The curriculum has been reviewed to take account of Curriculum 2000 and there are appropriate policies and schemes of work for all subjects. All statutory requirements are met and the literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented with enthusiasm and rigour. The requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education are fully met. . Arrangements for pupils' personal, health and sex education are good and there are suitable policies for health, sex and drugs education. Time is made available each week to develop these areas in ways which are appropriate for the age of the pupils. The stimulating and challenging curriculum is reflected in the high quality of displays of pupils' work and areas of interest in classrooms. The organisation of teaching staff and classroom support assistants provides a very favourable adult to pupil ratio and has a beneficial effect on pupils' learning especially for those with SEN or English as an additional language. In order to try and raise standards in English and mathematics the school in recent times introduced grouping of pupils, across Year 1 and across Year 2, according to their prior attainment. These "setting" arrangements are working well and are ensuring that pupils who are at different levels of attainment receive targeted support.
- 23 The commitment to equality of opportunity is strong and this is very apparent in the way all pupils are fully included in the teaching and learning. Pupils with SEN and those who receive specific support under funding for raising the achievement of pupils of minority ethnic heritage (EMTAG) are very well supported. All teachers have responsibility for all pupils. A significant strength of the school is the way in which all pupils with special educational needs, and those learning English as an additional language, have their needs met without withdrawing them from their classes. This means that teachers and learning support assistants have to plan together thoroughly. The learning experiences of pupils with SEN are based on their individual education plans and are broken down into very small but achievable steps. This very effective planning ensures that pupils learn the basis skills of reading, writing, spelling and number in a consistent manner. The school has developed very good strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy to pupils with SEN including the "setting" arrangements and checking daily on their progress. The daily small group tuition and regular reviews of progress, including the high quality of records kept by learning support assistants, ensure that pupils receive learning experiences that meet their needs. Individual targets in English, mathematics and personal development are set for pupils receiving specific support under EMTAG and are reviewed regularly. More precise recording of progress towards meeting the targets would help the staff to monitor achievement more thoroughly. There were no Traveller pupils in the school at the time of the inspection but there is evidence that that the headteacher and staff warmly welcome them. Good links are made with the Local Education Authority's Traveller Support Service. The last inspection reported that high attaining pupils did not always achieve their capabilities. This issue has been addressed well, particularly

by the setting of individual targets in literacy and numeracy. The inspection finds that the most able pupils are generally achieving above average levels.

- 24 Links with the community are very good. Visits to the local supermarket, toy museum and Hindu temple extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of their local environment. Links with the fire service, health authority, local clergy and a local orchestra also enrich pupils' learning. There are few, if any, extra curricular activities held in the school. Before pupils transfer to the junior school information on their progress is exchanged. Teachers from the receiving school visit pupils in their classes and pupils spend time at their new school familiarising themselves with routines and staff to ensure a happy and secure transfer.
- 25 Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved and is now very good overall. Spiritual development is promoted well and has some very strong elements. Assemblies provide pupils with appropriate opportunities for reflection and prayer but the quality of worship is too variable. Sometimes there is a lack of a reverent atmosphere to enhance the sharing of special moments and shared experiences. Religious education lessons provide pupils with very good opportunities to develop an understanding of fundamental issues such as the wonder of new life. One child movingly wrote of the birth of a new baby, describing it as a 'new beginning'. Pupils are given very good opportunities to express their feelings and these are respected by the staff.
- 26 Provision for moral development is very good. The use of a consistent reward system encourages pupils to behave well. Appropriate and achievable class and school rules are based on encouraging pupils to consider how their actions affect others and how positive behaviour creates a happy working atmosphere. In the hall a large display of feelings is a focal point when discussing behaviour and pupils are asked to relate their actions to whether they make others happy or sad.
- 27 Provision for social development is similarly very good. Pupils have a range of opportunities to develop responsibility, self-confidence and independence in well-planned lessons and the routines and structures of daily school life. The excellent relationships and very good ratio of adults to pupils ensure that pupils feel comfortable discussing sensitive issues that concern them. The organisation of lessons provides many opportunities for pupils to work together, such as when conducting a science experiment or researching a history project. A sense of citizenship is developed as pupils raise money to support good causes and write to 'pen pals' in America sharing experiences of home and school. Successes in both academic and personal achievements are recognised and valued by all. For example, the whole school celebrated the brave and responsible actions of a Year 2 child who saved the life of his mother by ringing the emergency services.
- 28 Provision for cultural development has also improved since the last inspection and is now very good. Pupils have opportunities to learn and appreciate the richness of their own and other people's culture through music, art, geography and history. The school values the different cultures and religions represented in the school. A most interesting assembly about St Patrick's Day, which included dance and music, celebrated the heritage of the children who come from Ireland or the Traveller Community. Signs and displays are labelled in the community languages and parents are invited to share their traditions with the whole school. For example, Indian stick dancing was performed to celebrate the festival of Diwali and children have tasted Jewish and Indian foods. In religious education lessons pupils study the major world religions and all pupils are made aware of each other's important festivals such as



Christmas, saints' days, Diwali, the Muslim festivals of Eid and the Chinese New Year.

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

29 Pupils are very well cared for and this enables them to feel extremely well valued and secure. The very good efforts made by all staff to make the pupils feel valued have a very positive impact on their attitudes and achievements. Arrangements to ensure their health and safety are very good. Suitable care is taken of the Nursery children when they play in their playground where dangerous slopes pose a risk. First aid arrangements are very good. Pupils are well looked after at the end of the school day until they are collected. The school is very secure, clean and tidy and is welcoming for all pupils. The youngest children are helped to settle into the routines of school life quickly. Staff throughout the school know pupils and their backgrounds very well. Along with very good procedures to monitor their personal development, this awareness allows them to provide very effective personal support. Arrangements with regard to child protection are very well established and effective.

30 Measures to promote and monitor good behaviour are very successful. The consistency of approach to behaviour management by all staff is crucial to the development of the high standards shown by the pupils. The school's approach, which emphasises the use of praise and reward works well and enables pupils' behaviour and attitudes to improve steadily as they move through the school. For example, the quality of supervision and the play activities provided by lunchtime assistants have a very positive influence on behaviour and relationships in the playground. Procedures to promote positive attitudes in relation to racial harmony are very successful and contribute to a climate where no oppressive, sexist or racist behaviour occurs.

The very recent appointment of an additional administrative assistant is a positive move to help improve attendance rates. However, the school could do more. Registration procedures are efficient but communications with parents do not place sufficient emphasis on the importance of regular prompt attendance. The range of strategies used to encourage pupils in relation to attendance is therefore too limited.

31 Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good, particularly in literacy and numeracy where results are used to identify targets for individual pupils. Children's progress in all the areas of learning is summarised on their entry to the reception class and assessments in English and mathematics are then undertaken regularly as pupils move through the school. The assessment co-ordinator and staff identify the most able or potentially gifted pupils and ensure their targets are appropriately challenging. The headteacher and assessment co-ordinator are reviewing assessment procedures, in order to track pupils' all round progress more thoroughly from the foundation stage, so that they can judge the value added even more rigorously. Procedures to identify and meet the needs of pupils with SEN are very thorough and follow the guidance of the national Code of Practice. Pupils' progress is monitored daily as teachers and learning support assistants give individual and small group support to pupils. The very good quality notes made by learning support assistants then helps to plan the next stages of work. In turn this ensures that during the regular, very well conducted reviews, the school can feedback to parents how well their children are doing and offer further very good advice about how to maintain the brisk rates of progress. Special needs staff liaise well with outside agencies to ensure that the pupils' needs are fully met. The progress of

pupils learning English as an additional language is suitably assessed against their stages of English acquisition.

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

- 32 The good partnership with parents has been maintained since the previous inspection. Parents are pleased with the school and feel their pupils achieve good standards. A small percentage of parents attended the pre-inspection meeting or responded to the survey. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting said how useful they found the meetings on literacy and numeracy. They also valued the use of reading diaries. About a quarter of parents who responded to the survey were concerned about the level of homework, and how well the school works with parents; about a third showed concerns over the amount of information they receive about their children's progress and the level of activities provided outside lessons. The inspection finds that information provided to parents is good. Annual reports provide informative comments about achievements and targets for development. The school works hard to involve parents in their children's education. Homework is provided at an appropriate level for an infants' school. Although pupils have good opportunities for involvement in the wider community the headteacher and staff should consider whether some extra-curricular activities could be provided in the school. The headteacher and staff respond to parents' views. For example, following poor attendance at a meeting about assessment, discussion with parents led to the provision of crèche facilities and a significant improvement in attendance at the next meeting.
- 33 Parents' support for their children's education is satisfactory. A small number give good help in classrooms. Parents' attendance at assemblies and performances by pupils is good. Most hear their children read on a regular basis. The Parent Teacher Association organises useful fundraising events. The school makes good efforts to involve parents in educational initiatives such as a family literacy and numeracy project but has not achieved the success it would like. A small but significant number of parents fail to see the value of prompt, regular attendance at school.
- 34 Every effort is made to ensure that parents have the opportunity to take part in the identification and provision for the special educational needs of their children even though some parents choose not to take up these opportunities. There are very good systems to inform them of their children's progress. The action plans drawn up by the school ensure that parents are kept informed about the school's work while waiting for the results of assessments made by external support services. This system works very well and shows how keen the school is to develop and sustain very close working relationships with parents.

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

- 35 The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by the governing body. The school has continued to improve in the short time since the last inspection and a strong sense of direction guides its work. The headteacher, teachers, support staff and non-teaching staff work closely together. The commitment to equal opportunities is strong and all pupils are respected. General policies and procedures are very clear and the school runs very smoothly. New technology is used effectively to help the school's administration.
- 36 The school development plan and its associated action plans are thorough and indicate appropriate targets for improvement. Most of the success criteria are

suitably precise in relation to outcomes in pupils' learning. For example, in English, "all Year 2 pupils" will write in "joined handwriting". Up-dates on the progress in addressing the last inspection's issues are regular and evaluative. Action plans indicate very clearly how they will be monitored and evaluated.

- 37 A rolling program of lesson observations ensures that the headteacher, subject co-ordinators and mentors of newly qualified teachers are aware of strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning. There is clear evidence that these findings, in addition to analysis of pupils' progress, have influenced subsequent planning, curriculum organisation and staff development. A good example is the decision to introduce setting in English and mathematics. The inspection finds that setting is working well and helping to raise standards. Governors also have good knowledge of the school's work. They visit the school regularly and provide informative reports to the governing body. They are well known by the staff. The governors have a clear vision for the school's future development and discuss the school's work in a critically constructive manner. Funding is controlled efficiently and the link between finances and educational priorities is good. Governors compare the school's performance with other schools to evaluate value for money. The governors' decision to spend above average on support staff has been very effective. Support staff make a substantial contribution to pupils' learning.
- 38 The governing body has implemented excellent procedures for monitoring the school's provision for special educational needs (SEN). A named governor takes an active interest in the provision and its effect on pupils' progress. The governor writes very good reports for the governing body after attending annual reviews and discussing the special educational needs work with the co-ordinator. The headteacher is the SEN co-ordinator and has developed very good systems and ways of working that include ensuring governors receive up-to-date information about the success of the school's provision.
- 39 The levels of staffing are very good overall. In general, staff are well deployed but in the nursery they could be deployed better to ensure children have regular opportunities to work in small groups. Support staff and non-teaching staff are generally well trained and along with administrative workers make a very positive and significant impact on the work of the school. There is a good link between training and the needs of the school and individuals. The accommodation is satisfactory and teachers have provided a stimulating and well ordered environment for learning. In recent times, improvements to the accommodation have benefited the pupils, for example, the provision of a new library. The books in the library are few in number but of good quality and the school has well-advanced plans for buying more. A weakness in the accommodation is the enclosed play area for nursery children. It is too small and has steeply sloping edges. As a result, children's physical skills are not being developed as well as they could be. Learning resources in most subjects are adequate and well stored and maintained. In the foundation stage the quantity and quality of books in reading areas are not sufficient to excite children's interest. Recent losses in computers, due to theft, mean that pupils cannot sufficiently develop their ICT skills within the whole curriculum.

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

- 40 The governors and headteacher should:
- (1) Improve progress in ICT by ensuring that pupils regularly apply and develop ICT skills within the whole curriculum. \* Paragraphs: 4, 89-93.

- (2) Improve attendance by:
- emphasising more strongly to parents the importance of regular attendance;
  - considering rewarding good attendance;
  - following up first day absences more urgently. Paragraph: 16.
- (3) Improve day-to-day assessment in the nursery and reception classes and ensure that findings are used to plan children's work. Paragraphs: 18, 21, 44.

### **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL FOR INCLUSION IN THE ACTION PLAN**

- In the nursery, provide more opportunities for children to work in small groups. Paragraphs: 8, 21, 44.
- Continue to explore ways of improving the nursery's external play area. \* Paragraphs: 8, 29, 39, 43.
- Develop pupils' speaking skills more thoroughly. Paragraphs: 2, 19, 53, 58.
- When pupils write in other subjects apart from English, make sure that they are given enough guidance. Paragraphs: 2, 19, 61.
- Record EMTAG pupils' progress, towards meeting their targets, more thoroughly. Paragraph: 23.
- Consider providing more extra-curricular activities. Paragraphs: 24, 101.
- Improve spiritual development in assemblies. Paragraph: 27.

**\*Indicates that the school has identified the issue in its development plan.**

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	51
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	18	25	49	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	27	228
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	42

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	50

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	52

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	27
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	93.0
National comparative data	94.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	42	34	76

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	31	35
	Girls	26	26	28
	Total	59	57	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (76)	75 (85)	83 (74)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	34	33
	Girls	26	29	26
	Total	58	63	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (79)	83 (74)	78 (74)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	11
Black – African heritage	-
Black – other	1
Indian	16
Pakistani	15
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	-
White	101
Any other minority ethnic group	18

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.7
Average class size	20.6

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	11.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	273.5

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27

Total number of education support staff	1.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	47.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	512,215
Total expenditure	496,571
Expenditure per pupil	2,150
Balance brought forward from previous year	9,983
Balance carried forward to next year	25,627

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	261
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.	57	32	11	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	47	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	57	9	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	17	55	19	2	6
The teaching is good.	36	57	2	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	30	26	9	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	43	4	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	40	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	43	32	21	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	32	53	6	0	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	53	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	30	30	4	17



## **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**

- 41 Children entering the nursery have a wide range of prior attainment. A few are learning English as an additional language, some have well developed English language skills and an above average number do not have the levels of English and mathematical competence normally found in children of this age group. Nevertheless, the majority make good progress and by the time they enter Year 1 they reach the expected learning goals in communication, language and literacy and in mathematics. In all other areas of learning they make satisfactory progress and reach many of the expected goals. Children who are learning to speak English as an additional language receive effective support that helps them to make good progress.
- 42 The nursery has places for 26 children at each of the part-time, morning and afternoon sessions. The majority of children spend two terms in the nursery before being transferred to a reception class at the start of the term in which they become five. Normally, in the term after their fourth birthdays, children attend an afternoon nursery session. In the following term they attend a morning session and subsequently, in the term in which they become five, transfer to the reception class on a mornings only basis. They join the small proportion of children who have spent their pre-school years at home or have attended other local authority or private settings. In the term following their fifth birthdays, all these children attend full time. However, children who enter the reception class in the summer term can immediately attend full time if their parents so wish. The school is aware that, because of circumstances beyond its control, current admission procedures are complex and far from ideal and hopes to be included in a scheme to give under-fives an earlier start to full time education. Current arrangements have an adverse impact on staffing arrangements and curriculum organisation.
- 43 Teaching throughout the foundation stage is satisfactory; during the week of the inspection, a few instances of good or very good teaching were observed and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching and non-teaching staff work well together and under the newly appointed foundation stage leader a team approach is being developed. Overall, provision is satisfactory. However, a weakness is the unsafe and unsatisfactory nursery outdoor play area. It occupies a small and sharply sloping site and contains climbing equipment condemned as unsafe. This weakness has a negative impact on the progress children make in developing gross motor skills.
- 44 At the time of the last inspection the nursery provided a good start to children's education and progress continued in reception. However, direct comparison with the previous inspection needs to be treated with caution because of recently introduced major changes nationally for children of this age. The school has successfully introduced the new foundation stage curriculum for the nursery and reception classes and a broad curriculum is provided. Plans have been introduced to try and ensure that the curriculum is helping children meet the expected learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. The school is aware that these plans are not yet well enough developed to help all children, regardless of how long they spend in the foundation stage, to steadily progress in their learning. Day-to-day assessment procedures are not thorough enough to note children's achievements. Consequently, the work does not always build on what children already know, understand and can do. For instance, despite differences in their age and experience, children attending the nursery in the afternoon and morning sessions cover the same work. In the reception

classes, staff have a consistent approach to marking and annotating children's work but do not monitor and record their progress thoroughly enough.

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

- 45 By the time children leave the reception year, most have attained the early learning goals in their personal, social and emotional development. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In the nursery and reception classes, children have positive attitudes to learning and some have a high degree of motivation which is well fostered by the provision and sensitive support given in the reception classes. For instance, in the full time reception class one child worked independently and persistently to compile an alphabetically ordered list of animals. Two girls followed up an adult-directed writing activity by working independently to perfect their handwriting skills. Throughout the foundation stage most children concentrate well and listen attentively. They have high levels of independence because of the high expectations of the adults. In the nursery, children help themselves to aprons and overalls, for instance, when painting. If hungry, they help themselves to a snack of cereal, fruit and milk, then wash and dry the bowls and spoons they have used. As part of a well established routine in the reception class, children have the responsibility of ensuring that cartons of milk are ready for snack time. Throughout the foundation stage, they are encouraged to select activities and most make sensible choices. The vast majority behave well and are developing an awareness that their actions have an impact on others. Staff deal appropriately and sensitively with the rare instances of unacceptable behaviour. However, an area of relative weakness is that in many adult led nursery activities, including registration, story and music sessions, the child/adult ratio is too high. The ratio of 26 children to one adult does not enable children to relate to one another or to fully develop a relationship with significant adults. More thoughtful deployment of staff would give children the opportunity to be part of a close group in which more relaxed relationships could flourish.

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

- 46 By the time children leave the reception class, most children reach the majority of early learning goals. Overall, they make good progress over time, particularly in reading and writing skills, because the teaching is good. In the nursery and reception classes, most children listen attentively as adults explain and instruct. However, their speaking skills are not as well developed because they do not have enough opportunities to talk about their ideas and feelings in a small group. It is a relative weakness in teaching that not enough is done to enrich and extend children's vocabulary or to develop their expressive use of talk. A few use language appropriately in their role play and, in the part-time reception class, imaginative provision and sensitive support promote good use of written and spoken language in the role play setting of the doctor's surgery. The receptionists answer the telephone, make notes in appointment diaries and direct patients to the waiting room. "You go and sit down in the waiting room," says a receptionist with authority.
- 47 Children know a range of rhymes and their knowledge of sounds is well built up. Good teaching in the nursery helps the older group link sounds to letters and by the time children leave the reception class many make effective use of their knowledge of letter sounds to help them spell out the words they want to write. In the nursery, children have appropriate opportunities to write. For instance, during the week of the inspection children could choose to write a letter to a giant. Some made good attempts to write letter shapes; however, more consistent adult support would have improved their learning. In the reception classes, because of good teaching and

learning, progress in writing is more marked and children make good use of a range of strategies to help spell the words they use in their, sometimes lengthy, stories. For example, two girls knew that by substituting the letter “b” for “r”, the word “red” could be changed to “bed”. In the nursery, children begin to take home books to share with their parents. Most handle books correctly and know that they convey meaning. By the time they leave the nursery, children’s reading skills are below average. Older, more able nursery children retell a story with enthusiasm but make no attempt to read any accompanying text. Using a more restricted vocabulary, less able children understand and can describe the sequence of events illustrated in a picture book. However, most of the children who entered the reception class in September are well on their way as readers and those who entered in January are successfully taking their first steps as readers. By the time they leave the reception year the majority will have attained the expected goals in reading. A weakness in provision is that the quality and quantity of books provided in reading areas throughout the foundation stage are not good enough to capture children’s imagination and enthusiasm and to promote their delight in books. Overall, day-to-day assessment procedures are weak. However, where they are satisfactory, for example, in assessing nursery children’s knowledge of initial letter sounds, there is a beneficial impact on children’s learning and attainment.

### **Mathematical development**

- 48 By the end of the foundation stage, because of the good teaching, the majority of children make good progress and reach the expected goals. Some exceed them. Number is taught well. In the nursery, staff make good use of registration sessions to consolidate and extend counting skills; children count the number of people present and count the number of tokens collected for books or computers. They sing number rhymes, practise writing numerals and use their matching and counting skills in board games. Information and communication technology (ICT) is well used to reinforce learning about pattern and order. In the reception classes, children place numerals in the correct order and learn to add. By the end of the reception year the majority count and calculate as expected for children in this age group. The activities provided throughout the foundation stage help children gain an awareness of measuring. Nursery children empty and fill a range of containers and in the reception class children count and record the number of small buckets-full needed to fill a specified container. Their learning about solid shapes is good and good progress is made in identifying and matching common solid shapes. Most name two-dimensional shapes and, working independently, make good use of squares, rectangles and triangles to create pictures and patterns. Teachers make good use of children’s work to praise individual effort. “ How many rectangles has he used?” asks one teacher, also using the work to reinforce class recognition of shapes and counting skills.

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

- 49 Overall progress is satisfactory and by the time children enter Year 1 the majority reach the expected goals for learning in this area. Teaching is satisfactory and there are some instances of good teaching. In the nursery, because of the good subject expertise of the teacher, learning in ICT is good and children make rapid progress. They use the mouse well to select and move items on screen and most of the older group can load a disk onto the computer. Children know their favourite programs. " I just love this brick game, " says one to another as they begin work. They make satisfactory progress in the reception classes. Science learning is appropriately provided for throughout the foundation stage and children make steady progress in investigating and observing living things. They plant and care for sunflower seeds in the nursery, and in the reception classes there is an exceptionally rich variety of growing things for children to see, feel and smell. In one class, children's interest in the natural world is well fostered by their teacher during snack time. She reads to the children from an information book about squirrels and owls and in the ensuing discussion children show a good level of knowledge about the habits of British wild life. In the nursery and reception classes there are sound opportunities for children to use the good range of construction kits and to work with different materials and tools. Consequently their learning about designing, making and modifying is appropriate and they make satisfactory progress in selecting and using suitable materials, tools and techniques.

## **Physical development**

- 50 Overall, teaching and learning in this area are satisfactory and children make appropriate progress towards attaining many of the learning goals expected by the time they enter Year 1. They learn to use a range of tools; they cut accurately with scissors and control pencils and brushes with increasing confidence. When working on the computer they control the mouse well, they show appropriate levels of dexterity when working with construction kits. In the nursery, adults play throwing and catching games with the children and this helps improve their co-ordination when using bats or throwing and catching balls. By the time children leave the reception year their use of tools and materials is as expected for children in this age group. However, their progress in developing gross motor skills is curtailed in the nursery because the outside play area is unsuitable and unsafe. The unsatisfactory provision impairs children's ability to make sufficient progress in balancing and in moving confidently over, under and around climbing equipment. By the time they leave the reception classes, children are unlikely to meet the early learning goals in moving with control and co-ordination.

## **Creative development**

- 51 In creative areas of learning satisfactory progress is made towards the expected learning goals overall. However, there are areas of relative weakness and strength within this area of learning and between different classes. Overall, in the visual arts, teaching promotes appropriate learning and the lively and vivid paintings of sunflowers in the part-time reception class are evidence of good quality teaching and learning. The well-chosen colours and good control of paint indicate that these children are already achieving the early learning goals in exploring colour and form in two dimensions. A weakness is that there is little evidence of work in three dimensions. In their musical development, children join in songs and rhymes tunefully but in a nursery musical ring game, teaching failed to generate a sense of fun and excitement and learning was not as good as it should have been. Role play in the nursery is

appropriately provided for. A glutinous mixture in the water tray provides an exciting environment for a range of model prehistoric animals. Children create an imaginary small world where creatures wallow in the swamp. Less appealing is the small home area situated on a raised platform and unimaginatively equipped. The location makes it difficult for adults to participate in order to extend the play. Provision for role play in the full-time reception class is adequate and in the part-time class is very good because considerable thought and effort has been given to creating an area rich in possibilities for language development and imaginative play. In addition, an adult sensitively supports and encourages the play. As a result, learning is of very high quality; children mimic the words, style and actions of adults in a doctor's surgery, act out their experiences and become members of a shared imaginary world. Despite the variations, overall teaching and learning are satisfactory.

## ENGLISH

- 52 Pupils in Year 2 attain standards that, overall, are in line with those expected nationally. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. However, although most pupils' attainment is average, the number attaining above average is significantly more than the national average in reading and writing. This is an improvement on the most recent national tests in 2000 which showed that the number reaching the expected level was below the national average in reading and well below in writing. The number of pupils who reached a higher level was similar to the national average for all and similar schools. Overall, last year's national tests showed that the school's standards were below average in reading and writing and well below average compared to similar schools. Because of good teaching and the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy standards are rising across the school. Most pupils make good progress in reading and writing with high attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs making very good progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to other pupils. Boys have performed better than girls in the national tests. The school is aware of this and is analysing data to identify possible reasons and trends. Gender differences in performance were not significant during the inspection.
- 53 The pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and most make very good progress with a significant number of pupils reaching the expected levels for their ages.
- 54 Pupils make good progress in listening skills and they are above average by the age of seven. Pupils listen attentively to adults and to each other. Progress is less consistent in speaking and standards range from unsatisfactory to good. By the age of seven attainment in speaking is satisfactory overall but some pupils speak well. In almost all lessons pupils participate eagerly in discussions. They are developing a good range of appropriate terminology in science, mathematics and religious education. In history lessons in Year 2 pupils used language confidently to express their ideas about the Fire of London. In assemblies, pupils have some opportunities to speak confidently in front of their parents and teachers. However, opportunities for pupils to develop their oral speaking skills are not provided consistently and lesson plans rarely provide objectives for speaking. Consequently, there are occasions when pupils could have made better progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress in oral English because of the good support they receive. Where possible, bilingual skills are used to ensure first stage English learners understand what is expected of them and also to check their knowledge and understanding.

- 55 Good progress is made in reading and by the age of seven pupils' attainment is average overall. The most able pupils attain above average standards. All pupils are aware of authors and illustrators and are able to identify the main characters and events in their favourite books. In Year 1 and Year 2 an understanding of letter sounds, word families and spellings give pupils confidence in tackling unfamiliar words and this has a very positive effect on the progress they make in becoming fluent and confident readers. Pupils in Year 1 and low attaining pupils in Year 2 read books with increasing accuracy and understanding. High attaining pupils in Year 2 retell a favourite story in sequence and include considerable detail. They read aloud with confidence, appropriate expression and understanding and choose books because of particular interests such as adventure stories. One particularly able pupil was already reading 'Harry Potter' books and was delighted that the new school library included the very latest books, which he considered were far better than the earlier ones. Pupils take books home regularly and family members hear them read and make useful comments on how well they are reading. This has a very positive effect on pupils' standards and progress and forms a good link between learning at home and at school.
- 56 Good progress is made in writing and standards in Year 2 are average overall. Considerable emphasis is placed on developing pupils' independent writing skills and the good start provided by the foundation stage is built on well in Key Stage 1. Teachers are very skilled at providing pupils of all attainment levels with the strategies to become confident independent writers. Classrooms include attractively displayed lists of word families and sound patterns. Pupils make good use of word lists, dictionaries and thesaurus to help them with spelling difficult words. Teachers provided many reminders of when to use punctuation and how to structure a sentence accurately. As a result by the end of Year 2 the majority of pupils are spelling common words correctly and making good attempts to spell more complex words. Pupils observe the rules of punctuation, using full stops and capital letters. High attaining pupils in Year 2 use question marks and exclamation marks and some are beginning to use speech marks and apostrophes to add interest to their stories. All pupils write for a variety of purposes, such as writing instructions, accounts, letters, and poems. Pupils in Year 2 have designed their own poster to show the dangers of electricity whilst younger pupils have written their own 'Crocodile poems'. Work is always very well presented and handwriting is very neat and well formed with older pupils learning to join their letters.
- 57 Behaviour is almost always very good. Pupils enjoy English lessons and show pride in producing work of a high standard. They show very favourable attitudes to learning and enjoy very positive relationships with their teachers, sharing humour and exchanging ideas and experiences. Most pupils are very eager to learn and show very good levels of independence and concentration. These positive attitudes make a considerable contribution to pupils' rate of progress and the standards they achieve. Opportunities to work collaboratively and to develop personal skills are well used. Groups of pupils work together with the minimum of adult support and complete their work in a quiet and purposeful atmosphere.
- 58 Teaching has continued to improve since the last inspection and is now effective in helping all pupils achieve well in their learning. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and over 80 per cent is good or better. Ten percent is outstanding. Lessons are very well planned. All teachers are confidently implementing the 'Literacy Hour' and are adapting it very successfully to meet the needs of groups of pupils. The introduction of ability groups across each year group (setting) has greatly enhanced the quality of teaching and ensures it is carefully structured and well

planned to meet the needs of pupils of all attainment levels. Teachers share learning objectives with pupils and ensure that they are very clear about what it is they are expected to learn. Class, group and individual targets are particularly effective in developing learning. Plenary sessions are used well to check that pupils have understood the lesson, are ready to move on to the next stage of learning or need further help to reinforce their learning. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are given a particularly high priority and pupils' knowledge and understanding of basic skills are apparent in their extended writing. Imaginative and challenging opportunities for extended writing now ensure that progress in this aspect of English is good. Teachers use praise, comments and questions effectively to check understanding and extend thinking. When teaching is very good or outstanding expectations are particularly high and the teachers' enthusiasm, explanations and knowledge have a very positive effect on attainment and progress. In excellent lessons teaching is imaginative, lively and exciting. A potentially mundane activity to develop the word building skills of lower attaining pupils was transformed into a fun activity in which pupils, many of whom had complex learning needs, were enthusiastically involved in helping each other. Pupils eagerly gave the thumbs up or down sign to indicate whether they were sure or unsure of the accuracy of the spelling. These strategies not only enlivened the learning, adding interest and motivation, but also ensured the teacher was able to identify those pupils in need of more support and give them confidence to ask for help. Relationships are very good and teachers have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour and attainment resulting in very good discipline and high achievement. Teaching of speaking skills is satisfactory overall and good in some lessons. Inaccurate sentence structures sometimes go unchecked and the strategies pupils are taught in their written work are not always transferred to their spoken English. When this does happen, for example in an excellent Year 2 lesson, pupils are reminded of the need to use the past tense they have learned about in their written work.

- 59 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and tasks are always well matched to pupils' individual needs. Support staff are used very effectively to give additional help to designated individuals and groups of pupils. Their contribution greatly enhances the learning opportunities for the pupils.
- 60 Procedures for assessment are effective and results are used to set targets for individual pupils. National Curriculum and school tests are also used to predict what National Curriculum level pupils can be expected to reach but predictions now need to be more firmly influenced by the termly assessments. Teachers mark work on a regular basis and there are some very good examples of comments that help pupils to improve their work. Homework is set to extend work done in lessons and to check that pupils have fully understood new learning.
- 61 English is given a high priority throughout the school. Emphasis is placed on reading and writing in a variety of contexts and for a wide range of purposes. However, there is scope for greater attention to developing literacy skills in other subjects, including more explicit reference to them in the subjects' lesson plans. Teachers have enthusiastically implemented and adapted the National Literacy Strategy and this is having a very positive effect on raising standards. The curriculum leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject. Monitoring of lessons and planning has had a very good impact on the quality of the teaching and learning.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 62 In the 2000 national tests pupils' performance was well below average in comparison with schools nationally and with similar schools. Although standards have not kept pace with the national improvement they are better than in 1998. The findings of the inspection are that standards are continuing to rise and now at a faster pace. The current pupils in Year 2 attain broadly average standards. Overall achievement is good. Although boys perform better than girls in the tests the inspection found no significant differences. The improvement in standards can be attributed to several factors:
- improvements in teaching
  - grouping pupils, across each year group, according to their prior attainment (setting)
  - greater challenge for high attaining pupils
  - very careful assessments and tracking of progress
  - careful analysis of strengths and weaknesses
  - action taken to address weaknesses in learning.
- 63 Weaknesses in teaching and provision for more able pupils, noted at the time of the last inspection, have been addressed.
- 64 Pupils make good progress overall. In Year 1 they learn to calculate with numbers up to ten and understand that in a two-digit figure the digits have different values. High attaining pupils confidently calculate sums to 20. Most recognise common two-dimensional shapes and high attaining pupils know about some three-dimensional shapes. Pupils learn to measure length and mass using non-standard units and this is well built on in Year 2's work on measuring capacity using litres and millilitres. Consequently most attain standards above those expected of seven-year-olds. The majority of pupils in Year 2 add and subtract using numbers up to a 100 and multiply by two and ten. They name common two and three-dimensional shapes accurately. Low attaining pupils recall addition facts to 20, average ability pupils make good progress in counting forwards and backwards in tens, for instance from 64 to 154, and high attaining pupils mentally calculate sums to 100 and identify factors of numbers up to 30. High attaining pupils also have good problem solving skills because, since the 1999 inspection, the school has improved provision in this area and teachers now provide good opportunities for challenging mathematical investigations. Most pupils apply mathematics appropriately to practical situations. For instance, during the week of the inspection, in lessons on capacity, they equated half a litre to 500 millilitres. Good links are made with science when pupils record their findings of investigations in block graphs.
- 65 Pupils have positive attitudes to learning mathematics because teachers make the subject interesting and relevant. In mental mathematics sessions, they listen carefully and are eager to answer questions. They concentrate well and are well motivated; most have the ability to persist at a task even when not directly supervised. In Year 1 and Year 2, pupils demonstrate high levels of independence and initiative in the way they tackle practical and other tasks. In group activities the vast majority collaborate well, sharing resources and discussing the most effective way of approaching a task. Most are confident about offering suggestions. Written work is presented with care and pride. Since the introduction of setting for mathematics lessons, teachers have noticed an unexpected increase in pupils' self-esteem, reflected in the confident and positive approach to mathematics observed during the inspection.
- 66 Overall, teaching in mathematics is good and this promotes good learning in pupils of all abilities. A particular strength is the provision for investigative work for high



attaining pupils in Year 2. Generally, lessons are well planned. Learning objectives are clear, shared with pupils and well linked to activities and tasks. As a result, pupils' learning is well focused and good progress is made. Day-to-day assessments are of very high quality and are well used by teachers when they plan what pupils need to learn next. A very significant strength is the very good relationships that teachers develop with their pupils and this underpins the very good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Teachers motivate pupils well and provide challenging activities, such as the "Whiz Bang Wallop" mental mathematics game designed to reinforce high attaining Year 2 pupils' knowledge of number factors. Teachers have high expectations of learning and of behaviour and pupils respond well. For example, in a lesson on the measurement of capacity in Year 2, the teacher expected pupils to work sensibly and purposefully as they filled and emptied containers of water. They responded accordingly and achieved well.

- 67 Lessons are carefully organised and resources are well used. In most classes very effective use is made of "number fans" during mental mathematics sessions and in some classes, individual white boards are well used to record answers and to ensure that all children participate fully in the lesson. When appropriate, pupils' own language is used to ensure that pupils learning English as an additional language understand what is expected of them. Support staff are often well deployed and in one Year 1 lesson, through her unobtrusive and effective help, the learning support assistant ensured the full inclusion in class mental calculations of a small group of low attaining pupils. Her positive comments, such as "--- didn't know that yesterday", when a child correctly answered a question, reinforced the child's learning. In most lessons teachers make good use of questioning to extend learning, for example, by asking pupils to explain their mental calculations. One relative weakness was that in one lesson pupils' incorrect answers were not fully explored to clarify their thinking. Mental mathematics sessions are usually well paced and, as a result, learning proceeds at a brisk pace.
- 68 Strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning have been identified carefully and decisive action has been taken to address the weaknesses. A significant development has been the introduction of setting and this has led to more focused teaching and learning. Within each set, work is well differentiated to ensure that all pupils are working at the appropriate level. Pupils are each set targets and these are regularly reviewed. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well. Assessment procedures are good and pupils' progress is tracked well. Teaching has been rigorously monitored and feedback given to teachers. The subject leader recently left the school and the headteacher has temporarily taken responsibility for the subject. The improvements introduced thus far are having a beneficial impact on pupils' achievements and the school has the capacity to bring about further improvement.

## SCIENCE

- 69 According to teachers' statutory assessments for seven-year-olds last year, pupils' overall results were well below the average for all and similar schools. However, the percentage of pupils who attained better than the expected level was close to the national average. Overall, pupils achieved best in life and living processes. Good teaching and regular investigative work are helping to improve standards and consequently they are now broadly average in the current Year 2. The most able pupils attain above average standards. The inspection found no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls. Standards have improved since the last inspection two years ago, especially in Year 1.
- 70 Pupils throughout the school make good progress irrespective of their abilities, gender and ethnic background. Pupils in Year 1 make good progress in life and living processes, materials and their properties and physical processes. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection because progress was then too slow. Pupils accurately label the main human body parts and their work on senses is good. They successfully identify light sources and record their findings in simple writing and drawing. Investigations are undertaken regularly and include sorting and describing the properties of different materials. In a lesson on magnetism the teacher's very good use of scientific terminology, effective use of resources and high expectations ensured that pupils learned rapidly. At the beginning of the lesson about two-thirds thought that all metals were magnetic but after a thorough investigation of the magnetic or non-magnetic properties of a range of materials almost all pupils understood this was not the case. Progress is also good in Year 2. Pupils' written recording includes clear explanations of how to make a simple electrical circuit and the most able pupils label a circuit diagram clearly. They also, in some cases, give an accurate list of materials that conduct electricity. Year 2 pupils' understanding of life processes and living things is being enhanced by their current work on seeds and their germination. High attaining pupils show good knowledge of the parts of plants. All pupils' work in Year 1 and Year 2 shows discernible progress in communicating their findings from investigations. They also talk well about their work and use appropriate terminology. Good links are made to mathematics when pupils record results in graphs, for example, bar charts of favourite food in Year 2.
- 71 Pupils are acquiring science skills well and they show considerable interest and concentration. They co-operate very well and use resources carefully. Their very positive attitudes and very good relationships contribute significantly to their progress. They enjoy talking about their work and respond well to challenging questions. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher's opening question; "How do plants start?" fired pupils' interest and they very quickly showed their awareness of seeds, roots, shoots and bulbs.
- 72 The quality of teaching is good overall. Objectives for pupils' learning are clearly identified in teachers' planning and generally are met. Pupils are managed very well in the main and consequently behaviour is invariably at least good. Teachers make good use of scientific terminology and this has helped pupils to talk with more clarity about their work. Appropriate resources are provided for pupils' work and they were used well in the lessons on magnetism. In the most effective teaching questions are used well to check on pupils' recall of knowledge from previous lessons and to develop their understanding of the work in process. In Year 2 lessons the teachers' well focused questions helped pupils to observe and talk about fruit and seeds with growing awareness and confidence. Particularly good use is made of those occasions when the whole class of pupils is gathered together. For example, as

preparation for investigative work in the next lesson, a Year 2 teacher asked pupils to suggest how they might grow some of the seeds they had just observed. This enabled pupils to show not only the extent of their knowledge and understanding but also to use their skills of enquiry. In all lessons teachers value pupils' contributions and work hard at developing very good relationships. The support staff are used very well and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. They ensure that pupils with SEN and those for whom English is an additional language understand what they are to do, often by sensitively providing a quiet word in their ear. Teamwork is strong and learning assistants are thoroughly briefed. In much of teachers' marking, good feedback is given to pupils. Praise for pupils is often followed by a question to extend pupils' thinking. For example; "You researched with care. Why do you think a worm is divided into segments?" More attention to how pupils could improve their writing skills would be helpful to them.

- 73 Science is well led by the subject co-ordinator and, since the last inspection, the issue to raise standards, especially in experimental and investigative skills, has been addressed well. Teachers' planning is monitored by the co-ordinator and a new scheme of work has been introduced. Appropriate assessments take place at the beginning and end of units of work and include indication of the National Curriculum levels achieved. The school should now consider targets for individual pupils as it does for literacy and numeracy.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

- 74 Only one lesson was observed. Scrutiny of pupils' completed work, discussion with teachers and scrutiny of their plans, together with the lesson observation, indicate that by the age of seven attainment is broadly as expected. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall but progress is good in some aspects of the work.
- 75 Pupils in Year 1 learn to mix different shades and tones of a colour and in one class they use these hues to create lively and interesting patterns. Pupils show good control of paint and pastel crayon in their portraits which have an immediacy and quality. In the work on portraits, the subject is relevant to pupils and they have the opportunity to work from direct observation in an appropriate scale using paint or pastel crayons. As a result, their learning is good and the quality of their finished work is also good. In Year 2, effective use is made of information and communication technology to generate colourful non-representational pictures. Throughout Year 2, pupils have used watercolours to create pictures in the style of Rodin's Cambodian Dancers and in some of the work the brushwork is careful. Pupils have used a range of materials to create a sequence of pictures linked to the creation story and in one class the materials have been used particularly well to create a dramatic and striking collage. In the good lesson seen in Year 2 pupils selected and used a range of materials with imagination and skill to create masks. However, in general pupils' contributions to the large collage pictures displayed in corridors and the hall do not fully reflect their true capabilities.
- 76 In the lesson seen, pupils' behaviour and attitudes were good. They listened carefully and were interested in the idea of masks. When shown a wooden Chinese mask one suggested it might be called "The Spirit of Fire". When asked what a mask was for, one replied; "It's for disguising". A third had brought an African mask from home to show to the class. Pupils worked purposefully as they selected and used materials. Most were proud of their work and suggested materials they might need to finish their work at the next lesson. The teaching was good. Explanations and instructions were clear and expectations of behaviour were high. Pupils responded well and learning

was good. Resources were well used to inspire pupils and the teacher's use of questioning was very effective in promoting the idea that masks might express emotions. The plenary was very well conducted and good opportunities were taken to praise pupils for their efforts and to encourage them to think about ways in which their work could be improved or developed. Support staff were well deployed.

- 77 The school follows the QCA curriculum guidelines and assessment procedures are informal. At present pupils do not have sufficient opportunity for recording from first hand observations. Work on display in public areas does not always fully reflect pupils' creative skills. The subject co-ordinator has not had sufficient time in the post to gain a full awareness of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. The school has the capacity to make improvements.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 78 By the age of seven standards are as expected for pupils' age and some have good making skills. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall but progress is good in some aspects of the work. In Year 2 they know that vehicles incorporate a chassis and axles and include these features in their designs. They use a range of materials and techniques to make model vehicles with fixed axles and rotating wheels. In successfully using the Jinks technique to make strong joints in balsa wood chassis frames, some pupils attain standards above those expected of seven-year-olds.
- 79 In Year 1, pupils learn to use split pins to join the limbs and body of a cardboard figure. They experience how cogs and gears fit together through working with construction kit. In their work on healthy food, they identify favourite fruits and vegetables. During the week of the inspection pupils in Year 1 made satisfactory progress in designing and making a healthy sandwich. In Year 2, pupils design glove puppets and pop-up cards and make good eye-catching posters which warn; "Don't play near electricity cables". There is no written evidence that pupils evaluate these products. However, teachers provided appropriate opportunities for verbal evaluations in two good Year 2 lessons. Because of the effective planning and teaching in these lessons, pupils progressed well in learning to design and make a printing block and to appraise their work. At the start of one lesson, pupils identified the characteristics of a good design; "It's colourful" said one child; "It makes a pattern" said another and a third added; "It's not complicated". The teacher reinforced these ideas well and, at the end of the lesson, encouraged pupils to evaluate their work against the criteria of pattern and simplicity.
- 80 Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and their behaviour is usually good. They listen carefully and work with care. They handle tools and materials safely and with good control. When working with food they responsibly make sure their hands are clean. In one Year 2 lesson, in a class in which relationships and attitudes to learning were very good, pupils spontaneously applauded their teacher's demonstration of a printing technique.
- 81 Teaching is satisfactory and there is a substantial proportion of good teaching particularly in Year 2. Strengths include the good relationships teachers have with their pupils, (sometimes established over a very short period of time) which underpin pupils' positive approach to learning and their good behaviour. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond well to these expectations. Lessons are well planned and artefacts and demonstrations are often well used to enhance learning and to make sure pupils clearly understand what is expected of them. However, this is not always the case; in one lesson, some pupils were confused

about their task because there had been no demonstration to help them understand how a design for a sandwich could be planned. Support staff are well deployed to help pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language and this enables these pupils to make good progress.

- 82 The school follows the QCA guidelines and, to ensure that pupils' experience is sufficiently broad, now needs to check that too much time is not spent on one topic. Assessments are carried out at the end of each topic. The curriculum leader, who is relatively new to the role, monitors planning and takes informal opportunities to see pupils' work. She is a member of a borough working party on the subject and has ideas for future developments. The school has the capacity to bring about improvements in the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

- 83 The school alternates the teaching of history and geography and so due to the timing of the inspection it was not possible to see any geography lessons. Inspection judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils. Pupils, including those for whom English is a second language and those who have special educational needs, make very good progress and their attainment by the age of seven is above that expected for their age. Geography was not reported on in the last inspection.
- 84 Pupils are developing good enquiry skills and are developing an understanding of the physical and human features of different locations. Pupils in Year 1 recognise the features of their own town and locate them on a map of the area. Pupils in Year 2 are developing a good understanding of how towns and villages develop and how size of population and transport systems affects these areas. They show a very good knowledge of their own town and are aware of its place in the United Kingdom, Europe and the world. Good knowledge of other towns, cities and countries was shown well as pupils located the capitals of major countries and identified London, Manchester, Wales, Cornwall and Scotland on a map. Year 2 pupils confidently discuss complex issues of pollution and poverty in different parts of the world and are aware of their responsibility to improve the world.
- 85 Pupils clearly enjoy geography. They have good attitudes to work and are eager to contribute to discussions with adults. Although no teaching was observed a scrutiny of their work on display showed how their interest in geography had been imaginatively harnessed by following a global yacht race. Pupils tracked the progress of the various yachts and made detailed studies of the places they stopped at en-route, such as La Rochelle, Sydney and Southampton. Currently there are no assessment procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment.

## **HISTORY**

- 86 Attainment by the age of seven exceeds expectations for pupils' age. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make very good progress. History was not reported on in the last inspection.
- 87 The curriculum for history is imaginative and well planned in order to motivate pupils' interest in people and events of the past. Teachers' enthusiasm excites pupils' imagination and the subject is brought alive for them. Pupils are encouraged to think of themselves as historians as they consider the authenticity of evidence and use a range of artefacts, photographs, the Internet and books to gain knowledge and understanding of past times. They have a very good understanding of chronology, events, people and changes that have occurred in the past. Pupils in Year 1 use the local environment, photographs and books to identify Victorian houses and compare them with modern flats and bungalows. Year 2 pupils know the significance and contribution of historical figures such as Florence Nightingale and the events of the Great Fire of London, accurately dating them and placing them on a time line. Pupils are able to write their own accounts in the style of the diarist 'Samuel Pepys'. An awareness of how the past affects the present was developed very well in an excellent lesson in Year 2. The teacher made very good use of resources. Pupils handled original 'insurance plates' from the seventeenth century and discussed with confidence the reasons why the Great Fire started and the lessons that were learned.
- 88 Pupils' attitudes to history are very good. They show great enthusiasm for the subject and enjoy being challenged to think and make comparisons about the way people lived in bygone days. They are keen to develop their research skills, to explore new ideas and exchange these with each other. Pupils are encouraged to organise their own work and record their findings in their own words. Teaching of history is very good and sometimes excellent. Teachers have very secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. In the excellent lesson in Year 2 a combination of very clear explanation and opportunity for pupils to use historical sources contributed to the outstanding learning. The good sources include a variety of artefacts, archaeological finds, maps, photographs, the Internet, visits and books to bring the subject alive. There are no assessment procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

- 89 At the time of the last inspection the school was required to build on the good progress made by children in the early years of the school. While this has been successful in those areas of the subject that have sufficient resources, in other areas there has been a lack of progress. Recently the school has lost computing equipment in thefts and as a result there are not enough up-to-date and working computers. In the three lessons seen attainment was above average in control technology, for which the school is well equipped, and average when using a word-processing program. However, the rate of progress is unsatisfactory, as pupils do not regularly and frequently practise their skills across the whole curriculum.
- 90 In the two lessons observed in Year 1 attainment was average when pupils used a word processing package. Pupils have a fair understanding of the functions of the keyboard and know, for instance, how to enter and erase text and how to produce full stops and capital letters to form sentences. They alter the size and style of the font using computers to write sentences about themselves and their school. By the time pupils are seven they load and save to a file or disk making sure that their work is

safely stored and show some increase in speed when typing. Pupils in Year 2 create pictures using a paint program titling their work "Autumn Darkness", "Day and Night" and "The Yellow Beach". Pupils understand how to use the drawing and painting functions of the program to produce satisfactory work in the style of Jackson Pollock.

- 91 In the only lesson seen in Year 2 attainment was above average as pupils programmed small floor robots. The teaching was very good. Pupils were asked to design their own routes for the robots. Using rulers and brushes they set out their paths and the adults in the class used tape to ensure the tracks were permanent. Pupils then programmed their robots to follow a sequence of movements. Pupils understood how to clear the memory of the robot and command it to move in a variety of directions and turn 90° as it moved around the course. The most able pupils were able to program the robot to turn angles of less than 90° and sequence a series of complex movements. Pupils identified their errors quickly and were able to correct their programs. They worked extremely well together, sharing resources and taking turns to punch in a sequence of movements. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, were very involved and at the end of the lesson demonstrated how their robots moved around the course. Pupils spoke clearly and succinctly to report their findings.
- 92 Teaching was satisfactory in the lessons in Year 1 and very good in the lesson in Year 2. Pupils show how they plan to use ICT in their lessons and, because interesting activities are planned, pupils are excited and their learning is more productive. The curriculum covers all of the subject's strands but because there are so few computers, it takes a great deal of time before all pupils have the opportunity to attempt the planned work. Usually learning is at least satisfactory and pupils remember well what they have done. Teachers keep records about pupils' accomplishments writing notes of pupils learning computing skills.
- 93 The co-ordinator and governors have a thorough understanding of the need to restore the school's facilities and develop good quality resources.

## MUSIC

- 94 Only two lessons were observed, one in each year group. There was insufficient evidence therefore to evaluate overall standards. In the lesson in Year 1 attainment was as expected for pupils' age, and in Year 2 attainment exceeded expectations. Pupils' singing in assemblies was good.
- 95 Pupils in Year 1 enjoyed using untuned percussion instruments to accompany a new song they were learning. They participated well and generally, showed a satisfactory sense of rhythm and control. Their singing was satisfactory. Pupils were well managed and they behaved well. The teaching was satisfactory but the teacher and learning assistant did not capitalise on the chance for each to work with a smaller group of pupils to improve their performance. The teaching in the Year 2 lesson was very good. The teacher introduced the terms "ostinato" and "timbre" as pupils listened carefully to a piece of music. They then used percussion instruments to devise ostinato patterns. Pupils worked very hard and achieved well as their performance improved. Attitudes and behaviour were excellent.
- 96 Music has not been a key priority for the school in recent times. However, plans for its future development are appropriate, including the improvement of teachers' expertise.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 97 Three lessons in gymnastics were observed. Pupils make very good progress and by the age of seven standards exceed expectations for their age. In each of the lessons observed pupils worked very hard to improve their performances. Physical education was not reported on in the last inspection.
- 98 In an excellent lesson in Year 1, pupils produced well-above average sequences of balances and travelling movements, which moved from floor exercises to apparatus. The class teacher's very quiet but clear instructions ensured that pupils were quick off the mark to begin work. As soon as they entered the hall they started their warm-up exercises. Moving swiftly about the hall pupils controlled their movements very well. They made sure that they did not stop any other pupil from working and because their stretches and balances made sure their muscles were warm they quickly began the main part of the lesson. They set out their own equipment and enjoyed the added challenge of balancing and finding ways of moving in different levels. In this lesson, as in others, pupils demonstrated very mature working habits, never slacking from the very brisk pace that they set for themselves. A key feature of this lesson was how the teacher improved performance with a quiet word of encouragement or a smile and a request to think of more complex balances. The teacher and learning support assistant worked extremely well together to encourage pupils to stretch their arms and fingers, point their toes and thus hold very good balances. The class teacher's very good subject knowledge and suggestions to 'Be proud of your work' had pupils trying their hardest to perform as well as they could. At times the teacher would stop the lesson and ask pupils to demonstrate their movements. After each, the question was always; "What could we do to improve?" By the end of the lesson pupils' work was interesting, complex and challenging. In this lesson for six-year-olds almost all pupils achieved the standard expected of seven-year-olds and many achieved beyond this level.
- 99 Two lessons were observed in Year 2. In one lesson the quality of the work was average and in the other attainment was above average. In the first lesson the supply teacher had rightly adapted the plan to ensure that good behaviour was established and pupils understood what was expected of them when working in the hall. After a good warm-up session pupils developed patterns of movements and shapes. The teacher watched pupils working and at the correct time stopped the lesson to look for good examples of sequences. Carefully building in variations to pupils' work the teacher moved the pupils onto working on benches and mats. This meant that at times some pupils were not working and were waiting for an opportunity to develop their patterns. In the second lesson in Year 2 the quality of teaching was very good. Again, clear instructions, careful coaching and a watchful eye from the teacher meant that pupils made very good progress in developing good sequences of rocking and rolling. In this lesson the teacher demonstrated well and helped pupils to develop controlled movements.
- 100 The quality of teaching is good overall and teachers' planning clearly sets out the learning objectives. Lessons have a good structure and develop patterns of movements sensibly. In all lessons teachers manage pupils very well. They take great care to encourage pupils and pass on how pleased they are with their work. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and require them to use a variety of skills. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils quickly planned the layout of their equipment using small-scale drawings while they were changing. This not only helped to develop pupils' independence but also ensured that the apparatus was quickly and efficiently set out.



- 101 The co-ordinator is a skilled and experienced manager. There are no extra-curricular sporting activities but mid-day supervisors organise and play ball and traditional games with pupils at lunchtime. The co-ordinator's plans for the subject are comprehensive and appropriate. The governors' decision to renew physical education equipment was timely and is having a positive effect on the quality of pupils' work.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 102 Three lessons were observed in religious education. Other evidence of standards was obtained from discussion with pupils, scrutiny of their work and assemblies. Progress is very good and by the age of seven pupils broadly exceed the expectations for their age outlined in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Religious education was not reported on in the last inspection.
- 103 Pupils in Year 1 are developing good knowledge and understanding of major faiths. They have retold the Hindu story of Rama and Sita and have written simple accounts of Muslim and Christian festivals. At the start of a lesson in Year 1, when pupils were asked to recall the names of special people, they very quickly replied "Guru Nanak" and "Jesus". Pupils have written independently about "The first Christmas" and Jesus' "special friends" the disciples. Pupils respond very well to opportunities to talk and write about their feelings. One child wrote; "I was sad when my rabbit died". In a lesson on "Mothering Sunday" pupils' confidence grew as they talked about their mothers. Pupils in Year 2 show good knowledge of "special books" including the Bible, the Torah and the Qu'ran. They have undertaken good work on religious ceremonies associated with the birth of babies. The most able pupils have responded well to questions on the role of godparents. Pupils' writing about "new beginnings" is often especially good and shows their confidence in expressing their thoughts and feelings, for example, about leaving friends when moving to a new house.
- 104 The teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to excellent and was good overall. In all the lessons discussions are very well managed and the teachers' very good relationships with the pupils help them to talk freely. Teachers value pupils' contributions and give them time to articulate their thoughts and ideas. In Year 2 teachers use language effectively to promote pupils' sense of wonder when studying the life cycles of frogs and butterflies. In both lessons in Year 2 links with science were very good. In the excellent teaching the very brisk pace helped to sustain all pupils' interest throughout the lesson. Time was used very productively to ensure pupils made maximum progress. In all lessons good support is given to pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. All pupils are given regular opportunities to write in religious education lessons and they cover a good amount of work. However, there is scope for teachers to give further help in developing writing skills.
- 105 The subject co-ordinator was absent during the inspection but there is evidence that the subject is managed well. Pupils' work is fully in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus.