

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BARNEHURST INFANT SCHOOL**

Erith, Kent

LEA area: Bexley

Unique reference number: 101473

Headteacher: Mrs H Crozier

Reporting inspector: Mr M Carter  
20714

Dates of inspection: 17 - 20 June 2002

Inspection number: 194725

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

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant with Nursery
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Barnehurst Infant School Barnehurst Close Northumberland Heath Erith Kent
Postcode:	DA8 3NL
Telephone number:	01322 334401
Fax number:	01322 350745
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K Franklin
Date of previous inspection:	02-06-1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20714	M Carter	Registered inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Geography Music	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9619	R Miller	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Pupils' attitudes and behaviour.
19774	M Docherty	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Religious education English as an additional language	
29426	D Grimwood	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology History Physical education Special educational needs Equal opportunities.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

PBM Inspection Services Ltd  
PO Box 524  
CHEADLE  
Staffordshire  
ST10 4RN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>22</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school serves residential areas of Barnehurst, which is to the east of Erith centre. The school is average in size and over-subscribed, with 179 full-time pupils organised into six classes and a further 46 part-time pupils in a nursery class. A very small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds; no pupil speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is nine per cent; this is below average. Nearly all of the pupils have pre-school education mostly at the school's own part-time nursery class. The attainment of the large majority of the pupils on entry is average; the proportion of pupils with above average attainment is falling but was about a third in 2001. The baseline assessment of pupils in 2001 indicates that one pupil in five has attainment below the local average. A few children have been placed in the nursery because of their particular needs. Currently, the number of pupils in the school with special educational needs is 24 per cent and about average. There are seven pupils with statements of special educational need; this is above average and includes pupils with difficulties such as autism and moderate learning difficulties.

### HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good, effective school. Standards are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science and there are high proportions of pupils with attainment above the national expectations for their age. Standards dipped in 1999 but, with teaching that is good overall, they are now improving well and the school has an expectation of further improvements under the leadership of the new, effective headteacher. The school's ethos is inclusive and promotes good learning and academic and personal progress for all. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and the school is popular with parents. Governors appropriately hold the school to account and check that spending is effective. The cost for each pupil is a little above average for the type of school but the budget is used effectively to raise achievement and the school represents good value for money.

#### What the school does well

- Standards in the core subjects are high in English and good in mathematics and science.
- Teaching is good overall with nearly a fifth that is very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good.
- Procedures for promoting good attendance, good behaviour and a lack of harassment.
- The pupils' attitudes to and enthusiasm for the school and their learning.
- The provision the school makes for the pupils' social development.
- The shared commitment the staff has to making improvements.

#### What could be improved

- The monitoring carried out by the subject coordinators, except in English and mathematics.
- The use of assessments in the non-core subjects to provide targets, learning objectives, and work, at appropriately different levels.
- The use made of skills gained in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology lessons to support learning in other subjects.
- Systems to ensure that:
  - collective worship is held daily;
  - reports to parents include commentary on each subject;
  - the pupils withdrawn from lessons are monitored to ensure that they do not miss important learning.

*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 1997, when standards were found to be very good in the core subjects. Since then, standards fell in 1999, but are now rising and are well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. Improvement over the last two years has been faster than the national picture and standards are now at least as strong as they were at the time of the last inspection. Work has been done to make the required improvements identified in the last report but some of these have yet to be completely finished. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is now improved and meets recommendations. Assessment is used satisfactorily to help teachers devise well-matched learning. Risk assessments are regular and rigorous. However, coordinators are not yet sufficiently involved in the monitoring of their subject to gain an overview of standards and developments needed, especially in the non-core subjects. Monitoring is largely carried out by the headteacher and there is a plan for the involvement of coordinators in these activities to be implemented next term. Although this issue has not been sufficiently improved, the school's overall improvement is good due to

current strategies and the improved standards.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
reading	C	C	A	A	well above average    A above average        B average                C below average        D well below average   E
writing	D	D	A	A	
mathematics	E	C	B	A	

Standards in reading and writing were well above average in 2001 and the unconfirmed results of the National Curriculum tests of 2002 indicate a slight improvement. In mathematics, standards as shown in these tests were above average in 2001 and indications are that they have improved in 2002, with over half the pupils achieving a high standard. In science, assessments are made by teachers and here standards were average in 2001 but with more high attainment than usual. The unconfirmed 2002 results are similar but there is less low attainment. The inspection found above average standards in reading and writing and above average standards in mathematics and science. In comparison to similar schools, performance is well above average. Since the last inspection, standards generally have improved slightly but in 1999 there was a severe dip in test results. Since then, results have improved strongly to regain and overtake the earlier position. There are now good proportions of pupils with high attainment and the proportion not reaching the expected standard has been reducing. On entry to the school, the proportions with high attainment are considerably smaller than they are on leaving the school. Both high and low attaining pupils achieve well. Standards in information and communication technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education are generally satisfactory and in art and design and design and technology there was insufficient evidence to judge attainment.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils' attitudes to school and their enthusiasm for learning are very good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The pupils' behaviour is good both in and out of classrooms. The school is an orderly and happy community.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The pupils learn to respect others and take more responsibility than they did at the last inspection. They form good relationships.
Attendance	Currently satisfactory with higher than average authorised absence last year although unauthorised absence was low.

There is practically no bullying or oppressive behaviour and pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are very well integrated and make a good contribution to the school's social life. The large majority of parents think that behaviour is good and that pupils respect the rules, which are consistently applied by staff. This good behaviour helps the pupils to have very good attitudes to their work and to be conscientious, for example, about homework. The playground is organised and supervised in a way that promotes the pupils' personal development and friendliness. There are many formal and informal ways by which the pupils learn to form good relationships. In the last reporting year, up to July 2001, attendance was well below average because of the number of authorised absences. Measures have now been taken to reduce this and the current rate of attendance is slightly above average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The standard of teaching is good overall, particularly in the Foundation Stage where over a third of lessons are very well taught. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is good. Marking and homework are used well to help pupils to make improvements. Skills in literacy and numeracy are thoroughly taught and pupils of high attainment are suitably challenged to achieve well while pupils with low attainment are given extra support, often by withdrawal from lessons. Consequently, most pupils now achieve the expected standards by the age of seven. Teachers use questioning well to help pupils to listen, think and reply, but sometimes the less confident speakers are given fewer opportunities for this. By making tasks suitably challenging for groups of pupils of different ability and by providing support for lower attaining pupils, all learning needs are met in English, mathematics and science. This is less evident in the non-core subjects and, here, teachers sometimes lack a clear view of the pupils' learning needs. This is partly because of some weak subject knowledge, for example, in music, and partly because assessments are not used to help teachers provide experiences that will help pupils sequentially gain skills and understanding. Nevertheless, teaching in these subjects is satisfactory overall and the pupils are provided with interesting tasks and are well managed. In art and design and design and technology, there was insufficient evidence to judge teaching. In the Foundation Stage teaching is good in all six areas of learning and there is a good connection made between them. The Foundation Stage staff work well as a team.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory and providing a good range of interesting experiences. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are well used.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall. The new Code of Practice is operating well in the school and there is a good degree of support for pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Very good provision for pupils' social development particularly at play times. Provision for moral development is good and reflected in the school's behaviour policies. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. Procedures for improving attendance and monitoring behaviour are very good, but the use of assessment is weak in the non-core subjects.

The school works well with parents and the headteacher is highly involved in supporting parents who see the school as open and helpful. The curriculum for the Foundation stage is good and organised well with clear teamwork and cohesion between areas of learning. The curriculum for the six and seven-year-olds is particularly strong in the core subjects but there are weaknesses in non-core subjects, where there is sometimes a lack of subject knowledge and insufficient monitoring. The school does not comply fully with the requirement for a daily act of collective worship and more could be done to enhance provision for spiritual development. The pupils' welfare is protected well and good behaviour is promoted and monitored through a number of very effective initiatives.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good and helping the school to make good improvements. Senior staff are clear and effective in their roles, but subject coordinators do not yet monitor the standards of learning and teaching, especially in the non-core subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors carry out their duties satisfactorily and support and challenge the school, but lack systematic evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses. Statutory requirements are met.



The school's evaluation of its performance	Good overall. The headteacher's monitoring of lessons is rigorous and helpful. Outcomes are reviewed in the light of the growing analysis of test results, which should now include tracking of the progress of groups of pupils.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. All grants are used for their purpose and governors evaluate the effectiveness of spending but the school's use of best-value principles does not yet underpin all aspects of spending.

There is an appropriate number of teachers and support staff and they have a good range of opportunities for professional development, although this has been less pronounced for the non-core subjects. The school's accommodation has improved since the last inspection and is now good with additional facilities of a computer suite and a resource and technology area. Outdoor areas for the Foundation Stage have also been improved. The school's resources for learning are sound and good in some areas such as design and technology. The new headteacher has helped the school to gain a strong ethos of teamwork and commitment to improvement. Subject coordinators have little opportunity for monitoring. This was a key issue in the last report, but there is a robust plan for this to take place in the autumn.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is approachable.</li> <li>• It is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The children are happy and work hard.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• Information about progress.</li> <li>• Homework.</li> </ul>

Parents are generally very happy with the school and are very positive about the headteacher's leadership. Inspectors agree with all the positive points raised by parents but disagree with those who think that the range of after-school activities is weak. There is some agreement that report writing is not fully informative insofar that each subject is not reported separately and more information about comparative progress is needed. Homework was found to be used very effectively and well supported by most parents at home.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Standards are well above average in English, and above average in mathematics and science. They have improved slightly since the last inspection because there are more pupils with high attainment. However, in 1999 they fell considerably but have recovered well since and are still rising. Standards in reading have improved since the last inspection with a few pupils having very high attainment. In mathematics, standards are also slightly better than they were at the time of the previous inspection. In reading, writing and mathematics, performance is well above that of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In the Foundation Stage, an above average number of pupils are on course to attain or exceed the nationally agreed early learning goals in each of the areas of learning, with a relatively large proportion doing so in personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; and mathematical development.
2. From an intake that is generally average in attainment, the school is very effective in increasing the pupils' comparative standards in the core subjects. The proportion of pupils achieving above average results increases as they get older. Recently this achievement has been marked, for example, from 6 per cent high attainment at the age of five to over 40 per cent at seven. This good progress is started in the Foundation Stage, both in the nursery class and the reception classes, where lessons are well matched to the pupils' needs and there are high expectations of attainment and behaviour. The six- and seven-year-old pupils build on this good start and profit from the good teaching and provision especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
3. Progress is less marked for the six- and seven-year-olds in the non-core subjects where attainment by the age of seven is satisfactory in information and communication technology, geography, history, music and physical and religious education. Standards in these subjects are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. In art and design, there are a few indications of good standards but overall there is insufficient evidence to make judgements. There is also insufficient evidence to judge the standards in design and technology because of the system by which some subjects are taught only for parts of the year.
4. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is generally good. Their needs are usually well met in lessons and in small group work but occasionally learning objectives do not meet the specific targets in the pupils' individual education plans. However, through a combination of good support in lessons and learning in withdrawal groups these pupils make good progress and some are able to overcome their difficulties. Consequently, the proportion of pupils with low attainment reduces as pupils get older. The needs of gifted and talented pupils are properly met and their progress is good.
5. The school now tracks the progress of pupils using an appropriate system. However, although the school is inclusive in its principles, the progress of particular groups is not yet analysed. The inspection evidence is that pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make the same progress as the other pupils. There have been some significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls in some years, although there is no clear trend, but the progress of girls and boys is not yet tracked separately, nor is that of other particular groups, such as those starting with high attainment. The tracking system needs extension.

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

6. Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good; they continue to be a strong characteristic, as they were at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including the youngest children in the Foundation Stage and those with special educational needs, enjoy coming to school. They show interest and enjoyment in learning throughout the range of the school's activities. This is an aspect of school that parents are pleased about. The behaviour of the large majority of pupils is good, including in lessons, assemblies and during break times. There has been one pupil excluded in the past academic year.
7. The overall good standard of behaviour identified in the previous report has been maintained. No bullying, racism, sexism or other oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection and mid-day staff report that instances of inappropriate behaviour occur only on rare occasions. Nearly all of the pupils are polite, friendly and follow instructions carefully. Playtimes and lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions, where pupils socialise well. They are given suitable opportunities to show initiative and develop personal responsibility by undertaking tasks such as issuing and clearing away play equipment and looking after

each others' welfare at playtime. Independent group working in the classrooms and in a writing corner in Year 2 is helping to encourage more independent learning and this is an improvement on the previous inspection.

8. Relationships are good amongst pupils and staff and with each other. Pupils are mostly kind and considerate towards one another and they show respect for teachers and visitors alike. In class, most pupils are attentive and concentrate well. They listen carefully whilst their classmates are talking and share ideas and resources well.
9. Attendance figures have fallen slightly since the last inspection but the present rate is satisfactory. The school makes clear statements to encourage parents to send their children to school regularly. A number of parents choose to take holidays in term time and this affects the progress made by these pupils. Punctuality is good for the vast majority of pupils and lessons start and finish on time.

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

10. In the lessons observed, the teaching was good overall. Eighteen per cent of the lessons were very good, 38 per cent were good, 41 per cent were satisfactory and one lesson (2 per cent) was unsatisfactory. This profile is better than the last inspection. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good; it is best in the reception classes where four out of ten lessons were very well taught.
11. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is good and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been adopted well. Planning follows guidance appropriately and uses the teaching frameworks to provide learning that is sequential and appropriate for pupils of different ability, especially in mathematics. Basic skills are taught well and help the pupils to acquire competence, knowledge and understanding. Because the teaching is good, the pupils remain interested and concentrate well on their tasks. In science, basic skills are also planned into the lessons to provide good progress in learning. However, the skills gained in these subjects and in information and communication technology are not used often enough to support the pupils' learning in other subjects.
12. In the core subjects teachers have high expectations and challenge the higher attaining pupils well. They also provide work that is suitably simplified for pupils of low attainment. Class management is good in all subjects and discipline is well kept, with good achievement and behaviour being rewarded by appropriate rewards. These systems are well applied by all staff and are consequently effective, leading to good behaviour in classrooms, around the school and on the playground. Most lessons are taught at a good pace and support staff and resources are used appropriately. Homework is also used well and a home-school diary acts as an effective form of communication between parents and staff. Consequently, most pupils' learning is well supported at home and in the case of reading, this is highly effective leading to the good progress that pupils make.
13. Teaching in information and communication technology is usually good. Teaching in geography, history music, physical education and religious education it is satisfactory; however, there are strengths in the way that lessons are planned to be interesting and active and how the learning through topics is connected. There are weaknesses in teachers' knowledge of some subjects, such as music and geography. The role of assessment is still not used enough in the non-core subjects to help teachers know what learning is needed next and to plan for the progressive learning of skills. Generally speaking, the techniques and detailed progression that are effective in the core subjects are not yet used enough to promote learning in the non-core subjects.
14. The best lessons are characterised by planning that fits the needs of different groups of pupils well, having clear learning objectives and being interesting and related well to the National Curriculum programmes of study. The lessons are often exciting and involve changes of activity and the opportunity for pupils to gain a degree of independence in planning their tasks. The least successful teaching shows that there is insufficient knowledge of the subject for teachers to interpret guidance and emphasise the key elements of learning needed for pupils to progress. In a minority of lessons the learning intended by teachers is not clear enough.
15. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and there are examples of some very good teaching where what is taught is related very well to the individual needs of pupils as set out in their individual education plans. There is a good degree of liaison between staff teaching withdrawal groups and the class teachers who are then able to offer additional help within lessons, which is sometimes ably

provided by individual learning needs support assistants. All staff are very understanding and inclusive in their attitudes towards the pupils. The very occasional incidents of unacceptable behaviour are well managed and overcome with minimal disruption. Overall, the progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good.

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

16. The school provides a sound curriculum that is broad and balanced with appropriate coverage of National Curriculum subjects and religious education. The provision for music is not as strong as in the other subjects because of a lack of expertise among the staff. The requirement for a daily act of collective worship is not met fully and the school has no procedure to ensure this happens. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good. It covers all the recommended areas of learning and is planned effectively to national guidelines. Sufficient time is given to all subjects throughout the year but science and the non-core subjects of history and geography, art and design and design and technology are taught in blocks of time over two or three weeks. This is beneficial for practical subjects where pupils are able to work in depth. Physical education lessons are rather long and this sometimes leads to pupils becoming tired and losing concentration. Two shorter sessions would allow pupils to have physical exercise more frequently, would allow for a wider range of activities, and would mean pupils remain fresher and more focused. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced detailed programmes of work based on the latest national guidance in science and all the non-core subjects, except physical education and information and communication technology, for which the school has devised its own programmes of work. This has helped to provide a consistent approach throughout the school and systematic development of pupils' skills. However, the skills gained in literacy, numeracy and information and communication lessons are not used enough to support learning in other subjects.
17. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The coordinator, acting in conjunction with teachers and governors, has produced an up-to-date policy, which fully meets all the requirements of the Code of Practice. Teachers know the pupils well and those with special educational needs are quickly identified and supported. Individual education plans contain clear and achievable targets for progress. Pupils with statements of special educational needs receive the help indicated by their statements. Pupils are withdrawn from their normal classes for concentrated help in small groups for literacy and numeracy lessons. Pupils are generally withdrawn when their class is having a lesson in that particular area of the curriculum. The withdrawal system does, on occasions, result in individual pupils missing teaching in other subjects and while care is taken to rotate such withdrawals, there is no monitoring of their impact for individual pupils. The school monitors the progress of withdrawn pupils and feels that the progress made outweighs the disadvantages of being withdrawn. The school is keen that pupils have equality of opportunity and, for example, is careful to ensure that no pupil is disadvantaged for financial reasons. Assessment arrangements for literacy and numeracy are good but the information gained is not used to assess the progress of different groups of pupils. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. That this has been done successfully is indicated by the relatively high achievement of pupils in both literacy and numeracy in the national tests.
18. A minority of parents feel that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside school hours. The school offers few extra-curricular activities but, considering the age of the pupils and the nature of the school, its provision is satisfactory. The school has no separate, planned programme for health education, sex education or for drawing pupils' attention to the dangers of drug misuse. However, many of these aspects are successfully covered through work in other areas, particularly science, and through the procedures of the school. For example, the school has a strong and clear approach to healthy eating, starting in the nursery, where pupils are offered a range of fruit to eat with their mid-session milk.
19. The pupils are taken on frequent trips to museums and places of interest to support their learning, particularly in science, history and art and design. Visits are planned to enrich the particular topic being studied. For example, Year 2 pupils, considering the life of Florence Nightingale, are able to visit a local museum, handle artefacts and engage in role-play activities. The school has strong links with a local old people's home. Pupils take harvest festival produce to the home. They invite residents to the school to see their Christmas production and provide and serve refreshments, thus helping to develop their social skills and develop an understanding of a different age group. The school has good links with local industry, through its Friends association, and through pupils, and uses these links to raise funds for valuable resources. A local firm offered to match the amount raised by a particular pupil in one of the school's regular sponsored events; this generous gesture involved over £1,000. The Friends association is active and contributes fully to the activities of the school and, as well as raising funds, on occasions helps to

support learning, for example, when the school staged a 'medieval' fete as part of the Jubilee celebrations.

20. Links with the adjacent junior school are good. These have a direct effect on the learning of the pupils since they are able to use the junior school's field for physical education lessons and resources such as the conservation area in science lessons. Teachers from both schools liaise on curriculum matters, helping to ensure that there is continuity in the pupils' learning. The coordinators for special educational needs worked together to produce a policy for these pupils. Junior pupils act as 'reading buddies'. Year 2 pupils are invited to physical education sessions during the lunch hour, and to assemblies, at the junior school. Such arrangements help to make the transfer of pupils to the juniors as seamless as possible. Students from local secondary schools do work experience. Teachers in training at local colleges are also regularly placed at the school. This increases the number of adults and offers greater opportunities for individual support for pupils. This is helpful to their learning and particularly so for pupils with special educational needs.
21. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and the school has maintained the good standards noted at the time of the last inspection. The school is a caring and happy community with high aspirations for its pupils. This has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Parents are pleased that the school is helping their children to develop in a mature and responsible manner.
22. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. History lessons provide occasions for spiritual development, a good example being when Year 2 pupils visited a local museum as part of their study of Remembrance. They made poppies and the poppies were made into a wreath. The wreath was placed on a replica of the Cenotaph and the children observed a two minutes silence. However, insufficient care is taken in assemblies to create a reflective atmosphere with suitable music. Although there is often a prayer or period for reflection, these are not respected with reverence. Assemblies do not always include prayers or periods for reflection and the school does not meet the statutory requirements for collective worship. Pupils are given insufficient opportunities to consider the nature of a deity. Despite this, assemblies do contain moments of wonder, for example, when a silk scarf was dramatically pulled from a mystery parcel to illustrate a story.
23. The school's efforts to promote the pupils' moral development are good. Rules of behaviour are posted in classrooms and are referred to by teachers. The whole school is set behavioural targets each week, the target board is prominently displayed in the hall and there is considerable discussion as to whether pupils have met the targets. Individual pupils' achievements are celebrated, for instance, when they are allowed to add a 'brick' to the 'wall of achievement'. Achievements can be behavioural as well as academic, such as 'being a good friend to others'. Stories in assemblies have strong moral themes, emphasising the difference between right and wrong. Adults in school provide good role models. Pupils respond well: nearly all are polite, friendly and behave well. This is particularly noticeable in activities outside the classroom such as games sessions and visits to the conservation area.
24. The school makes very good provision for social development. Pupils are given opportunities and are encouraged to work together discussing work and checking findings. This is formalised in Year 1 where pupils have a work partner of the week. Partners change each week so that by the end of the year each pupil has partnered most of the others in the class. Pupils in Year 2 are given the opportunity to be 'buddies' to pupils in the reception classes, making sure that they are looked after at lunchtimes. Other pupils feeling lonely at lunch or playtimes have only to sit on the *friendship bench* to be joined by pupils willing to talk or play with them. Older pupils are given jobs around the school: tidying the computer room, delivering registers. For the post of *environmental monitor*, pupils are required to submit a written application.
25. The many educational visits away from the school site provide useful opportunities for pupils to mix together in the wider community. Whole year productions at Christmas allow pupils to work together on a joint venture. Pupils are encouraged to think of those less fortunate than themselves through their good support for several charities.
26. Cultural provision at the school is satisfactory. Pupils gain an appropriate understanding of their cultural heritage through their work in history and the visits they make to local museums and historic buildings. The school provides some cultural experiences including visits from theatre groups and musical ensembles, although opportunities for musical appreciation are limited. Older pupils were unable to name a musical composer but are more knowledgeable about artists, being able to name painters such as *Picasso, Leonardo da Vinci and Seurat* and to make observations about their work. Whole school events

such as 'Global Day', when each class chooses a different country for study and mounts displays and events in their classroom, help to give pupils some understanding of other cultures. The parents of an Indian pupil brought in clothing and prepared Indian food in one class. Pupils are issued with a passport and allowed to 'cruise' to other classrooms. Pupils also have the opportunity to study the Jewish faith in religious education lessons. However, such events are fairly infrequent and opportunities for studying the cultural diversity of British Society are not as well developed as other areas.

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

27. During the school day, pupils are cared for well. There is good overall provision for the needs of pupils and standards have been broadly maintained since the last inspection. The pupils are respected and valued as individuals and are known well by all the staff who have good relationships with them. There is a friendly, family atmosphere in the school and the main emphasis is placed on caring for one another.
28. The school has sound arrangements for child protection in place and this is an improvement on the last inspection. The headteacher is the named person responsible and staff are well aware of procedures to follow should the need arise. The school has an effective health and safety policy, which is implemented appropriately. Formal risk assessments are now undertaken and this too is an improvement on the previous inspection.
29. There are very good procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality. Registration procedures meet statutory requirements and unexplained absences are always followed up quickly. There are very good links with the Educational Welfare Officer for dealing with individual problems when they arise.
30. The school's behaviour policy is based on positive encouragement. There are well-understood routines in place for managing poor behaviour both in class and on the playground. However, there is rarely any need to implement these because pupils respond quickly to reminders. This was endorsed by lunchtime assistants, who, whilst knowing the sequence of procedures in dealing with persistent misbehaviour, found that they rarely had to go beyond this initial step. Good work and behaviour are encouraged by rewards and this has helped raise the self-esteem of many pupils.
31. Standards of teacher assessment are satisfactory overall and the school is developing good tracking procedures. These do not however, currently include monitoring by gender or ethnicity or ability. Assessment procedures for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are now in place and are effective. The quality of assessment in other subjects varies and is unsatisfactory overall. Most are done on an informal basis and there are few ways in which coordinators can gain a view of standards in their subject. However, the teachers know the pupils well. The school has identified the need to organise a more systematic whole-school approach to assessment and its use in target setting and to help them plan learning that is well matched to the needs of pupils of different abilities in all subjects.
32. The school provides a good standard of care for pupils who have special educational needs. Their progress is monitored carefully and adjustments are made to their individual education plans so that future lessons meet their needs.

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

33. Parents consider this to be a good school. They are happy, overall, with what the school provides and achieves. Most parents feel welcomed into the school and they believe the school is helping their child become a mature and responsible person. A significant minority of parents thinks that the school does not provide enough extra-curricular activities, particularly for the younger children. Although there are few activities, the inspection findings are that they are sufficient for the nature and age of the children.
34. Links with parents are good. A large number of parents attend consultation evenings and also help in school by listening to pupils read. The parent school association is very active in securing funds to buy resources including equipment for the new computer suite and outside play area.
35. The quality and quantity of information provided for parents are satisfactory. A newsletter each term and the home-school reading diaries serve to act as regular dialogues between home and school. Most parents support their child's learning at home and this is having a positive impact on standards achieved by pupils. The end-of-year reports set out targets for pupils to achieve and this is an improvement on the

previous inspection. However, they do not report about every subject of the curriculum separately nor give an indication about comparative progress made. The school prospectus is comprehensive and contains helpful information for parents whose children are new entrants to the school. This information is supplemented by staff making home visits to ensure parents understand the information and deal with any concerns they may have.

36. Parents are given clear information about the school's special educational needs policy and practice. The school identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs at an early stage. Parents are fully involved in all stages of the process. They are kept fully informed of their children's progress and are invited to annual reviews in addition to parents' evenings.

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

37. The leadership and management of the headteacher is very good. Within a short space of time, a clear educational direction has been established and there is a very good degree of commitment to improvements and a strong sense of working together as a team. The induction of new staff and newly qualified teachers is very good and, although professional development profiles are not maintained, mentoring is effective and teachers as well as other staff gain skills and expertise within the school. Performance management requirements are met well and integrated to the schools procedures for review and evaluation. The school has recently gained Investment in People status. The impact of leadership and management has improved since the last inspection when it was good.
38. The headteacher is very involved with all levels of the school's work and particularly in supporting parents and promoting the school's reputation and procedures. She has helped to improve the quality of teaching through a rigorous series of lesson observations with feedback to teachers; drawing out common points for improvement; and staff development meetings. This good quality of monitoring is to be shared with other teachers through a plan to involve all coordinators in monitoring lessons. However, this work is planned for the autumn term and despite the fact that it was identified in the last report, little has yet been achieved in extending the role of subject coordinators in monitoring. The other issues identified in the last report have been successfully dealt with, although assessments are not yet used enough to help plan well-matched work in the non-core subjects.
39. The school's ethos is inclusive and a small number of pupils with specific difficulties, such as autism, have been enrolled. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. This results in pupils with special educational needs generally making good progress in relation to their previous levels of attainment. The coordinator for special educational needs is very experienced and has updated the school's policy to meet all the latest requirements of the Code of Practice. She has a close personal knowledge of the individual needs of pupils at the school and has the confidence of the teaching and support staff. There is now more monitoring and analysis of test results and this information helps in forming groups for learning and tracking the progress of individual pupils and the school's overall effectiveness. The information is used well in providing feedback to coordinators about the subjects tested and senior managers evaluate overall standards and effectiveness using the results.
40. The governors are supportive of the school and its staff and are also keen to hold the school to account. For example, the decision to retain two senior managers was extensively questioned and then agreed. Governors have an opportunity to contribute to the school development plan and to budget for resources to implement it. The plan is extensive and carefully drafted using the priorities identified by subject coordinators and the outcomes from monitoring and evaluation. However, its criteria for success are sometimes too general. Governors have a number of ways of learning about the school's main strengths and weaknesses and have a sound oversight of its work, but these ways lack a systematic approach. However, the governors are well aware of their statutory duties and these are carried out satisfactorily, despite the difficulty that some governors have in visiting the school during the day.
41. The school is appropriately staffed and there is a satisfactory balance of experience and expertise, with the exception of music. Learning support staff make a good contribution to lessons and to the maintenance of good order throughout the school, although their role in some lessons is not always clearly defined in planning or recording assessments. However, all staff are offered further training and some learning support assistants are gaining qualifications at a good level. The programme for staff development is based upon the needs identified from monitoring and evaluation and staff wishes. It is run by one of the senior managers and effectively complements the provision made within the school. A good range of external courses are attended, but there has been very little to improve teachers' knowledge and

understanding of some of the non-core subjects, where coordinators have identified needs, such as in music and geography.

42. The accommodation is good overall and has been improved since the last inspection. It is clean and well maintained and has colourful wall displays. Since the last inspection a computer suite has been added as well as a large multipurpose room. A new nursery has been built and the outside play areas for the children attending have been extended and this too is an improvement on the previous inspection. The playground is quite cramped for the number of children but because of the excellent organisation of lunchtime activities the space is used well. The school building does not currently meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 fully.
43. Financial planning for the current year is satisfactory and special grants such as allocations for special educational needs are used appropriately. The full governing body agrees the budget allocations annually and governors monitor expenditure regularly. Sufficient financial information is made available to the governors and they make sound use of resources and link spending decisions to educational priorities. There are appropriate procedures to review and evaluate the effects of financial decisions and governors have an understanding of best value principles. The school budget is managed well on a day-to-day basis and financial control and administration are sound overall. A recent internal audit carried out by the local authority confirms this. The school has a sizeable seven per cent of income unspent from the last financial year, but there are a number of plans to reduce this, such as the spending needed for monitoring initiatives. The cost for each pupil is a little above average but due to the good achievement of most pupils and the way that they increase their comparative attainment, the school offers good value for money.
44. There have been improvements in resources since the last inspection; the most significant of which is the provision of a computer suite. Machines in the classroom supplement this. The software to use on these machines is not yet sufficient to support learning across the curriculum. There are insufficient artefacts to support learning in history and religious education.



## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

*Issues that the school has already recognised or is working to improve are marked \*.*

In order to make further improvements, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- ☐ increase the monitoring of teaching and learning carried out by coordinators in non-core subjects (paragraph 39); \*
- ☐ increase the use of assessment in the non-core subjects\* to:
  - set targets for classes, groups, and individuals (paragraph 31);
  - provide clear learning objective for lessons (paragraph 31);
  - plan work at different levels of difficulty for pupils of different prior attainment (paragraph 31);
- ☐ extend the use of basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects (paragraph 17); \*
- ☐ improve the school's provision to ensure that:
  - requirements for daily collective worship are met fully (paragraph 16, 102);
  - reports to parents provide information about each subject separately and give parents an indication of comparative progress (paragraph 35);
  - the lessons missed by withdrawn pupils do not constitute a loss of significant learning (paragraph 17).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

39

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

33

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	15	16	1	0	0
Percentage	0	18	38	41	2	0	0

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

### 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)	23	179
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	8	43

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.2
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	37	28	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	31	34
	Girls	26	27	27
	Total	60	58	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (92)	89 (83)	94 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	33	33
	Girls	27	25	26
	Total	57	58	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (86)	89 (97)	91 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	167
Any other minority ethnic group	7

This table refers to pupils in YR-Y2 only.

### Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

## Teachers and classes

### Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.9
Average class size	29.8

### Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	243

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Financial information

Financial year	2001-2
----------------	--------

	£
Total income	507693
Total expenditure	522829
Expenditure per pupil (based on 207 pupils)	2526
Balance brought forward from previous year	51963
Balance carried forward to next year	36827

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	225
Number of questionnaires returned	133

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	27	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	32	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	60	36	3	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	48	9	3	0
The teaching is good.	71	27	1	1	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	47	10	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	22	3	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	27	0	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	41	3	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	74	25	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	27	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	34	12	7	17

### **Other issues raised by parents**

Many parents expressed gratitude to the headteacher, who they see responsible for recent improvements.

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

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

45. The Foundation Stage consists of one nursery class, with two groups of children attending part-time for either a morning or afternoon session, and two parallel reception classes. The majority of pupils enter the nursery with broadly typical levels of attainment for their age in all six of the areas of learning. Children make good progress and generally achieve the nationally agreed early learning goals by the end of the reception year, particularly in personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; and mathematical development. The analysis of baseline assessment data for the current reception class shows that nearly all are on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year, with a good number achieving beyond expectations.
46. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is generally good and often very good. Teachers plan well and use routine assessment to inform curricular planning. They check pupils' understanding of tasks regularly and develop a practical curriculum to allow full access for all children. Teachers and other members of staff understand the requirements of the curriculum and use its stages effectively to ensure that pupils develop knowledge, understanding and skills progressively in all areas of learning. Staff show a good knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of very young children and are very responsive to their contributions. They present work clearly and engage and motivate pupils well, choosing imaginative and interesting activities to achieve the learning goals. Teachers utilise every opportunity to allow pupils to build on what they know already. Phonics and other basic skills are taught in interesting ways and, in reception, they draw on elements of the National Numeracy and National Literacy Strategy to good effect.
47. Good deployment of staff ensures that children who are high attaining or have special educational needs are given an appropriate level of challenge. This was particularly evident in number work and reading in the reception classes. Behaviour management is strong. The children demonstrate appropriate behaviour and self-control, even when they are excited by the activities they are working on. Staff are well deployed to help all the children achieve well and assessments of each area of learning are made routinely to ensure that all pupils are making appropriate progress.
48. The newly appointed coordinator has made significant developments in a cohesive curriculum with common planning systems to ensure that all pupils make steady progress through the different stages. Common planning, assessment and record-keeping systems are now in place together with expectations for developing activities. Each classroom has a reading area with cushions and fabrics to invite children to engage in reading, writing *stations* for informal opportunities to record ideas, and a listening area with a range of tapes for extra listening opportunities. The coordinator has very good vision for developing the Foundation Stage, for creating a team ethos, and for sharing good practice. She has already begun monitoring the teaching and learning in classes and auditing resources and classroom provision to ensure that the highest standards can be achieved and children given equal opportunities as they progress through the five or six terms of the Foundation Stage.
49. The range of activities that support the knowledge, understanding and skills developed through a particular theme are often very interesting. There is still a slight over-prescription in planning, with limited opportunities for pupils to follow their own interests outside the curricular theme. During the inspection, most activities in the nursery were focused on the theme of vehicles and travel so that the pupils were led to creative activities, all relating to this overall theme. In reception, similarly, there was a very high focus on creative activities relating to the garden-centre theme. These focused activities support the teaching very effectively and consequently the curriculum provided is good. The practical and visual elements of the curriculum and collaborative organisation ensure that children with special educational needs are easily drawn into the on-going work and, particularly when supported by teaching assistants, they make good progress. This is particularly significant because of the small number of pupils specifically placed at the school for their individual needs.
50. Assessment and record-keeping are carried out routinely and indicate that children make good progress across particular areas of learning, for example self-portraiture, number-related activities and reading and writing activities. Additional opportunities are provided for higher attaining pupils to work on reading skills through very well directed guided reading activities.

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

51. The children start in the nursery with skills generally typical of pupils of the same age. They make good progress. By the time they leave reception, nearly all of the children have achieved the early learning goals, with many exceeding them. Most children are confident and socially well adjusted, developing high levels of independence and concentration, particularly when their interests are engaged. Teaching is good.
52. Calm, purposeful and encouraging teaching in nursery and reception classes ensures that pupils have a sense of belonging to the group and an awareness of the behaviour boundaries set by the school. Staff provide good models of behaviour and are very responsive to pupils' contributions, use praise well and deal with the small amounts of inappropriate behaviour with fairness and consistency. Pupils are introduced to the main themes of the curriculum as a group and are then offered opportunities to work collaboratively on visually stimulating and practical activities. They work with good independence and concentration and are capable of self-evaluation with good judgement. Staff are effectively deployed, giving pupils enough support to settle into tasks and to allow them to make progress.
53. Pupils enjoy learning, showing curiosity and strong exploratory impulses, for example in the nursery pupils worked within the theme of travel and transport. They looked with great interest at the car, which a member of staff had driven into the playground for them to inspect. They raised interesting questions and made links to their own experience of cars. For example, one explained that the boot was where his mum put his swimming things; pupils were fascinated by the very obvious link between the key turning in the ignition and the engine starting. Pupils bring their own life experiences into the role-play area, demonstrating good social skills and understanding. In the three Foundation Stage classrooms they acted out roles and modelled appropriate behaviour for the context in which they found themselves. Pupils behaved as royalty in the throne room inspired by the royal jubilee festivities. They behaved as mechanics in the jubilee garage as they repaired bikes and assured customers of good service. In the well-appointed *garden centres* of the reception classes, they took on different roles with good accuracy. Pupils understand the social conventions of the different settings, negotiating different roles and responsibilities in getting very involved in the daily dramas of each role-play area. Pupils play together harmoniously and invite classmates to join in with appropriate welcomes.

### Communication, Language and Literacy

54. Pupils start nursery with average levels of language skills. Most children in the nursery are attaining at a typical level for their age and, by the time they reach reception class, have made good progress. Listening skills are well developed and children enjoy stories and rhymes, joining in with great enthusiasm. Daily group sessions are provided to allow pupils to talk about what they have been doing, and very effective questioning by staff allows them to elaborate on their ideas. Almost all of the children achieve the early learning goals by the end of their reception year, many exceeding them. Teaching is good, at time it is very good.
55. Most children in the reception can recognise their names and can write them with appropriate use of capital and lower case letters. They can recognise the sounds of the letters and are beginning to recognise the sounds achieved by combining letters, for example, the sound of "s" and "h" coming together as "sh". Such work is consolidated by activities in which pupils classify groups of real objects beginning with "sh" and make good attempts to write and say the tongue twister *"she sells sea-shells on the sea-shore"*. Such work was highly motivating and indicated good awareness of the initial sounds in words like "she" and "sea". Pupils explore ideas from a text, for example, *Tommy Tucker singing for his supper* and his dilemma when expected to cut something without a knife. In one class, the teacher brought her own family experience to the discussion, asking pupils to speculate about her husband's response if he had to sing for his supper. Pupils clearly enjoy such personal insights from their teacher.
56. In the reception classes, pupils' reading development is good. Pupils know about the information contained on the cover of a book and also that information can be read from non-book sources, for example, on packets of seeds in the *garden centre*. Pupils read with good attention to the features of the text in fiction and non-fiction books. They understand how information is laid out in headings with annotated diagrams and photographs in a non-fiction book. For example, in a book about seed dispersal they are able to use the index and contents pages well. They also understand from diagrams how seeds are dispersed, for example coconut seeds by the sea, berries and seeds through bird digestion and excretion, and by seeds sticking to animal fur and to the children's own clothes. Pupils are delighted to realise that the seeds that stick to their socks as they walk through the grass are being carried by them to germinate in other parts of the countryside. Higher attaining pupils read well and explore ideas beyond the literal meaning of the text. They understand about story convention and have expectations of story development from their wide experience of reading, for example that a frog in a wizard story is likely to be

a handsome prince languishing under an evil spell.

57. Currently in reception classes, nearly all pupils are ready for and appropriately covering National Curriculum work in their daily literacy and numeracy sessions. This work is based on the planning framework of the national strategies in these two areas; this is good practice. In both reception classes, significant percentages are already reaching standards that exceed the early learning goals in reading. They can recognise several of the most common words and are beginning to use knowledge of phonics to tackle unfamiliar words. They seek clues in illustrations and self-correct when their reading fails to make sense. Some pupils use text punctuation to bring more understanding and expression to their reading and understand that speech punctuation requires a change of voice between direct speech and the linking narrative. Pupils achieve early learning goals in writing by the end of the reception class. They are developing writing for a range of purposes in the role-play areas, for example writing an order in the *garden centre* and taking down messages from the telephone in the *travel agent's*. Pupils hold and use pencils effectively and most make recognisable letters, which are correctly formed and phonetically plausible.

### Mathematical Development

58. Pupils enter nursery with broadly typical mathematical knowledge and understanding. Most recognise some numbers and many can count to five, sometimes to ten, demonstrating this skill in number rhymes and games. In one nursery lesson, children moved a toy car along a four by four grid in different directions, following instructions given by a classmate. Those giving instructions were able to identify appropriate moves to achieve a specific goal, learning from any mistaken call, which takes them over boundary lines. This lesson was developed further in the information and communication technology suite, where pupils confidently transferred skills using direction keys to move the car icon on a similar grid. In a reception class pupils discovered that numbers of items can be laid out in rows and columns with no change in their total, for example two rows of three or a vertical of six. The more able children in reception classes are coming to understand that they can partition a collection of six or ten items into different groups without changing the total, and that the groupings can be recorded in mathematical symbols and sentences. For example, *five plus one equals six, two plus two plus two equals six*. Pupils understand the language of comparison well and use it effectively – large, larger, etc. They can name and classify two-dimensional shapes by name, size and colour, and are beginning to recognise and produce repeating patterns through printing, cutting and pasting and constructing with linking plastic bricks the sequence they have designed. Most children are achieving the early learning goals and a significant percentage beyond them. Teaching is good.

### Knowledge and understanding of the world

59. Children have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the world when they come into the school and are keen to talk about their experiences. For example, one child talked about his mother's dental treatment with a great deal of drama and descriptions of gore. By the time they come to the end of reception class, they have developed an even wider knowledge and understanding because of the broad range of opportunities the school provides, including very good role-play designed to explore and reflect on ideas developed in the planned curriculum. For example, pupils celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the accession of Queen Elizabeth to the throne and then played out royal roles in their own *throne room*. They learn about cars and simple mechanics and are given good opportunities to look closely at a car and ask questions about why things happen and how things work and what things are used for. They are given the opportunity in reception class to look very closely at growing things and to identify some of the features of plants, for example a tangled root system observed when a plant pot was removed to expose the soil and the long tapering tap-root of a bean plant. They draw on their own experience of growing things at home within their family, one child bringing in his bean plant to show how far it had developed since he planted it with his father a few weeks earlier. Pupils investigate the needs of plants and see the effect on growth when light and water are withdrawn. They grow a range of plants, bedding some of them with a keen eye for floral design. Pupils are also given opportunities to paint and draw plants and flowers with different media. This work contributes to pupils' spiritual development as they look with great admiration at the quality work achieved. In assessment activities children demonstrate what they have learned, for example the names of parts of plants and the parts of a car which help it to move, identifying engine and wheels, steering wheel and ignition key with good judgement.
60. Children's standard of work using computers is good at the end of reception class, but even in nursery they are demonstrating finely controlled skills when using direction keys and clicking onto higher levels of challenge. Assessment records indicate that they are using the mouse well to click and to drag objects when directed. Teaching is good overall but pupils are not given enough opportunity to celebrate the



multicultural world in which they are citizens. There are few indications of community diversity. This is an important shortcoming for all pupils, particularly for those who do not see their own ethnicity and family experience acknowledged in the general curriculum. An exception to this was when one parent brought in saris and helped children celebrate Diwali, but this appears to be an isolated opportunity.

### **Physical Development**

61. The children's development of fine control skills, for example, using scissors, paint-brushes and pencils, progresses well in the Foundation Stage, and most achieve early learning goals by the end of reception. They are able to use a range of small equipment to construct models and to fix materials. During the week of inspection, the children moved imaginatively, safely and with growing confidence in the climbing equipment in the outdoor play areas. They can control and coordinate their bodies when moving and climbing and take care to give others space. Little physical development work was seen during the week of inspection and little direct teaching. Some children use sand and water activities imaginatively, for example to plan a garden like "*Mary, Mary's*", with rows of shells and flowery borders. Others use the water tray to water their flower arrangements, using watering cans and water pumps to good effect.

### **Creative Development**

62. Throughout the Foundation Stage classes, the children are given the opportunity to explore a wide range of media and materials. Pupils develop high levels of creativity within the planned areas of the curriculum, exploring colour, texture, shape and space in two and three-dimensions. In the nursery, for example, the children had produced a car out of large cardboard boxes and enjoyed a wide range of adventures as they developed drama and role-play around this construction. Pupils develop an understanding of how sounds can be produced and repeated in particular patterns. They enjoy singing simple songs from memory, for example, "The Wheels of the Bus" and enjoy the repeating refrain of the conductor calling out "Move along, please!" and show good expertise in rhythm work. They use good levels of imagination in the role-play areas, drawing on their understanding of conventional roles and discourse. Teaching is good. Pupils respond to experiences well.

### **ENGLISH**

63. Standards are well above average in writing and reading and above average in speaking and listening. These findings were reflected in the results of the National Curriculum tests for 2001 and early indications from the 2002 tests are that results are rising. In each case, there is more than the average proportion of pupils with high attainment. This is a similar comparative position to that at the time of the last inspection and the school has kept up with the rate of national improvement, standards having dipped considerably in 1999. In comparison to schools having pupils from similar backgrounds, performance is well above average. The performance of girls and boys is very similar and the few from ethnic-minority backgrounds have standards at least as high as the school's average.
64. Speaking and listening skills are above average overall and there were few instances observed where pupils did not listen and understand well. There were a good number of instances in which pupils of all ages spoke well and were able to describe their thoughts in detail and with good expression. However, there is a minority of pupils who are less confident orally and their progress in speaking is not sufficiently well promoted. For example, in a lesson for pupils of Year 1, the teacher's questions helped to promote a good quality of thinking but only those with ready answers were invited to reply. The teachers' own assessments of the pupils' speaking skills indicate fewer with the expected standard than in other aspects of the subject, although, overall, standards are good because of the good number with high attainment. The school responds to pupils' speaking needs by providing a number of opportunities to talk in the classes, but these are not sufficiently targeted on those less confident pupils.
65. Attainment in reading is well above average with a good degree of very high attainment. The pupils are generally fluent and learning well. This is partly because reading is taught well in literacy lessons and partly because the pupils' progress is monitored and they are encouraged to enjoy books and to move on to more advanced ones as soon appropriate. There are also effective schemes for pupils to be heard to read at home and at school. In the National Curriculum tasks and tests carried out recently, unconfirmed results indicate that the proportion of pupils not reaching the expected standard has fallen and the good proportion with high attainment has been maintained. A few pupils have standards in reading that are close to those expected of eleven-year-olds. The large majority of pupils read with interest and understanding and have good attitudes to books. Most are fluent and interpret the text well using

punctuation to good effect when they read aloud. All the pupils of Year 2 understand about non-fiction books and how to find information from them although they have limited opportunities to use the school's library. The pupils have a good number of opportunities to read or recite to their class. For example, in a good Year 2 lesson, a group effectively presented a re-telling of a well-known story and this was led by a confident and articulate pupil.

66. Those pupils with special educational needs are given extra support in lessons and by regular withdrawal sessions. These are often taught by the coordinator for special educational needs and they provide additional training in phonics and writing that is mostly well related to the targets in their individual education plans. In addition, withdrawal sessions are also provided for pupils with low standards in literacy and these are taught by support assistants and provide learning that is very closely related to a national scheme of work provided for such pupils. Occasionally, the work from this scheme does not meet the needs of all those in the group, but there is good liaison with class teachers who are able to follow it up. The provision in both these sessions is satisfactory and helps the pupils to make good progress and especially to develop strong attitudes to their learning. For example, in one such session the pupils were very keen to complete their writing even when the lesson was ending. However, explanations are sometimes brief and fail to put into context what the pupils are learning. While the work of withdrawal groups is effective in helping pupils to make good progress and teachers are aware that some pupils miss sections of classroom lessons, there is no monitoring of what any individual may miss in the classroom. Hence, the school has no overall evaluation of the impact of withdrawal.
67. Attainment in writing is well above average and a good number of pupils use punctuation and spelling accurately. They have written for a wide range of purposes. The Year 2 pupils show enjoyment in finding ways to influence the reader. Written work is usually neat but teachers do not promote a joined handwriting style regularly enough and consequently handwriting is inconsistent. The pupils enjoy listening to and discussing others' written work. In a lesson for Year 2 pupils, the pupils easily found rhymes and words with the same number of syllables, however, they were less clear about how to write a poem because there had been too little explanation about key differences between prose and poetry. Nevertheless, the pupils were keen to write and share their work, which was good overall. The pupils were intrigued by nonsense poetry and were able to appreciate the mismatch of ideas that some poems exploit. The past work of all the pupils' in writing shows good progress and very good progress by the higher attaining pupils. They increasing use appropriate writing devices and plan stories appropriately with beginnings, middle and endings, effectively using writing conventions, such as characterisation and settings. They have learnt to phrase a letter well. The progress made by the lower attaining pupils is good also but not as fast as that made by others. The range of writing for these pupils is appropriate. Their learning of basic skills, such as punctuation and spelling has taken longer but their work shows good progress from their standards last September. There are still about five per cent of the pupils who have not achieved the expected standard of writing for seven-year-olds.
68. The quality of teaching is good in three out of four lessons. Teachers generally have a good knowledge of the subject and appropriate ways to teach it. They use and teach the correct terms for aspects of text, such as *phoneme* and *connectives*. Lessons are devised to be interesting and are usually planned for different levels of ability with appropriate work. In the weaker lessons there is less attention paid to the pupils' prior achievements and consequently too little difference in the work provided for pupils of different ability. Occasionally, teachers' learning objectives are over-general and provide too little clarity in what the pupils should learn, for example, "*to look at descriptive words*". However, there is usually sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils and class support assistants are used well in helping or leading groups. However, more could be done by such assistants in recording individual pupils' assessments and in making provision for pupils to be more independent in locating the spelling of words for themselves. General personal targets as well as overall attainment targets are set and shared with pupils but these have not been extended to specific learning targets based on the learning objectives identified. Teachers plan well to provide the pupils with a range of writing and reading experiences and there are good opportunities for Year 2 pupils to write at length. There is little identified use of writing and reading skills in other subjects despite the school's use of a scheme that aims to promote literacy awareness in some non-core subjects. Teachers use questioning effectively to promote thinking and improve pupil responses.
69. The teachers are keen to make continual improvements and to raise standards and this attitude has been promoted well by the coordinator. The coordinator and headteacher monitor aspects of planning and review pupils' work. Evaluations have led to an appropriate action plan. The headteacher has effectively monitored teaching throughout the school, but the coordinator has not yet systematically undertaken this work, although there are plans to do so. The school's emphasis on using large books to enable teaching about reading and text conventions has been very successful and this is because of the investment made in

such books and the awareness the teachers have of the National Literacy Strategy, which is used well.

## MATHEMATICS

70. National tests in mathematics for 2001 showed that standards of attainment at the school were above the national average and well above the levels reached by schools of a similar type. National test results also show that there has been a sharp improvement in standards since 1999 and that this improvement has been better than the national trend. There has, over this time, been no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. The findings of the inspection are that this improvement has been maintained and that levels of attainment of pupils aged seven are better than those found nationally. About half the pupils are working at a level higher than expected of pupils aged seven. Pupils with special educational needs, who benefit from individual help in the classroom, and, on occasion, being withdrawn for concentrated help from the coordinator for special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. The school has improved on the good standards found at the time of the last inspection. This improvement can be traced to the clear leadership of the subject. This has ensured the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and has led to a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics throughout the school. Pupils' skills are developed systematically as they move through the school, a process that has been assisted by thorough assessment procedures, which allow individual pupils' progress to be tracked. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has also meant an increase in teachers' knowledge and confidence. This has been particularly marked in the teaching of mental calculation. This is an area that has been targeted in in-service training for teachers. Teacher's expectations of pupils are high and this has been, at least partially, responsible for the high proportion of pupils working at higher levels. The use of homework has also been very effective. This has been carefully planned and introduced, using a scheme devised by the advisory staff of the local education authority. The high level of support from parents has been instrumental in consolidating and extending the pupils' learning.
71. By the time they are seven, higher attaining pupils are able to recall many of the multiplication facts. Most pupils can remember the 2, 5 and 10 multiplication tables. They use terms such as *multiple* and *product* appropriately. A few pupils are confident with the commutative law of multiplication, realising, for example, that if  $4 \times 6 = 24$ ,  $6 \times 4$  must equal 24. Higher attaining pupils understand that division is the inverse of multiplication and are able to divide successfully by 2, 5 and 10. Lower attaining pupils are able to add and subtract mentally, using number facts up to 20. Higher attaining pupils are able to give change from £5 and understand the significance of the decimal point when recording sums of money. Lower attaining pupils are able to use their knowledge of subtraction to give change from amounts like 10p, although some still reverse digits when recording. Pupils, other than those with higher attainment, are still prone to take the larger number from the smaller number in problem solving situations. Many pupils are able to identify lines of symmetry in shapes like equilateral triangles and are able to recognise right angles. They can measure accurately, using standard units such as centimetres and millimetres. Following on from work on computer programs, they are developing their understanding of plotting coordinates in the first quadrant. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 are confidently able to add three numbers, while lower attaining pupils still need structural apparatus to help them with addition sums. Some pupils are able to complete 'more than' questions adding 10 and 20, although only a few are sufficiently competent with place value to complete 'less than' statements using 10 and 20. Pupils with special educational needs 'count on' in ones.
72. The quality of teaching is good and the high standards noted at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. Teachers prepare for their lessons well. They remind pupils of the main thrust of the lesson by writing the aim of the lesson on the top of the page in each child's workbook and, when appropriate, providing tables in their books to show pupils efficient methods of recording and to maximise the use of time. They often reproduce enlarged versions of these tables so that they are able to demonstrate exactly how recordings should be made in clear, easy steps. They prepare resources well so that, for example, Year 2 pupils doing work on giving change have large replica coins so that all pupils can be shown how the process works. They have a neatly organised class shop so that they are able to buy 'real' products before giving change.
73. In the better lessons, teachers increase the progress of all pupils by planning work for different ability groups using the National Strategy as a basis. This planning includes the involvement of learning support assistants. This is particularly helpful for the learning of pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are further helped, in some lessons, by being withdrawn for individual help in small groups. The work of the pupils who are withdrawn is planned to follow that of the rest of the class. The use of

computers to support learning in mathematics is, generally speaking, not yet fully developed but they are well used to help the learning of those pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are generally stimulated and motivated by working with a computer, reserved exclusively for their use, on programs that have been chosen specifically to help their learning.

74. A further benefit of the National Numeracy Strategy has been the use of a plenary session at the end of each lesson. Although there is still a tendency, on occasions, to use these for the children to describe what they have done, they are generally used well by teachers to draw out the main teaching points of the lesson, helping to consolidate and extend their learning. Teachers use good questioning skills in these sessions to get pupils to explain their strategies, thereby giving all pupils an insight into the way problems may be tackled.
75. The use and application of mathematics is acknowledged by the school to be an area that is not so well developed as others are but some investigative work takes place. Year 1 pupils, for example, develop their measuring and data handling skills by investigating whether taller pupils always have bigger feet. Year 2 pupils investigate number patterns using dominoes.
76. Teachers have good methods for assessing pupils' learning. They gain immediate knowledge of their learning by getting them to show their answers, using number fans or individual whiteboards. They mark pupils' work well, offering encouragement, and, particularly for lower attaining pupils, helpful advice on how to improve. Individual pupils' progress is tracked carefully but this assessment is not, as yet, used to set pupils individual targets for learning. Test results are analysed to find areas of weakness in learning but the progress of different groups of pupils: boys and girls, pupils of different abilities or from different ethnic backgrounds is not analysed.
77. The use of numeracy skills to support learning in other areas of the curriculum has not yet been fully developed. There is some evidence of data handling being used in science lessons but this tends to involve graphing of information not related to other learning such as pupils' preferences.

## SCIENCE

78. Standards of attainment are above those expected nationally for pupils that are aged seven. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in lessons by assistants and make good progress. The school has maintained the above average standards found at the time of the last inspection. There have been some changes in provision since the last inspection; the most notable is the introduction of a detailed programme of work based on the latest national guidance. This has helped to ensure a consistent approach to the teaching of science throughout the school and also that the pupils' skills are systematically developed. The school has adopted a lively approach to the teaching of science, supporting work in the classroom with visits to local museums and places of interest as well as inviting outside speakers into the school. This adds interest and variety to the subject and gives access to equipment and materials it would not be possible to use in the classroom. For example, Year 1 pupils study forces on a trip to a science museum and contrast natural and unnatural material as well as looking at growing plants on a visit to a local country park. Recent involvement in a major, commercially sponsored, science project not only provided the school with much needed resources but gave the opportunity for staff to review and improve their approach to promoting skills of scientific enquiry by working in classes alongside advisory staff employed by the local education authority.
79. By the time they are seven, pupils have a good knowledge of the programme of study. High attaining pupils use terms such as *amphibian* and *herbivore* and can define the characteristics of an insect. There is a range of understanding, however, illustrated when one pair of Year 2 pupils suggested that a shrew was an insect. In the same lesson, a high attaining pupil was able to deduce the nature of a crustacean by researching material in books. Pupils cover a good range of work looking at forces including friction; how an electric circuit is constructed; how heating and cooling affect the change of state of materials; and what constitutes a healthy diet. Pupils in Year 1 are able to name the parts of a plant and conduct experiments into whether a magnet can work through other materials and which materials would be suitable for use in making an umbrella.
80. Pupils are given opportunities to conduct personal research using books and the Internet and this process is well introduced. There is a practical, experimental approach to science at the school but opportunities for pupils to develop their scientific enquiry skills through investigation are limited. A learning support assistant largely sets up experiments and opportunities for pupils to choose their own equipment and

materials and to consider the nature of 'fair testing' are missed. The school does have resources to aid the development of scientific enquiry, including a very useful conservation area, which is being increasingly used by the pupils. The attitude of pupils to science is good and is a help to their learning. For example, Year 2 pupils using the conservation area are interested and excited but remain focused on their task and behave sensibly and well, working together in groups and pairs. Pupils are asked to work together in pairs and small groups on a lot of occasions in science and generally do this well, showing a good level of cooperation and maturity. Work in science makes a positive contribution to the social development of the pupils.

81. The teaching is generally good. Teachers use the programme of work to plan their work thoroughly, setting clear learning objectives in the lesson. In most lessons, the main objective is shared with the children and, in some cases, the teacher writes it on the top of the page in the pupil's workbook. In good lessons, the teachers continually refer to this objective so that the pupils have a clear understanding of what they are trying to achieve. To assist the achievement of the objective, teachers prepare well. For example, in a lesson where the class was using the Internet to find information about mini-beasts, the teacher had prepared a worksheet to guide the children's research. By previously studying the web site, she was sure that all the information asked for on the worksheet could be found. She was therefore in a position to immediately assess the success of the pupils' research and the pupils did not become unnecessarily confused or frustrated. Good questioning by the teachers encourages and challenges the pupils to think beyond the literal facts. In the same lesson, the teacher asked "How do the hooks on the end of their legs help them in their environment?" and "What will conditions be like under the trees? Why does this suit worms?" Teachers mark pupils' work, frequently offering encouraging comments, but although they often write the objective of the work on the top of a page, there are few examples of advice or questions on how the pupils might improve their work or how they might achieve the objective.
82. The coordinator has had few recent opportunities to monitor standards in teaching or learning and this remains an area for development. Information and communication technology is beginning to be used to support learning. Numeracy skills are developed, particularly data handling skills, with pupils making graphs of information. Often this information is rather irrelevant, for example, favourite snacks in the class, rather than something that has more scientific significance. Assessment procedures have yet to be standardised throughout the school so that the progress of learning of individuals and groups of pupils can be tracked and this is an area for development.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

83. No lessons were observed due to the time tabling arrangements. Little work was available for review and consequently no judgements can be made about standards or teaching in the subject. A small amount of work has been retained and stored in pupils' records but this is mostly undated and gives little indication of current standards. However, a small number of displays were available representing the work of some of the older pupils. The main one, in the entrance hall, indicates some very careful observational drawing leading to collage work of good quality. There are also other pieces of work, such as paintings in the style of *Picasso* and some experimental paintings inspired by music. The stored work includes typical paintings of houses, some good chalk portraits and tie-dyed flowers. While these indicate some good standards, there are too few to be representative of standards overall.
84. Teachers say they are confident in teaching the subject and the guidance of a nationally recognised scheme of work is used. An annual visit enriches the pupils' experience by introducing the use of natural materials to make pictures. The school has a good number of reproductions from which to help pupils begin to appraise works of art. There is currently no system by which the coordinator can evaluate standards. However, a simple assessment sheet is about to be introduced. The coordinator manages a budget for the subject and replenishes consumable items maintaining a good stock. There are other plans to extend the curriculum, monitor learning and invite more artists into the school. However, the subject currently lacks a strategy for evaluation, although a new draft policy has been written but this insufficiently identifies how progression in skills will be taught.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

85. No lessons were available for observation and there was little evidence of standards overall. No judgements can be made about standards or the quality of teaching. However, there is evidence of pupils' past work in portfolios. Some of this is of good quality, although there is insufficient to indicate the overall

standards in the school. This work includes some pictures with moving parts, neat glove puppets, and cardboard vehicles for which pupils of Year 2 had learnt to make axles and join them to a box. These were very similar indicating some teaching of a method of joining but limited choices for the pupils, who were allowed to decorate the vehicles in different ways. The pupils have also designed and printed tee-shirts. Such examples indicate that a range of techniques has been used and that problems have been solved. In some examples, such as weaving with natural materials, it is not clear that the teaching had sufficiently emphasised the requirements of the programme of study in this subject or in art and design.

86. Teachers say that they have lacked confidence in teaching the subject but that the introduction of a nationally recognised scheme of work has helped. The coordinator has run workshop sessions for staff and hopes to extend this form of professional development. There are currently no formal systems for monitoring pupils' standards, but a simple assessment sheet is soon to be introduced. Monitoring of what is taught has not been regular or rigorous and improvement is planned. There is a need to promote the key elements of the subject separately from those of art and design. An additional room has helped the school's provision and resources are good in their range and quality. They are well stored and accessible and include resources for food technology.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

87. Only one lesson was observed and this was for pupils of Year 1. A small amount of pupils' past work was available and by talking to pupils and reviewing displays, the evidence indicates that standards are satisfactory and similar to those at the time of the last inspection. The pupils gain a sound understanding about different places around the world but their understanding, knowledge and skills in mapping are less secure. In the lesson observed, pupils with special educational needs were supported well and helped to take a full part in the lesson, which involved visiting local streets.
88. There is little evidence to indicate that pupils are gaining skills such as those connected with mapping and using different sources of evidence in their learning. However, pupils of Year 2 know about globes and maps of the world and have learnt a little about a few different countries either from their own experience of holidays or from a specific week that the school runs. In this, each classroom provides an experience of a different country and its people. Pupils remember this well, but their memory is largely about the culture, costume and ways of life and less about other geographical features. For example, they could not remember the shape of India. In the Year 1 lesson observed, the aim was to find ways in which the area could be a safe place and the focus was on road signs and safety and missed opportunities to relate them to other geographical features.
89. The teaching is satisfactory but there are missed opportunities to help the pupils' progress in the development of skills and understanding. Lessons are planned to be interesting and relevant and help the pupils to be well motivated, often through practical tasks. Lessons are carefully organised, for example, in the Year 1 lesson, the pupils were divided into groups and there were several adult helpers to support the local visit. However, despite the guidance offered in the school's policy, the skills and understanding of key geographical features are not taught sufficiently well. For example, in the small amount of recorded work for Year 2 pupils, there was evidence of work about Mexico and some mapping work about the Island of Struay but the work indicated that the pupils had not been taught about mapping symbols and that they confused elevations and plans.
90. The policy is helpful in providing guidance about the importance of the different parts of the National Curriculum programme of study, and teachers use a nationally recognised scheme of work. However, the topic approach used does not ensure that progression in skills and understanding the key ideas of the subject are sufficiently taught. The coordinator ensures that the classes of the same age group are provided with similar learning and monitors planning. However, since there is no monitoring of lessons, the teaching of skills and understanding is not well enough evaluated. While there are some assessments made at the ends of topics these are not used enough in tracking the development of pupils' skills and understanding. The coordinator is correct in thinking that more staff development is needed to overcome this problem.

## **HISTORY**

91. Because of time tabling arrangements, it was possible to observe only a limited number of lessons. However scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and discussions with pupils confirm that

standards are in line with those expected of pupils aged seven. Pupils with special educational needs, helped by having special tasks set for them and having individual help from learning support assistants, make satisfactory progress. This was the situation at the time of the last inspection. There have, however, been some changes, the most notable of which is the introduction of a detailed programme of work, based on the latest national guidance. This has helped to ensure a consistent approach to the teaching of history throughout the school and also that the pupils' skills are systematically developed. The school has supported this with visits to local museums and places of interest in an attempt to bring the subject to life and give pupils' studies more relevance. For example, Year 2 pupils make a visit as part of their study of the work of Florence Nightingale and are able to handle artefacts associated with her work, as well as engaging in role playing activities. They are also able, as part of their work on Remembrance, to make poppies, which are used to make a wreath and then lay the wreath on a replica of the Cenotaph, an act which they accompany with a two minute silence. Work in history makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. The school also makes good use of special events such as the Queen's Jubilee to give the pupils relevant experiences. As well as role playing activities, they develop their sense of chronology through the study of events during the Queen's reign.

92. Pupils in Year 2 can remember good details about the life and work of Florence Nightingale and about the circumstances surrounding the Great Fire of London. Most pupils are able to produce a piece of independent writing recounting the main facts. They know a fair amount about the Tudors; for example, that Henry VIII liked eating swan. They have a satisfactory sense of chronology and are able to put historical events in the correct order. Pupils in Year 1 develop a sense of chronology through use of timelines and by referring events to those of their own lives. They are able to sequence domestic artefacts chronologically.
93. The quality of teaching in the few lessons seen was satisfactory. Lessons are well planned, with reference to the learning objectives listed in the programme of work, and contain different activities for pupils of different abilities. Having individual help from learning support assistants helps the lower attaining pupils. Progress is helped by the good class management techniques employed by the teachers, ensuring pupils are purposeful and work hard. Teachers make good use of timelines to promote a sense of chronology, moving from the known to new information. Work set is often challenging and, in good lessons, teachers promote learning with thoughtful questioning. *"What does the family having a coal scuttle tell us about life at that time?"* asks a teacher of Year 1 pupils. However, a lack of suitable artefacts handicaps learning in some lessons. The school needs to increase its supply of relevant artefacts, either by acquiring them or through a loan service.
94. Assessment arrangements have not been fully introduced and, at the moment, consist largely of samples of collating pupils' work. The school needs to record the progress of pupils as they acquire skills and understanding, to assist the systematic development of these skills.
95. The timetable has been arranged so that history is taught in blocks of two or three weeks. This allows pupils to 'immerse' themselves in the subject and to follow up to educational visits but it also means that there are long gaps between blocks of lessons and this does not help the consolidation of skills or learning.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

96. Standards of attainment are in line with those expected nationally of pupils who are aged seven. Pupils make, at least, satisfactory progress. This includes pupils with special educational needs and information and communication technology is used well to support the learning of such pupils; they have their own computer and receive good quality tuition. They generally make good progress. There is little difference between the progress of boys and girls. Although standards have not improved since the last inspection, there have been several improvements in provision and although these improvements have not been in place long enough to have had a noticeable impact on standards, the school is now in the position to make significant improvements. The subject is well led and this good leadership has meant a considerable improvement in resources, in particular the provision of a computer suite. This allows for whole-class teaching and means that pupils can be shown what to do in steps that are clear and precise. Staff training has meant an improvement in the knowledge and confidence of teachers and means that all classes now have regular tuition. Although resources have improved, the subject is not yet fully resourced, which means that the control element of the subject is not yet fully covered and this remains an area for development. The school does not yet have a full range of software, which means that the subject is not yet fully used to support learning in other areas of the curriculum, although there are examples of this

happening. For example, Year 2 pupils use the internet to conduct research into the nature of mini-beasts and Year 1 pupils support their work in mathematics by using a program to design symmetrical patterns. At the moment, there is limited evidence of computers in classrooms being used to support the work in lessons or to consolidate skills learnt during lessons in the computer suite.

97. By the time they are seven most pupils are able to draft written work on the computer. They are able to edit, save and retrieve their work, although they do not, at the moment, save their work into individual folders. They are able to use a computer to design a logo. Year 2 pupils make a design for a T-shirt. They are able to use appropriate clipart to make their work more attractive and interesting. For example, a Year 2 class produces illustrated stories in a concertina book style. They are starting to use the Internet to access information, although they are not yet able to e-mail. Younger pupils in Year 1 are able to produce captions using different fonts, sizes and colours. They are able to produce colourful pictures and patterns.
98. Teaching is usually good and this represents an improvement on the last inspection. Teachers now have sound subject knowledge and they present this to the pupils in clear, small steps, which allow most pupils to follow instructions and perform a variety of functions on a computer. Teachers show good class management skills and this, accompanied by the good level of resourcing and the positive ethos in the school, allows pupils to work together in pairs. In some classes higher attaining pupils are deliberately paired with lower attaining pupils so that they might encourage and help each other. Teachers also make good use of the skilled learning support assistants to help the progress of individual pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. Teachers generally help the learning of pupils by preparing well, so, for example, copies of the instructions necessary to perform operations are available and clearly displayed.
99. The computer suite is a very good resource but at the moment, each class is timetabled to use it only once during the week. This means that it is unused for periods of time. It would help the consolidation of learning and the use of the subject to support learning in other areas of the curriculum if classes used the suite more frequently. At the moment, there are no assessment arrangements to track the progress of individuals or groups of pupils and this remains an area for development.

## MUSIC

100. Standards in the two Year 1 lessons observed were satisfactory. There was no evidence available concerning the standards of pupils at the end of Year 2. The school recognises that provision for the subject is weak because there is too little expertise amongst the teachers since the previous coordinator left the school. The pupils of Year 1 know the names of a number of percussion instruments and have a basic understanding of how to play them. They can keep a simple pulse and follow a short rhythm, but are not aware of the difference between these. In the lessons observed the teachers did not know this either. Pupils handle instruments with care and can use them to produce an appropriate effect but they have not been taught how to handle them in order to play them well.
101. Pupils with special educational needs make progress that is similar to others, although, on occasions, they miss opportunities to play instruments when they are withdrawn from lessons. On other occasions, they are supported by classroom learning assistants who help them take a full part in the lesson.
102. The pupils' singing is satisfactory and a majority sing in tune but are not conscious of how they could improve the pitch and quality of their notes. Other pupils of Year 1 are able to recognise a nursery rhyme simply from a clapped rhythm by the teacher. They can also invent a short rhythm in response to the teacher. The pupils are taught some of these skills while in the reception classes.
103. In one of the lessons observed the pupils learnt little and the teaching was unsatisfactory lacking sufficiently clear intentions, because of a lack of understanding about the subject. In the other, the teaching was satisfactory because the pupils consolidated their skills in rhythm work well. The pupils' behaviour is generally satisfactory even when there is a lack of clarity about what is being taught. Behaviour is sometimes good and the pupils of Year 1 demonstrated a good degree of collaboration in preparing rhythms to play to the class. Learning is often slow.
104. The subject is currently coordinated by the headteacher. There has been a small amount of professional development for teachers and the introduction of a published scheme was intended to help teachers lacking sufficient knowledge of the subject. However, progress in gaining skills and understanding is limited by the teachers' interpretation of the suggested lessons in the published scheme of work. Radio



lessons are sometimes used. Fifteen pupils have lessons in playing the violin, Year 2 pupils learn the recorder, and the curriculum is enriched by a number of events in which the pupils perform such as a Christmas concert and assemblies. The resources available are satisfactory and there is a sound selection of recorded music for listening and appraising. However, there are few books that are suitable for pupils to research a musical interest available in the library. Provision for the subject has not been maintained since the last inspection and this is largely due to staff changes.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105. Standards of attainment are in line with those expected nationally, for pupils who are aged seven. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily. There is no difference in standards between boys and girls. The picture was much the same at the last inspection. However, the school has made an effort to improve the children's understanding of the effects of exercise on the body, an area which was criticised before. This has been linked to work in science and has led to an increase in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Children in Year 1 know that the heart beats faster after exercise and higher attaining pupils know that this leads to an increase in the supply of oxygen to the muscles. The use of physical education to support learning in other areas has been extended to dance, which is now directly linked to work in literacy lessons. This has led to an increase in teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm for dance. Training in national initiatives like the *Top Play Scheme* has led to an improvement in teacher knowledge and confidence and means that pupils are offered a wide range of games activities.
106. By the time they are seven, pupils are able to demonstrate a range of imaginative movements. They are able to warm up in pairs or small groups following each other's movements. They are able to pass a ball in a variety of ways, including a chest pass. The majority of pupils are not yet as good at catching, tending to hug the ball into the body rather than taking it in a manner which allows them to move it quickly. High attaining pupils are able to play passing and catching games but many do not have a sufficient level of skill to make this possible. Year 1 pupils work enthusiastically in gymnastics through actions involving stretching and balancing. They show increasing control in balancing and are able to hold a position and incorporate this into a sequence of movements including rolls, turns and jumps. Most pupils are able to transfer a sequence of movements from floor to apparatus but because they are not rigorously challenged, their movements are often imprecise.
107. The quality of teaching is consistently sound. Teachers dress suitably for lessons, emphasising the importance of the subject. The example is followed by pupils and few, if any, pupils are excluded from activities because of a lack of suitable kit. Teachers show good class control. This results in a good pace to lessons and pupils helping their learning by concentrating well even in difficult circumstances. An example occurred when pupils in a Year 2 class, taking part in a games lesson on the field. They continued to work hard and focus on the task at hand, despite it being a very hot day and a demonstration lesson, given by an outside agency to older pupils from another school, reduced the space available and was potentially distracting. Teachers are keenly aware of health and safety issues and are able to link these to the effects of exercise on the body. Pupils in the same lesson wore peaked caps to protect their heads and were aware, because of prior discussion, why they were doing this. A common weakness is that teachers do not successfully use evaluation to encourage pupils to reach their potential. Teachers make use of pupil demonstration but frequently do not point out what the good features of the demonstration are or how the performance could have been improved. Even when points for improvement are mentioned, pupils are not then given the opportunity to improve their own performance by practising themselves.
108. Resources for physical education are of good quality and adequate to support the curriculum. The hall is only just of sufficient size and when large apparatus is used, conditions are slightly cramped and do not allow free movement around the room. Although suitable time is allocated to physical education each week, this is, for most classes, allocated in one fairly long lesson. This means that time is not always maximised, young children can become over-tired and lose concentration by the end of the session. There are, at the moment, no arrangements for assessing the progress of individual pupils as they move through the school. This remains an area for development.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

109. During the last inspection the school was grant-maintained and comprehensively followed the Dorset Agreed Syllabus for the subject. This also provided daily acts of collective worship, so the school was

meeting statutory requirements. Since then, the school has been restored to Bexley local authority with foundation status and now is following this authority's Agreed Syllabus and meets all of its expectations. It is not, however, meeting statutory requirements to provide a daily act of collective worship. The coordinator has worked with the Bexley religious education advisor to plan the curriculum over a three-year rolling programme to ensure that planning corresponds to the detail of the syllabus. The school has adopted an unusual structure. The coordinator teaches the five National Curriculum classes together in the hall once a week. Individual class teachers pick up from this shared experience to develop the work through follow-up tasks in their own classrooms. The school has adopted this way of working to "re-energise" the curriculum, to support less experienced colleagues and to exploit the considerable expertise of the coordinator.

110. By the age of seven pupils' attainment is in line with the expectation of the local syllabus. They learn about Christian and Easter celebrations well, focus on one other religion, Judaism, and its high *holydays* in great detail. Comparisons and contrasts are made between the way people of different faiths conduct their lives, the sacred writings, places of worship and the important precepts that guide behaviour of the faithful. Children also have good knowledge of Bible stories and understand the meanings beyond the literal. They explore the ideas in the stories of Daniel, Ruth, and Samson, and understand their enduring messages for people of faith. They are also learning about Christ's teaching in the New Testament. When the school focuses on Judaism, it also introduces children to important dates in the religious calendars of different faiths, and this is particularly important in the multicultural and multi-faith community of which the children are members.
111. During the week of inspection the quality of teaching was generally satisfactory, though the whole-school lesson on one of a sequence of lessons on Judaism was good, the teacher drawing on a good range of artefacts to enhance the learning. The children benefited from a visit from a local rabbi who had introduced them to the customs and practices of Jewish families and of the traditional ceremonies of the synagogue. In the follow-up activities work covered in two parallel Year 2 classes was reduced to a fairly simple colouring and technology activity where pupils constructed a three-dimensional ark for the scrolls and decorated it beautifully to reflect its importance. Unfortunately, this work was completed without the benefit of visual resources, for example books, posters and photographs, which would have allowed pupils to decorate their work with closely observed traditional Jewish designs and appropriate Hebrew symbols.
112. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They were clearly inspired by the visit from the rabbi and recalled details of her presentation with great interest. The coordinator displayed some of the photographs and resources from that visit in the corridor. Pupils would have benefited from just such an array of artefacts in the classrooms.