

INSPECTION REPORT

SPARROW FARM INFANTS SCHOOL

Felton

LEA area: Hounslow

Unique reference number: 102499

Interim headteacher: Mrs L Simmonds

Reporting inspector: Mr F Carruthers
21285

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 June 2002

Inspection number: 194730

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 7

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Denham Road
Felton
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Middlesex

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs H Fullick

Date of previous inspection: June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21285	Mr F Carruthers	Registered inspector	English Art and design Information and communication technology Geography Physical education English as an additional language Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve?
9399	Mr R Watts	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
11419	Mrs J Underwood	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics History Music Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23453	Mrs C Cressey	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the London borough of Hounslow and has 161 pupils in the main school, which is very similar to the number at the time of the last inspection, and 35 children attending part time in the nursery. The pupils come from a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Just over 20 per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, including Indian, Pakistani, Black African, and Caribbean and there are a few refugee children. Most of these pupils are learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average. However, levels of social deprivation locally, as measured by a number of statistical indicators, are above the national average. There is an above average proportion (29 per cent) of pupils on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs. Two pupils have statements of special educational need; this is average. The range of special needs covers hearing impairment, behavioural difficulties, speech, and moderate learning difficulties. On entry to the nursery, the range of children's attainment is below average overall and a small number of children have little or no English. About 14 per cent of pupils joined the school after the reception year or left during that time. The school is designated as a community infant school and is involved in a number of local and national initiatives promoting good standards and parental links. It has gained the *Basic Skills Quality Mark*, as well as a *School Achievement Award* from the Department for Education and Employment for improvement in performance between 1997 and 2000. At the time of the inspection, an interim headteacher was managing the school. Governors have made a permanent appointment, to start in September 2002.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a good education for its pupils, because pupils achieve well and have very good attitudes to learning, the quality of teaching is good and the school is well led and managed. In addition, improvement since the last inspection has been good. Because the cost of educating a pupil at the school is very high compared to schools nationally, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of provision, including teaching, in the Foundation Stage, that is the nursery and reception classes, is very good, and means the children make a very good start to their education.
- The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good and this, together with the good range of learning opportunities the pupils have, leads to the pupils achieving well.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the pupils make good progress; provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is very good and these pupils make very good progress.
- The provision for the pupils' personal development and the way the staff look after the pupils are strengths that result in pupils having very good attitudes to learning and forming good relationships.
- There are very good links with parents and the community.
- The school is very well led and managed by the interim headteacher and she is well supported by the deputy headteacher, senior management team and governors.

What could be improved

- Standards of pupils' writing.

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 June 1997. Good progress has been made on all the key issues identified at the last inspection. As a result, planning for the various subjects of the curriculum is now good, all lessons are well planned and all subjects meet the requirements laid down in the National Curriculum. Systems for checking the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils are now good. The governing body is well involved in planning for the school's development. In addition to the key issues, standards have improved in reading, writing and several subjects, such as art and design, and geography since the time of the last inspection; the quality of teaching has improved and the good links with parents have been improved.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
reading	B	B	D	C
writing	A	B	C	B
mathematics	C	E	E	D

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

For the purposes of this report, inspectors have changed the benchmark category comparing schools to reflect the above average levels of social deprivation described at the start of this summary.

Pupils who are at the school the longest achieve well over time and from the moment of admission to the nursery the children make good progress, so that almost all achieve the early learning goals in the nationally agreed areas of learning at the end of the reception year. Almost all then go on to achieve the nationally expected levels or higher in reading, writing, mathematics and science in tests and assessments at the end of Year 2. Pupils learning English as an additional language achieve very well and, from starting school with little or no English, attain the levels expected of all pupils by the time they transfer to Year 3 in the junior school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and most achieve the expected Level 2. There is, however, a minority of pupils who join the school late, for instance in Year 1, who have not caught up by the end of Year 2 and some do not achieve the expected levels. Standards since the time of the previous inspection have fluctuated, resulting from variations in the different year groups. They have risen in reading and writing. From a scrutiny of pupils' work, it is evident that standards in reading and mathematics are satisfactory. Standards in writing are below average and no pupil achieved a higher level in the latest national tests in writing; this is an area for improvement. Pupils cover all aspects of reading, writing, and mathematics well and they have developed good skills of problem-solving in mathematics. Pupils are confident speaking in class and they have acquired good skills of tackling unfamiliar words in reading. Standards are below average overall in science. Almost all pupils achieved the expected level in recent assessments but few achieved higher than that. Attainment is average in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology (ICT), physical education and religious education. No judgement was possible in music.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very enthusiastic about school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils pay good attention in lessons and listen to their teachers. They play with others in the playground very well.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are responsible around school and have very good relationships with staff and each other.
Attendance	Satisfactory. There was little unauthorised absence last year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching is good overall and leads to the pupils achieving well over time. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is very good and means the children get off to a flying start. Staff in these classes have a very good grasp of

the learning that children in this age range need and they have very good relationships with them. All areas of learning appropriate to the age group are taught well. In Years 1 and 2, teaching in English and mathematics is good and staff make effective use of the national strategies for teaching. Teachers use the pupils' skills in these subjects well in other subjects, such as science, geography, history, and religious education. The teaching of basic skills is good and this helps the pupils to achieve well over time. This includes those with special educational needs, who receive good support in English and mathematics lessons from learning support assistants. Pupils learning English as an additional language receive very good support from the specialist teacher in small group situations. This teacher also provides help and advice to class teachers in their planning, so that these pupils do well and are fully included in all lessons. Teaching is good in most other subjects and is never less than satisfactory. No teaching is unsatisfactory. As a result, pupils' learning is good. Pupils put a good amount of effort into their work; the pace of learning is good; they concentrate well; and they develop a good awareness of how well they are doing and what their targets for learning are in lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Throughout the age range, there are good opportunities for learning. There is a good range of activities outside lessons for pupils, especially those in Year 2, to enjoy. There are very beneficial links with local schools, the parent and toddler group and the junior school on the same site.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. All elements of the provision are good and the pupils' individual education plans provide good guidance for making progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Individual and groups plans for pupils are very effective and help the pupils to achieve well very quickly.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	All aspects are very good. Provision is a key strength of the school. The school takes particular care to support the pupils' personal development and this is evident in the quality of whole-school occasions such as assemblies, and the way the staff create opportunities for pupils to become mature and responsible, and to understand the cultures and beliefs of others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Procedures that encourage good attendance are particularly effective. Systems to promote good behaviour, and to check on how well the pupils are progressing in school subjects and in the pupils' personal development are all good.

There are very good links with parents. The school supplies very thorough information about how well the pupils are doing and through its many community projects, provides very good support for parents which helps them both in their own lives and in supporting the children in the early years of their school life.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership by the interim headteacher is very good. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher, senior management team and governors. The school's aims and values are clearly expressed in the day-to-day running of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors meet all statutory requirements and have a clear overview of the school. They provide effective support for the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Staff and governors take a full part in analysing information about how well pupils are doing and how the school is performing compared with other schools.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall. Specific grants, such as those for pupils with special educational needs and those for developing links with the community, are good. Senior staff and governors consult with relevant agencies and compare the effectiveness of services and resources satisfactorily.

The quality and deployment of teaching staff are good. There is effective, full-time support from classroom assistants in the nursery and reception classes, but in Years 1 and 2, support assistants work part-time and this means that in many lessons, there is little or no support available. This is a point for improvement. The accommodation, including

the spacious grounds, is very attractively kept, but Year 2 pupils are taught in mobile classrooms, which have shortcomings. Levels of learning resources are satisfactory overall and are good in the Foundation Stage as well as for English and mathematics. The library is awkwardly placed in the entrance hall and requires some upgrading.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
Very strong support was evident in all aspects of the school. For instance: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the school is very led and managed;• teaching is good;• the pupils make good progress and behaviour is good;• parents feel comfortable approaching the school and are kept well informed about their children's progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nothing of general significance emerged from the parents' meeting and the parents' questionnaires.

The inspectors agree with the positive comments of parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The overall attainment on entry to the nursery is below average, and a proportion of those admitted are children who are at the very early stages of learning English as an additional language. The children make good progress so that on entry to the reception classes, attainment is closer to average. Results of assessments over the years show fluctuations between year groups as to the number of children achieving well above the average score and well below this score. Throughout the Foundation Stage, which comprises the nursery and reception year, teaching is very good and this results in good progress through to the end of the reception year. Almost all the children are achieving the early learning goals in all six areas of learning by then. Some are working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum and one high-attaining child is working at an even higher level. Children learning English as an additional language make good progress as a result of the very good provision available from the specialist teacher, working in close collaboration with the class teachers.
2. The good progress that the children make in the Foundation Stage continues when they move into Years 1 and 2. In reading, writing and mathematics, by the end of Year 2, almost all the pupils who have been at the school since nursery or the reception year reach the nationally expected levels of attainment, and some do better than this. Of the nine pupils in the current Year 2 who have not achieved expected levels in national tests and assessments carried out recently, six joined the school late, in either Year 1 or Year 2. The remaining pupils are on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils who, when they started in school, were at the early stages of learning English as an additional language, make very good progress. They achieved expected levels or above in reading, writing and mathematics, and this is the result of the very good specialist teaching and the fact that the pupils are fully included with all their classmates in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and very few do not reach expected levels by the end of Year 2. This is because the teachers carefully plan for them to achieve the targets in their individual education plans. The special educational needs co-ordinator, class teachers and learning support assistants provide high quality support for pupils in English and mathematics lessons.
3. In the current Year 2, standards in English are below average overall. In speaking and listening skills, and in reading, standards are average. In writing, standards are below average. Last year, standards in writing were higher than in reading and this reflects the different make-up of year groups. Overall, standards when compared to similar schools were average in reading and above average in writing. Standards of spelling are rising but are still below the average of most schools. No pupils achieved above the level expected at the end of Year 2 in writing in the recent national tests, and this is an area for improvement.
4. In mathematics, standards are average, and nine out of ten pupils in the current Year 2 achieved the nationally expected level in recent tests. The same percentage of pupils achieved the expected levels as did in 2001. When this is broken into its component parts, there has been a definite improvement since last year. The percentage of pupils achieving well at the expected level or above has significantly increased. Since the last inspection, when standards matched the national average, standards rose and then fell back in 2000 and 2001.
5. Standards in reading, writing, and mathematics have fluctuated since the last inspection, reflecting variations in the range of attainment between year groups. Overall, they have risen in reading and mathematics, but the priority for the school is to improve standards in writing, and this is featured prominently in the current school development plan. The school did not achieve its own very ambitious target for 97 per cent of pupils to achieve the nationally expected level in all three subjects because of the proportion of pupils, 15 per cent, who started at the school late and did not catch up sufficiently well. All these pupils are on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs.
6. In science, in comparison to their prior attainment, most pupils achieve well and make good progress, building on what they learnt in the Foundation Stage. Standards since the last inspection have fluctuated. For instance in 2001, the overall results of teacher assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 were well below the national average and below those of similar schools. Inspection findings indicate standards have risen and are below average overall in the present Year 2. Nine out of every ten pupils have attained the expected level but few pupils have reached the higher level. Given the above average level of pupil mobility and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and of those whose first language is not English, the standards represent good achievement. The trend is one of improvement because of good teaching and a well-planned curriculum, which

provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to develop investigative skills. A shortcoming is the lack of additional classroom support for science. This would help all pupils, especially lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, to make even more progress and would influence the overall standards the school is achieving.

7. There have been significant improvements in standards in information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, and religious education. They are now average, when they were previously below average. Pupils' progress is good in ICT and in art and design, and satisfactory in religious education. This is because teachers' expertise has improved with effective training, their planning is now good, and pupils have the opportunity to build on the skills and knowledge they developed in the Foundation Stage. This good progress is the result of concerted effort by the school to implement successfully its post-inspection action plan.
8. Pupils' attainment is average overall in design and technology, geography, history and physical education, and these findings are similar to those at the last inspection. All pupils make good progress. No judgement was possible in music.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils have very good attitudes to school. Parents who responded in the questionnaire all agreed that their children liked school and this is borne out in conversations with pupils. They make perceptive comments about the caring and family atmosphere of the school and clearly feel secure. They enjoy learning because, as one said, 'Teachers make learning fun'. Children in the nursery and reception classes are growing in confidence and make the most of activities provided for them. Teachers can start lessons promptly because pupils are keen to get on. During lesson introductions, they sit attentively and often compete for their upraised hand to be seen and to give the answer to questions. They then move quickly to start their individual or group work because they enjoy it and are keen to learn more. They concentrate well and work hard to solve problems. They are enthusiastic about doing things outside the classroom, taking a strong part in extra-curricular activities.
10. The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have the opportunity to discuss the reasons behind school rules and fully accept their validity. In almost all lessons, only a quiet word is occasionally necessary to keep pupils focused on their activity and generally, teachers need to spend very little time on this and can concentrate fully on their teaching. Even in the reception classes, children are becoming well disciplined in putting up their hands to answer questions and not interrupting when others are talking. Good behaviour has a positive impact on the good rate of learning seen in the majority of lessons. In a few lessons, where the teacher's skills at pupil management are less than fully secure, some pupils indulge in minor misbehaviour and this slows the learning of all. Occasionally at the end of sessions, pupils become tired and irritable. Their behaviour as they move around the school and in assemblies is good and the very youngest children display appropriate discipline for the occasion. Behaviour in the dining hall is very good and the meal gives pupils good experience of social interaction. Behaviour in the playground is very good with all pupils showing consideration for others. There were no exclusions of pupils from the school last year. Pupils treat books, resources, and the property of others with great care.
11. Pupils with special educational needs behave well. They listen to their teachers and the learning support assistants carefully and depend a great deal on the sensitive yet firm approach of their helpers. This specialised attention enables pupils to concentrate, complete their work and be fully involved in lessons. Pupils work well in their groups and are positive about their work. They achieve their learning objectives because the adults consistently reinforce specific targets so that the pupils know what to do to improve.
12. The personal development of pupils and relationships within the school are very good. Pupils willingly accept responsibilities offered and, on many occasions, volunteer to clear up or help around the school. In class, the strong rapport between adults and pupils is a very noticeable feature of almost all lessons. Pupils are confident that the teachers are there to do their best for them and they, in turn, respond by giving of their best. Pupils of all ages play well together in the playground and older ones respect the needs of younger pupils. They are aware of the multiethnic nature of their school and commented proudly on how well they get on together. This was very evident in the make-up of the spontaneous friendship and social groups observed. They recognise that there are many different ways of life and beliefs and, although they are somewhat confused about the details of these differences, they are secure in the principle that everyone has the right to choose their own way of life, within the constraints of consideration to others. No incidents of racism, bullying, or social exclusion were observed during the inspection. Pupils confirmed that although there were occasional problems, incidents were handled with sensitivity and rigour by the school.

13. The overall attendance last year was satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average for primary schools. There was little unauthorised absence. Some children are regularly a few minutes late, which adds to the time taken for teachers to get the lessons started.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching is good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and in Years 1 and 2, it is good. No teaching is unsatisfactory and the proportion of good, very good and excellent teaching has risen significantly since the last inspection. There is strength in depth among the staff. Four of the teachers are leading teachers within the local education authority, reflecting the high quality of their work in literacy and numeracy; they teach across three of the four age groups in school. Other members of staff were also observed teaching to a very high standard during the inspection. The good quality of teaching is a key factor in the good progress the pupils make.
15. Strengths of the teaching are the planning, which was a key issue for improvement at the last inspection, the teaching of basic skills, for which the school has achieved the *Basic Skills Mark*, the quality of relationships with pupils, and the very good marking of pupils' work and ongoing assessments that the staff make. Pupils are well managed and lessons are well organised. There are very good opportunities for pupils to carry out first-hand investigations in subjects such as science, and practical work in art and design, and design and technology. Teachers' expertise in individual subjects has improved considerably since the last inspection, when in art and design, geography, ICT and religious education, there were significant weaknesses. As a result of a good post-inspection action plan, these shortcomings have now been overcome and the teachers' good knowledge of subjects is evident in the quality of their planning. A particular feature of all plans and pieces of work completed by the pupils is the clear identification of the learning objective at the start of the lesson or attached to the start of a piece of written work. Teachers then come back to this objective during the lesson and confirm whether the pupils are attaining it, and they mark written work according to it. This means pupils are aware of how they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Teachers make good use of time, support staff, when they are available, and resources.
16. As a result of the good teaching, pupils' learning is good. They put in much effort and this was evident in almost all lessons. They get through a good amount of work, which was clear from a scrutiny of their work over the year, and they acquire basic skills of literacy and numeracy well. In the few lessons that were only satisfactory, the pace of the lessons was uneven, resulting in some elements being too long, as in a physical education lesson, and some being too hurried, as in the introductory part of an English lesson. Homework makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' learning.
17. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Staff have very good knowledge of the needs of children in this stage and the relevant curriculum. They are enthusiastic and have very good relationships with their classes, as do the nursery nurses. Praise and encouragement are effective in promoting positive behaviour and personal, social and emotional development. All lessons are well planned with appropriate learning objectives by all adults involved in the classroom, and teachers use questioning effectively to extend and develop children's knowledge and vocabulary.
18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is consistently good. Individual education plans show a sharp awareness of individual needs. Detailed plans include very specific strategies to support pupils' progress towards their stated targets. Targets are reviewed regularly and modified to match a pupil's progress. The special educational needs co-ordinator and class teachers ensure that the learning support assistants have a good understanding of pupils' needs and plan their work accordingly, including a wide range of practical learning activities. Staff position themselves well to provide quiet, unobtrusive support for pupils. Sensitive questions, explanations, and comments ensure pupils are clear about the learning intentions and constantly check pupils' level of understanding. Each day the learning support assistants review the progress individual pupils have made and plan work based on the last lesson. This ensures pupils are constantly challenged to improve their work. Pupils respond very positively to the high expectations the adults have of them and this has a very positive effect on their rate of learning and the standards of work they produce. Staff manage pupils in a calm and sensitive manner which helps them to feel secure. This instils confidence and assists them in settling to their tasks and achieving a feeling of success and self esteem. In Years 1 and 2, learning support assistants are available only in morning sessions and this means they are not able to support lower-attaining pupils in science and other lessons, where their presence would be very valuable.

19. The teaching of pupils learning English as an additional language is very good. Small group work is very focused to meet the needs of the pupils. This was evident when a group of reception children, withdrawn from class to work with the specialist teacher, read together and took part in many language-rich games based on the appropriately chosen Big Book, *The Runaway Chapati*. The specialist supports the planning of the class teachers very well, suggesting ways of promoting the language development of the pupils, and advising on resources, in addition to teaching small groups in class or withdrawn. There are close links made between all work that these pupils do and the remainder of the class.
20. Teaching is good across a range of subjects and this constitutes an important improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was unsatisfactory in art and design, and religious education, and there was too little direct teaching of ICT going on. It is good now in science, design and technology, geography and ICT. There was insufficient evidence to make firm judgements about teaching in art and design, history, music, physical education and religious education. Elements of each showed there is good coverage of these subjects and teachers' knowledge and understanding of them are at least satisfactory and often good, for instance in art and design. As a result pupils make good progress in these subjects.

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

21. The curriculum is suitably broad and covers all the required subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Provision has improved since the last inspection when many of the subjects such as art and design, physical education and ICT did not have complete schemes. Religious education did not meet locally agreed requirements. The school has developed appropriate schemes of work and policies for all subjects where there was a weakness identified. Long-term planning now ensures pupils have consistent opportunities to make progress based on prior skills and knowledge. The statutory curriculum is good and provides the pupils with appropriately enriching experiences. Collective worship now meets requirements, which is an improvement since the last inspection. For the children in the Foundation Stage the curriculum is good with a range of activities to help children develop their language and other skills. Detailed subject documentation using the latest guidance is being used for literacy and numeracy but for other subjects the work is planned within a series of topics using national guidance and schemes of work. The whole staff determine the long-term plan, and they work in year groups to draw up the medium-term planning, meeting weekly to write the daily plan. The classes in each year group follow identical planning but amend the tasks to meet the needs of their pupils. All subjects have a scheme and policy, although some are being reviewed and altered as topics are taught and evaluated for their effectiveness. Subjects such as geography and history are taught in half termly blocks: one half term history, the next geography.
22. Literacy skills are developed well in all aspects of the curriculum. There are examples of pupils using literacy skills in geography, history, religious education, and science. However, despite good writing opportunities, pupils' skills are below average and writing is a priority for development, already highlighted by the school. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills in a variety of situations. For example, during fruit and drink time, *Circle time*, when pupils have the opportunity to discuss issues, and at the end of most lessons, when they report on what they have been doing. Mathematics is used across the curriculum such as data handling, drawing of simple graphs and charts, in geography, and measuring in design and technology and science. Skills learnt in ICT are used in many subjects to enhance pupils' learning, such as in artwork, research, and reinforcing language and number.
23. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school maintains an appropriate register for special educational needs, which complies with the national code of practice and meets statutory obligations. Pupils are included in the full range of activities both in the curriculum and outside lessons offered by the school. Detailed individual education plans describe the school's strategies for supporting pupils' progress towards clearly stated, specific and appropriate targets. Challenging work based on these targets is set and this good provision has a positive impact on the pupils' progress. Provision for support in literacy and numeracy is stronger than for other subjects, where little support is available. Statements are implemented fully and effective support enables such pupils to have full access to mainstream education and to achieve well. Pupils learning English as an additional language are provided for very well, through specialist teaching and good involvement in all classroom activities.
24. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. The school has already implemented a scheme of work. The pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning, particularly during literacy

and numeracy sessions or participating in the group activities, when they are expected to work independently. There is an agreed policy on sex education, which allows pupils' questions to be answered as they arise. Healthy eating is encouraged and forms part of the science programme.

25. The provision for activities outside lessons is good. The school offers a range of activities for its pupils such as an art club, football, and family lending library. Clubs are open to both boys and girls and are very popular. Pupils participate in a range of visits that enhance their understanding of the curriculum such as to a farm, a country park and historical, hands-on trips. The pupils' learning is enriched well through this provision and through the many activities designed to support learning in the statutory curriculum, such as visitors and special events like the Jubilee party.
26. The school has successfully established many links with the community and this is the result of the very good work of the community development officer attached to the school. There is a Parent and Toddler group, based in the school, a Before and After School Club, classes for English as an additional language, numeracy and literacy for parents, all of which are well attended. There are volunteers helping with reading in school. The school is negotiating a link with local businesses whereby their employees are given the chance to work in classrooms.
27. The school has very good links with the junior school and the Year 2 teachers regularly liaise with the Year 3 teachers. The Year 2 pupils visit prior to starting and each has a Year 5 *buddy* to help them settle in. They also join in assemblies and after-school activities during the summer term. Subject managers are encouraged to attend the locally organised meetings for their subject. As the Parent and toddler group is based in the school, the Foundation Stage co-ordinator works closely with the leader, discussing topics, and the children spend time in the nursery before they attend so that they transfer smoothly when the time comes.
28. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection report and is now very good. The school's values and principles are very apparent and have a very positive effect on the quality of the teaching and learning.
29. Provision for spiritual development is very good. Staff are aware of the many opportunities to develop pupils' awareness of their place in the world. In assemblies and lessons, they are encouraged to think about and value their own successes and those of the other pupils. The school grounds are used well to develop pupils' awareness of the wonders of nature. Pupils show excitement and delight in the results of their exciting investigations in subjects, such as mathematics and science. This was illustrated well as pupils excitedly 'dragged' the headteacher outside to show her the intricate beauty of a spider's web shimmering in the sunshine. A quiet garden area is provided for pupils who want some time on their own away from the hurly burly of the playground. Staff are well prepared to help pupils handle personal and world tragedies, providing opportunities for pupils to explore their feelings through stories, poems, talking and listening.
30. Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils are constantly encouraged to think about the choices they have and how they should treat others. Careful explanations help pupils realise that inappropriate behaviour brings with it certain consequences. After recent vandalism of the nursery fence, carried out after school hours, discussions took place to help pupils realise the dangers this created for younger children, the cost implications in repairing it and the need for all to be involved in caring for each other. Such discussions help children to realise that there are reasons behind rules and serious consequences for all in not obeying them.
31. Provision for social development is similarly very good. The pupils are made very aware of their responsibilities to the school and their local community. Pupils have well planned opportunities to develop responsibility, self-confidence, and independence through well-planned lessons and the routines and structures in place. A high priority is given to ensuring that classrooms and shared areas are kept tidy and individual work is well presented. A wide range of adult and student visitors provides very good opportunities for pupils to relate to other people and develop positive relationships. The arrival of a new pupil to the school is prepared for well, as the receiving class decides who is going to be the *special friend* to help a stranger from another school or country settle into school life. This develops a strong sense of responsibility, care and support for others. The organisation of lessons provides many opportunities for pupils to work together and to compete fairly. A sense of citizenship is developed as pupils take part in arts festivals, raise money to support good causes and celebrate national events, such as the Queen's Golden Jubilee and England's progress through the World Cup.
32. Provision for cultural development has also improved and is now very good. Pupils have opportunities to learn and appreciate the richness of their own and other people's culture through art and design, music, geography and history. The community education project encourages those parents from other cultures to share their way of life

through exploring their music, dress, food, art and music. Traditional playground games are encouraged and the art of other cultures, such as African and Asian stimulate pupils' respect and interest in a wide range of traditions, skills and events. Through religious education, pupils study the major world religions and all pupils are made aware of each other's important festivals such as Christmas, Divali, Eid and the Chinese New Year.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school has good procedures for ensuring that its pupils are well cared for. Staff trained in first aid take good care of pupils who are ill or have accidents. For example, the school has two pupils who have nut allergies; teachers are reminded of this with a large warning in the register and all staff have been trained in the use of the antidote. Systematic health and safety risk assessments and equipment checks are carried out and the school is a safe environment. Staff are aware of precautions to be taken when undertaking tasks in subjects such as design and technology, and detailed risk assessments are carried out before educational visits. Child protection procedures, which meet local guidelines, are in place and the designated teacher has been trained in their use.
34. Behaviour is generally informally monitored but detailed records are kept of incidents of bad behaviour or emotional outbursts. Teachers use praise and reward stickers to motivate good behaviour and there is a well understood system of sanctions for those who misbehave. The absence of bullying is a result of the effectiveness of these procedures, the school's appropriate emphasis on a caring environment and effective action, should any incident occur. Similarly any incident of racist language is dealt with quickly and sensitively and, consequently, pupils of all ethnic groups feel themselves to be an equal part of the school community.
35. Registers are completed efficiently at the start of each school session and lateness is rigorously recorded. The school has made very effective efforts to improve attendance by careful monitoring, and letters and phone calls to parents where improvement is required. This has extended in some cases to staff collecting children from their home. In addition, those pupils with good attendance are rewarded with certificates.
36. The monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development is good. At the time of the previous inspection, this was an area for development and the school has made good progress in putting in place systems for recording and assessment across all subjects, and in using the data to improve teaching. Children in the nursery are regularly assessed as they take part in activities and this information is used very well by staff to plan new work and give individual support. At the start of reception classes pupils are formally assessed using a standardised baseline assessment, which is used again at the end of the year to indicate what progress they have made and to predict performance at the end of Year 2.
37. Teachers assess the success of each lesson in terms of pupils' learning and modify subsequent lessons accordingly. Assessments in English and mathematics are regular and used well to track progress. At the end of a topic or key objective, teachers record which pupils have met the objective, those who require further teaching and those who have gone further. Staff carefully analyse national assessment and test data to identify which areas need improved teaching. Effective action has helped to raise standards in those areas this year. Portfolios of moderated, levelled work are being completed in the main subjects to improve the accuracy of teachers' judgements. Staff use their very good knowledge and relationships with their pupils to monitor their personal development, which is then recorded in the pupil's report. Some information, for example correspondence with parents where there are problems, is maintained in a pupil's personal record. Where poor attendance is having a negative impact on learning, this is explained to parents.
38. The school effectively supports pupils with special educational needs through early and well-established procedures for the identification, monitoring and evaluation of pupils' educational needs. These procedures follow the guidance of the new code of practice. The learning support teacher and class teachers assess pupils frequently in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. For example, there is some good quality work on assessment, which focuses on how well pupils communicate and pay attention during sessions in the learning support group. Individual records carefully monitor pupils' progress towards their individual targets. Results of reading, writing, number and general abilities are recorded several times each year and these procedures effectively help to plan for future learning needs.
39. The school provides effective support and guidance in raising pupils' achievement throughout the school. Whilst a pupil's performance is well recorded through school, the information is not always in an easily accessible format to allow tracking or translated into current National Curriculum levels, which would, in turn, lead to short and medium objectives and allow individual pupils to know what they have to do to reach higher levels.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. Parents are very satisfied with what the school provides and achieves. The views expressed by the 25 per cent of parents who returned the questionnaire were very positive and there were no major concerns. The views of those who attended the parents' meeting were equally positive. These positive views are confirmed by the inspection.
41. The school's links with parents are very effective. One of the key factors is the very good quality of information the school gives parents. When children start in the nursery and reception classes, parents are invited to meet a wide range of school staff. Teachers talk to them about the methods used and there are booklets in a range of languages about the importance of help at home. Welfare and administration staff put parents at ease with the practical worries of a child starting school. The school publishes regular newsletters, which are also posted up outside every classroom, and up-to-date information and requests are written on whiteboards at the same locations. These also show curricular information for each term and have ideas of the support parents can give for various topics.
42. Pupils' annual reports meet statutory requirements and give good information about what the pupil has achieved that year in the main subjects. There are brief comments about progress in other subjects as well as a good insight into the pupil's personal development. Parents feel that they accurately describe their child. There are often targets to aim for in the following year but they do not always give a clear view of attainment against expectations except at the end of Year 2. Parents have the opportunity to comment in writing. They are further able to find out about their child's progress through formal discussion with the class teacher. Parents also find the practice of encouraging them to bring and collect their child from the classroom door a very good way of meeting the teacher each day if they wish to discuss any minor issues.
43. The school has numerous programmes to help parents, which in turn improves the support the parents can give. The family literacy and numeracy courses raise both parents' and their children's skills and encourage them to work together. Those parents of minority ethnic heritage who did not speak English have undergone an extensive course to teach them, which in turn has enabled them to play a more active part in their child's learning and the life of the school. The school often supplies a crèche to enable more to attend. The community education organiser provides very valuable support for this work.
44. The special educational needs co-ordinator ensures that parents are full participants in reviewing the progress their children make when measured against their individual education plans. These reviews meet the requirements of the code of practice and ensure that good links are maintained between parents and the school.
45. Parents respond positively to these efforts by the school and consequently, they have a good impact on the progress of their children at school and at home. Most parents support their child's learning by hearing them read at home and by supporting homework. Parental support is organised through class representatives who act as a link between the parents and the school. The contact between parents and the representatives is generally informal through 'networking' but very effective. The regular representative meetings therefore facilitate a good two-way flow of information. Because of this, the school derives high levels of support from parents both in the classroom as reading volunteers, making and maintaining resources, additional adult supervision on educational visits and for family social events, which help raise funds and cement the school as a community. As one of the class representatives said, 'This is a family school with a very friendly atmosphere. If you raise a problem, staff sort it out quickly and come back to you to tell you what they've done.'

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. Leadership by the interim headteacher is very good. She took up post at the start of the spring term, after the previous headteacher moved to another post. The governors, who wished to appoint a permanent headteacher to start in September, proposed this temporary appointment; a disappointing response to an initial advertisement meant a mid-year appointment was not possible. At the time, the deputy headteacher had been in post for less than a term and it was felt inappropriate for her to take on the full responsibility of headship. The incoming headteacher is due to start in the autumn term.
47. Most of the success of the school's post-inspection action plan in tackling the key issues arising from the last inspection is due to the leadership of the previous headteacher and deputy headteacher, and the team work of

governors and staff. All issues relating to monitoring of the quality of education, the curriculum and financial planning have been resolved well and the school has made good progress. The governing body meets all statutory requirements. As a result, subject managers have a good overview of provision in their subjects, senior staff analyse information about pupil progress and school performance well, and they take action to improve matters. For instance, after last year's national test results, staff scrutinised strengths and weaknesses and decided to focus on improving pupils' skills of spelling in writing and problem solving in mathematics. Action put in place has seen a good improvement in the scores in these areas in the latest tests. In relation to financial planning, procedures are satisfactory and there is evidence of governors actively seeking value for money. For instance, governors and senior staff became dissatisfied with the level of support in monitoring the budget that was being provided by the financial service contracted to do so. Last year, initial analysis and advice led governors to believe that staffing cuts may be needed; in the event, the school had a surplus carry-forward, well above the average of most infant schools. Following principles of best value for money, they have now purchased financial advice and support from a different supplier to help guide their decision-making.

48. The school is well led and managed and there is a clear, shared commitment to succeed, despite important changes at senior management level and resignations from the governing body. All elements of the school's aims and objectives are clearly evident in the daily work of the school, for instance in developing an atmosphere in which pupils are happy, care for one another and do well in their studies. Pupils of all levels of ability and ethnic background are valued and encouraged to take a full part in activities. The delegation of responsibilities to subject managers, including monitoring of teaching, planning and pupils' work, is effective in helping the school to move forward. The school's development plan is detailed, comprehensive and has a central focus on improvement. It has individual subject plans for key subjects such as ICT and is underscored by a clear financial commitment. All aspects of improving the effectiveness of teachers are geared towards the school's priorities to raise standards and the quality of the provision. Staff new to the school are given good support, whether they are senior managers, class teachers or support staff. Procedures are established so that all staff, including lunchtime supervisors, have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the whole school.
49. The governing body is well led by the chair and, although some members are new to their roles, there is sufficient expertise among the governors so that they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas to improve. They are kept well informed of progress by reports from the headteacher, they visit classrooms regularly and, in the work of their committees, have a good grasp of developments in curricular planning. The secretaries are efficient and effective in their day-to-day control of financial matters, school administration, and matters of pupils' attendance. They make good use of new technology in their work.
50. The co-ordinator for special educational needs, who is part-time at the school, gives high quality leadership, although she has very limited time available for her work. Administrative procedures are very effective and comply with statutory requirements. Taking account of the high numbers of pupils with special educational needs in school, there is insufficient time available and the co-ordinator has to put in considerable extra time outside school to meet the needs of pupils.
51. The levels and deployment of teaching staff are good and help the pupils to achieve well. However, although pupils are well supported by learning assistants in English and mathematics lessons, there is little support available in science and other subjects and this is an area for improvement. Each class receives a similar amount of support and the needs of individual pupils are not always taken into account when support staff are allocated to classes. This results in the complex needs of some pupils not receiving sufficient support.
52. The site and building provide very good accommodation for the school and are used well, especially the grounds, which are spacious and well set out for play, quiet times, adventurous activities and scientific study. However, there are two mobile classrooms, housing Year 2 classes, which do not have toilet facilities, and one of them is quite cramped. They provide barely satisfactory accommodation. Governors have pressed for extensions to the main building and the work is on the local education authority's medium priority list.
53. Levels of learning resources are satisfactory overall and good in a number of subjects, such as English, mathematics and ICT. Resources for children in the nursery and reception classes are good. Library resources are awkwardly sited and require additions.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. The school should:

- ☐ maintain the drive to raise standards of writing (paragraphs 5, 74, 77).*
- ☐ In addition, governors should consider for inclusion in their action plan:
 - adding to the level of classroom support for teaching, particularly to help pupils to achieve well in science in Years 1 and 2 (paragraphs 6, 18, 51, 92, 119);
 - developing library resources further (paragraphs 53, 79).

*Features in the school development plan

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	34
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	8	15	8	0	0	0
Percentage	9	24	44	24	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents three 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)	17.5	161
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	30

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	46

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	35

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	26	30	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	22	21
	Girls	28	29	29
	Total	45	51	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (93)	91 (96)	89 (85)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	19
	Girls	30	29	28
	Total	50	49	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (94)	88 (87)	84 (93)
	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	2
Black – African heritage	7
Black – other	0
Indian	10
Pakistani	7
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	126
Any other minority ethnic group	10

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.76
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	5.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	86

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.5
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.75

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001 - 02
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	£
Total income	544685
Total expenditure	534380
Expenditure per pupil	3002
Balance brought forward from previous year	70695
Balance carried forward to next year	81000

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	195
Number of questionnaires returned	49

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	22	0	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	67	33	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	39	2	4	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	57	35	8	0	0
The teaching is good.	73	24	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	33	4	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	29	0	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	35	0	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	55	39	2	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	61	35	0	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	31	0	4	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	41	10	4	4

Other issues raised by parents

Parents were very positive in their views about the school and are proud of its achievements. They were almost unanimous in saying that they feel they are made very welcome and that the school provides very good information on how well the children are doing and what is happening in school.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

55. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and is a strength of the school. There is a well-resourced nursery, which caters for 52 children. There are presently 35 on roll, who attend either a morning or an afternoon session, and some have attended the school-based Parent and Toddler group before entering the nursery. They are admitted to the nursery in the September of the year when they have their fourth birthday, transferring to the reception class the following September. The reception year consists of two parallel classes with 29 and 30 children respectively. Children entering these classes have a range of pre-school experiences; the majority have come from the school nursery, a few from pre-school play groups and a very small number who have had no pre-school experience at all.
56. The curriculum is based on the nationally agreed six areas of learning and in practice provides the children with a broad and balanced range of experiences. The nursery and reception year combined is effective in providing a wide range of challenging activities that are directly designed to help the children progress towards the nationally agreed early learning goals. The overall attainment on entry to the nursery is below average, and a proportion of those admitted are children who are at the very early stages of learning English as an additional language. On entry to the reception classes, attainment is closer to average. The children are assessed using a standardised baseline assessment. Results over the years show fluctuations between year groups as to the number of children achieving well above the average score and well below this score.
57. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Staff have very good knowledge of the needs of children and the relevant curriculum. Teachers are enthusiastic and have very good relationships with their classes, as do the nursery nurses. This gives the children confidence to speak, even if they are unsure of themselves, and motivates them to learn. Praise and encouragement are effective in promoting positive behaviour and personal, social and emotional development. All lessons are well planned with appropriate learning objectives by all adults involved in the classroom. Literacy and numeracy planning in the reception classes is based on the appropriate national strategies. Teachers use questioning effectively to extend and develop children's knowledge and vocabulary.
58. There is a very good range of activities, which helps to extend and develop the children's vocabulary. The adults, including the part-time specialist teacher of English as an additional language, work as a team in the classrooms, and the children benefit from this consistent approach to their learning. Expectations of behaviour are high and the children respond well to those expectations. For example, they tidy up the room with little prompting from their teachers. The attractive wall displays, much of which are the work of children, provide a bright and interesting environment where learning is encouraged. Day-to-day assessment is used well so that daily planning can be amended to ensure tasks provide challenge. The staff record the children's progress on the lesson plan or a separate assessment sheet depending on the activity. Parents are encouraged to get involved in their children's learning and listen to them read on a regular basis. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and has devised a six-term plan to ensure the appropriate development of relevant skills through the nursery and reception classes.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. Teaching is very good and the majority of children are on course to achieve the expected standards by the time they move into Year 1. Children enjoy school, are enthusiastic about learning and are well behaved for the most part, though occasionally they forget to put up their hand in response to a question and call out. They are beginning to develop independence and confidence. This reflects the teaching and encouragement to achieve, which is consistently reinforced by the staff. Children are beginning to display an understanding of the needs of others, particularly in play and group activities. Adults provide good role models, they treat the children and each other with courtesy and respect and the children know they are valued. Children are developing self-reliance in taking responsibility for their own actions, for example undressing and dressing for physical activities and tidying up. They are encouraged to share, take turns, help each other and wait patiently. Examples of this were seen in the nursery when children were playing ball with the nursery nurse and had to wait for their turn, and in the reception class when three children were working together on the computer, taking it in turns to use the mouse. Other examples observed were children sharing construction toys and tidying up after a lesson. The teachers make sure there is a range of activities available that help the children develop positive attitudes towards learning.

Communication, language and literacy

60. Children broaden and consolidate their use of language so that by the end of the reception year many achieve expected standards. A few have already achieved the early learning goals in this area. Teaching is very good. Lessons are carefully planned and well organised, with tasks pitched at an appropriate level. Communication skills are encouraged throughout and progress is good. This is evident in the many classroom activities. In the nursery, children are given opportunities to talk about themselves and the teacher's very effective use of questions helps all children to develop and extend their vocabulary. This is also true of the majority of focused activities as they too rely heavily on language. Another way of developing language that staff use well is role-play, acting out traditional stories such as *The Three Little Pigs*. This is particularly helpful in developing the language skills of children for whom English is an additional language. Regular sessions of small-group teaching of these children by the specialist teacher are very effective in promoting the children's early command of English. The teacher contributes very well to the teachers' planning in the foundation stage, helping staff to include the children in all activities.
61. In the reception class, teachers provide opportunities for the children to share experiences and work during discussions on the carpet, and during fruit and drinks time. Children listen and respond to teachers' questions and to the contribution of others, although occasionally they forget and speak out of turn. Children in the nursery enjoy looking at the characters from *Letterland* and learning the letter sounds, whilst those in the reception joined in the reading of a story about a snowman. These children used and understood words such as *title, author, spine, front and back cover*. They were encouraged to predict what might happen in the story. The children in the nursery are developing an awareness of letter sounds and those in the reception know both the sound and the name of each letter and can form rhyming words.
62. All reception children enjoy sharing the reading of a book with the teacher, recognising some of the words. They have made an enthusiastic start with reading. The majority of children can read a few words; the higher-attaining readers are confident and accurate. Children have sufficient knowledge to sound out words but the lowest-attaining children find it harder to run the sounds together to make the word. Children are taught to use the pictures as further clues to the text and to use them to answer questions about the story. Most children are happy to recite a nursery rhyme or retell a favourite story. All expressed pleasure in reading and read regularly at home to their parents. They know how to handle books with confidence and care.
63. Children in the nursery are becoming aware that marks on the paper can convey meaning and they are trying to write. A few are able to write their first name in letters that are recognisable but some are still finding it difficult to control the pencil. In the reception classes, there is a wide variety of writing skills. Some children can write a few simple sentences independently and use a *word bank* to help with spelling, whereas others need the support of an adult. These children often write only the first letter of the words of their story and this is a very important step in the development of writing. All children can write and recognise their names; some can write both their names.

Mathematical development

64. The teaching of mathematics is very good, with a range of activities to support the learning. Attainment is in line with expectations and most children are on track to achieve the early learning goals. In the nursery many children can count to 10 securely and a very small number can count to 40 and recognise the numbers on the number line. The majority of children are just beginning to match numbers to four. To reinforce understanding of numbers, counting activities, such as sticking the right number of legs on a pig and numbers rhymes, are used.
65. Reception children can order numbers to five and count in twos to 20. However, the lowest-attaining children found it more difficult to count in twos even when supported. During the plenary session when 2p coins were used to count, a few children thought the answer was three, as there were three 2p coins, and not 6p, the correct answer. The children are beginning to understand the concepts of addition and subtraction, by counting on and back. Appropriate vocabulary is taught such as shorter, longer, heavier and lighter. They have used two-dimensional shapes to make patterns and have painted pictures of patterns found on animals to increase their understanding of pattern.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. Teaching is very good and by the time the children leave the reception classes, most will have achieved the early learning goals. Children show a curiosity about their surroundings and explore, investigate and ask questions. The nursery children have been looking at animals in preparation for a visit to the farm. They are growing sunflowers in their garden and know they must keep them watered, though some children were observed almost drowning the plants as they watered them with such enthusiasm! All children are given the opportunity to walk round school looking at things they like or dislike. The reception children favoured the climbing frame and one child felt the conservation area was scary because of the long grass. They have listened to the sounds around them both in the classroom and outside and noted what they heard. They know the basic parts of a plant, identifying the stem, flower, leaves, and roots.
67. Children are beginning to understand differences between past and present through life cycles and looking at artefacts from a schoolroom long ago, comparing chalk with a white board marker. Examples of work about friendship are displayed on the walls and express how important friends are to the children; this is linked to learning about Jesus' friends, his disciples. As part of religious education, children have learnt about Harvest, the Christmas story, and weddings. This is also displayed and children have written what they like about weddings: "The rings sparkle ... I like weddings because I was a bridesmaid... I like the cake" and many more. Children are given many opportunities to use the computer, not just for reinforcement programs but also for artwork and simple word processing. Those observed using the computer demonstrate good mouse control.

Physical development

68. The quality of teaching is very good and already many children are achieving in line with expectations of the early learning goals, particularly in how well they move their bodies. In a physical education lesson, the nursery children demonstrated how well they control their bodies, moving to the music *Meg's Car* as a warm-up activity and stopping when required. Many can jump off a box with confidence and bend their knees on landing. A few can walk down the balance beam without falling off; all can do this on the bench because it is wider.
69. Reception children can control and co-ordinate their body movements and have good spatial awareness. They can move round the room jumping, hopping, running and stopping when required. They are becoming aware of the importance of exercise and what happens to their bodies during physical activity.
70. Many children in the nursery can undress themselves with little adult help whilst those in the reception can do it for themselves: only one or two need adult help. The nursery children have experience of large wheeled toys in their own secure play area. Although there is a secure area for reception children, there are no large wheeled toys; this has been highlighted as a priority for improvement.
71. Skills using scissors and pencils are satisfactory. Children are given many opportunities in both the nursery and the reception classes to develop their manipulative skills through colouring in, writing, cutting out, and small sized construction kits such as *Lego*. The majority of the children can cut out reasonably carefully along lines. Paintbrushes are used appropriately and with care. Displays indicate the many opportunities children have to cut out, colour, and glue.

Creative development

72. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is very good and most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of their reception year. Children enjoy a range of experiences in art, music, stories, and imaginative play. There are opportunities to experiment with mixing colours, collage, printing, dough, occasionally clay, and appliqué. This was a lovely sewn picture of the pond in springtime. The nursery children explore dough and paint, and have made some collages of their faces. They have also used marbling as a technique to make some interesting pictures. The reception children produce painted pictures of animal patterns, and some carefully observed paintings of one of the staff. They have included such detail as the colour of the clothes and the hair. Some of the portraits are very lifelike. The role-play areas in the reception classes are changed regularly to fit in with the class topic; at present, it is the rain forest and a park for picnics. Children were observed in the 'park' enjoying a pretend 'picnic' with food and drink. During the inspection, the nursery children were not observed in their role-play area. Musical development is satisfactory and children learn the names of the percussion instruments and how to play them. The children in the nursery already know the names of the untuned percussion instruments and can follow a conductor. Children in the reception classes listen to

music and talk about how the pieces make them feel, happy or sad. All children enthusiastically join in action songs and rhymes whenever the opportunity arises.

ENGLISH

73. The good progress that the children make in the Foundation Stage continues when they move into Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, almost all the pupils who have been at the school since nursery or the reception year achieve the nationally expected levels of attainment in all aspects of English and some do better than this. This includes all pupils who, when they started in school, were at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. These pupils make very good progress and this is the result of very good teaching by the specialist teacher and the fact that the pupils are fully included with all their classmates in English lessons. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and very few do not reach expected levels by the end of Year 2. This is because the teachers carefully plan for them to achieve the targets in their individual education plans, and learning support assistants are well briefed in how to help them in lessons. Two thirds of the pupils in the current Year 2 who have not achieved expected levels in the national tests carried out recently joined the school late, in either Year 1 or 2.
74. In the current Year 2, overall standards in speaking and listening skills and in reading are average. In writing, standards are below average. Last year, standards in writing were higher than in reading and this reflects the different make-up of year groups. Overall, standards when compared to similar schools were average in reading and above average in writing. After analysing the results of last year's tests, staff focused their attention on improving standards of spelling and this is beginning to have effect. The proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected level rose by a quarter. This result, however, is still below the average of most schools. A further initiative has been to introduce a system of teaching a joined-up style of handwriting, but this is too recent to have a major impact on standards.

Speaking and listening

75. Pupils display real confidence to talk in discussions and they answer questions clearly and often in full sentences. Attainment ranges from above to below average and is average overall. This is the result of good teaching, which began in the Foundation Stage and continues throughout the school. A good example of speaking skills is how well the pupils report on what they have been doing at the end of lessons. In a Year 2 class, a group of higher-attaining pupils talked about what they had found after reading an extract from a non-fiction text about the sparrow. They read from their notes clearly and could account for why they thought a particular point gave information about the bird's appearance, feeding habits, or habitat. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are similarly encouraged to give answers and say what they think in class. Some staff encourage the pupils' clarity of speech and correct frequently made mistakes. This helps the pupils to pronounce correctly the *th* sound in *another*, for example. Listening skills are generally good and pupils pay good attention to the teacher when she is talking. Because teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to report on their work in other subjects, such as science, geography, and religious education, pupils' skills of speaking are reinforced well.

Reading

76. Standards are average overall and pupils make good progress. Most pupils read regularly at home and they report that they enjoy reading. Because of the good teaching, pupils in Year 1, including those learning English as an additional language who make very good progress, can read frequently found words. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their skills in subjects such as geography and history. However, the location of the school library does not help pupils make use of its resources, which are somewhat limited in range and quality. Higher-attaining pupils read fluently and make few mistakes. They are already achieving levels expected of pupils a year older than themselves. Average and below average pupils are learning to use different strategies to help them read unfamiliar words. This was evident in one lesson when pupils described the many methods they use, such as knowledge of letter sounds, 'breaking up' words into syllables, reading on in the text, and looking for picture clues. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are reading with confidence. Their knowledge of letter sounds is secure and they are developing good awareness of the parts of books, knowing how to use the contents, index, and glossary. Pupils are reading for pleasure at home and some higher-attaining pupils visit the town library.

Writing

77. Standards of writing have fluctuated in recent years. In the current Year 2, they are below average overall and though four out of five pupils achieved the nationally expected level, no pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in recent national tests. Nevertheless, teaching in this aspect is good, benefiting as it is from a greater attention to improving spelling and handwriting skills. Pupils are encouraged to write across a range of subjects as well as in English lessons. All writing tasks are headed by their learning objective and the work is marked according to that objective. Pupils are reminded regularly about using proper punctuation in their work, spelling lists are given weekly to learn and pupils use *word banks* to help with spelling. During Year 1 pupils make sound progress using simple punctuation and spelling skills accurately. Higher-attaining pupils use full stops and capital letters with reasonable accuracy by the summer term and they make good attempts to spell more difficult words, such as *biscits*, *invited*, and *friends*. Pupils with special educational needs write short but legible sentences. Letter formation is not consistent but they make an attempt at using their own phrases and sentences. The attainment of pupils learning English as an additional language ranges from average to below average. They all make good progress over time. Pupils in general are not fully using the recently taught joined-up style of handwriting in their own work consistently. Skills of spelling are satisfactory now that there has been a greater emphasis on this aspect. Most pupils understand the need for a beginning, development and end to their stories, but pupils with special educational needs require much support with most aspects of their work. Writing must be a continued priority for the school if standards are to rise and more pupils achieve above the expected level by the end of Year 2.
78. Teaching is good and there is no unsatisfactory teaching. This is an improvement on the findings at the last inspection. There is strength in depth across the two age groups and two teachers are leading literacy teachers for the local education authority. A strength of the teaching is the planning, which is clear, concise and evaluated well by staff, so that when necessary, it is altered in the light of its success or changed when skills need to be consolidated. A further strength is the marking, which is a model of good practice. It provides clear feedback on how the pupils have achieved the learning objectives for the particular exercise and what they must do next. Learning support assistants are well briefed and focus on lower-attaining groups during lessons. They have been effective teaching the national programme of *early literacy support* to these groups in Year 1. All aspects of teaching are good and lead to good learning. As a result, pupils concentrate well and pay good attention to the teacher when they are together on the carpet. They settle down to tasks quickly and share equipment sensibly when they work in the groups. They tidy things away efficiently and in most lessons observed their behaviour was very good. In one satisfactory lesson, the pace of learning was uneven. Whereas the introduction was effective but short, the group work was too long and the rate of learning dropped, even though the teacher had planned for plenty of extended activities for the pupils to complete when they finished the focused activity. Homework, in the form of reading and spelling lists, makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning.
79. Subject management is good. The subject leader is holding the post temporarily and has introduced the new handwriting scheme in recent months. Procedures to check the pupils' progress are thorough and effective, and there has been good analysis of last year's national test papers to identify weaknesses. Resources for learning are good in quality and quantity but the library needs additional resourcing. The use of literacy in other subjects and the quality of learning experiences are good. For instance there are initiatives to provide three free books to each child per year; there are reading volunteers trained and working in classes; there is a regular Book Day; families can borrow games and resources to develop skills of reading; there are visiting theatre groups; and Year 2 pupils join the junior pupils when there are visiting poets and writers.

MATHEMATICS

80. The good progress evident in the Foundation Stage continues in Years 1 and 2 so that nine out of ten pupils in Year 2 achieve the nationally expected level. The results of the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2002 are in line with expectations, but as the necessary information is not available, no comparisons with other schools can be made. The same percentage of pupils achieved the expected levels as did in 2001. However, when this is broken down into its components there has been a definite improvement since last year. The percentage of pupils achieving well has significantly increased. Since the last inspection, when standards matched the national average, standards rose and then fell back in 2000 and 2001. They are higher this year and these fluctuations reflect the variations between year groups. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress.

81. The work of pupils in the current Year 2 shows learning in all the main aspects of the subject. The pupils have a good understanding of numbers and their place value up to 100, they can recognise numbers in the 5 times table and are beginning to solve problems using more than one operation. Examples of the pupils' confidence to solve problems were seen during one of the Year 2 lessons. Work entailing giving directions and making right angle turns has been understood. Pupils can use standard and non-standard measurements and they know to estimate before checking for the right answer. Both two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes have been studied and pupils can identify faces, edges and corners. Some elementary fractions such as halves and quarters and money have been introduced. All pupils, including those with English as an additional language and special needs are taught the relevant vocabulary and are confident to explain what they have done.
82. During the quick fire mental session at the start of lessons, pupils demonstrate their understanding of addition sums to 20 by adding or subtracting the two numbers shown on the dice. Pupils have no difficulty adding 9, 11, 19 or 21 to a given number but find it more difficult to write down the number sentences.
83. Pupils make good progress developing the relevant skills and building on the good work done in the reception classes. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make very good progress, especially those who enter school during Year 1 or 2 and achieve the expected level in tests at the age of seven.
84. Pupils enjoy the subject, particularly the mental sessions at the start of each lesson when they use either a white board or a 'number fan' to record their answers. They are well motivated and keen to succeed, especially when the lessons move at a good pace and the work set is appropriately challenging. Most pupils remain on task with little adult intervention. They share resources and sometimes help each other. They are confident to explain how they found their answers even if they are incorrect. The majority of pupils are well behaved but sometimes forget and, in their excitement to respond, call out the answer. Presentation of work is generally neat.
85. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous report, from satisfactory to good. Lessons are well planned with appropriate tasks and good pace, although pupils sometimes remain on the carpet for too long and this detracts from the good learning. All teachers have a very good relationship with their pupils and this gives them the confidence to respond to questions. Questions are used effectively to extend and reinforce understanding. Where the teaching was excellent, the teacher's knowledge and enthusiasm motivated the pupils, the pace was snappy and the demonstrations helped to reinforce learning. A very positive approach to the subject is encouraged, and pupils rise to the challenges set in the lesson. All teachers plan work that is well matched to the needs of their pupils, although more attention could be given to challenging the higher-attaining pupils. The learning support assistants play an important role supporting the lower-attaining pupils and those for whom English is an additional language, so that tasks are understood by them.
86. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well and teachers have clear ideas of the more effective ways of teaching the various elements, using the scheme already in place. The benefits of improved mental recall and the systematic development of knowledge, understanding and vocabulary can be seen in pupils' approach to the subject. The guidance of the strategy is now supporting teachers in their planning and leading to better-defined learning objectives.
87. A very knowledgeable, confident subject leader has had the opportunity to monitor planning and observe lessons. Information from the test results is carefully analysed and used to help in planning, especially when weaknesses are highlighted. Targets are set for groups of pupils in each class and amended as they are achieved. The priority for the subject manager is to ensure standards continue to rise.

SCIENCE

88. Standards have varied since the time of the last inspection and these variations mainly reflect annual differences in the intake of pupils, for instance in the fluency levels of pupils with English as an additional language. In 2001, the overall results of teacher assessments for pupils in Year 2 were well below the national average and below those of similar schools. Inspection findings show that standards have risen and are below average overall in the present Year 2. Nine out of every ten pupils achieved the nationally expected level but very few achieved the higher level. Given the above average level of pupil mobility and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and of those whose first language is not English, the standards represent good achievement. These are significant factors in accounting for why fewer than expected pupils achieve the higher level by the end of Year 2.

In comparison to their prior attainment, pupils at the school the longest achieve well and make good progress, building on the good progress they have made in the Foundation Stage. Those pupils with English as an additional language have achieved very well indeed, reaching at least the expected level for their ages.

89. The school has been successful in addressing the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. Good teaching and a well-planned curriculum provide pupils with a wide range of interesting opportunities to develop their curiosity and investigative skills.
90. By the end of Year 2, the pupils are developing their scientific knowledge well, through a wide range of practical activities. An analysis of pupils' work shows that they make consistently good progress and achieve well. The considerable emphasis placed on pupils undertaking their own experiments and investigating for themselves is an improvement since the last inspection. This results in pupils developing sound enquiry skills. A particular strength is the high quality of pupils' ability to record what they discover in a very well organised way. Most pupils are able to describe their observations clearly, using appropriate scientific knowledge, and they record their findings in a variety of ways, such as pictures, diagrams, tables, graphs and tally charts. Below average pupils and those learning English as an additional language need much support with recording, however.
91. The pupils identify similarities and differences between living things and classify and record their observations in a variety of ways. They have a good understanding of the need for exercise and a balanced diet to remain healthy. Pupils in Year 2 explore a range of natural and manufactured materials as they investigate what happens when bread is toasted and chocolate is melted. Links with literacy are developed well as pupils make their own poster about the dangers of electricity. As they move through the infant classes, pupils show an increasing knowledge and understanding of physical phenomena. Pupils in Year 2 work on forces, including making predictions and drawing appropriate conclusions about how to make things move faster and slower.
92. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Practical work is very well organised and pupils are helped to develop good skills in scientific enquiry. Lessons are challenging and very successful in engaging the interest of pupils. Practical investigations give the pupils good opportunities to develop their scientific understanding and make a good contribution to their social and moral development. In most lessons, activities planned for the pupils now provide appropriate challenges to meet the needs of all pupils, including higher-attaining pupils. The high quality of questions used by teachers is very effective in consolidating the pupils' previous learning and in extending their understanding. An emphasis on language structures and specific vocabulary and probing but sensitive questioning help pupils with English as an additional language to make similar progress to their peers. A point for improvement in the teaching is the lack of additional classroom support for science. This would help all pupils, especially lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, to make even more progress and would raise the overall standards the school is achieving.
93. The subject is very well managed. The subject manager provides strong leadership in the subject and is well qualified to support her colleagues in their professional development. She has a very good overview of standards, subject provision and the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of the subject, as a result of well-established monitoring systems. The scheme of work, based on nationally recommended guidelines, meets the requirements for the teaching of the subject and now gives sufficient challenge to higher-attaining pupils. The system of assessment built into the scheme is an effective means of checking the progress of pupils against the key learning objectives. However, work is not assessed against National Curriculum levels in order to give teachers a clear view of the progress that pupils are making. Resources and equipment are good in quantity and quality to support effectively the practical activities undertaken by the pupils.

ART AND DESIGN

94. The school has made significant improvement to provision and standards since the time of the last inspection when pupils were judged to be making unsatisfactory progress, teaching was unsatisfactory and the subject failed to meet statutory requirements. As a result of a good post-inspection action plan, the school has improved provision well, so that coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study for the subject is good and pupils build on the good progress in the Foundation Stage to achieve at least average standards overall by the end of Year 2. All pupils achieve well over time and much of the work indicates that staff and pupils have high expectations of what they can achieve. The quality of the display for this subject throughout the school is very good and indicates the care that staff take to present the pupils' work well.

95. No lessons were observed during the inspection, as the subject is timetabled in blocks of time alternately with design and technology. Evidence about attainment is taken from a scrutiny of pupils' work, an annotated portfolio of pupils' work and the ample displays in classrooms and around the school. Pupils in Year 1 show good attention to detail in their self-portraits and they begin to be aware of shades of colour in work they do based on the bold colours of Hockney's paintings. They use collage extensively in their work, and they weave patterns using looms made from natural objects such as sticks and branches. Some of this work includes materials such as feathers, fabrics, and straw, while other examples use sequins, ribbons, wool and material from saris. The effects are striking and are very well displayed around school. Pupils in Year 2 develop their understanding of perspective and viewpoint. They pursue their work using different materials, such as tissue paper, coloured film, wool, felt material and sticky paper to create flowers and leaves.
96. It is evident from the quality of the work in all four classrooms that the teachers' expertise is good and they extend pupils' basic skills very well. This is an impressive improvement since the time of the last inspection. The teachers very well annotate pupils' work. There is good encouragement and praise for effort. The subject is very well led and managed by the subject manager, who was appointed soon after the last inspection with a particular brief to implement the school's action plan. She has had some opportunity to monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work and has used her findings to promote a better level of challenge for pupils of different abilities. The school's portfolio of work is a particularly useful tool for assessment purposes and teachers use the whole-school approach to checking pupils' progress as they do in all foundation subjects. A very active after-school club for pupils is run by a tutor from further education through the community development links, and artwork is very attractively displayed in the entrance hall indicating the level of effort that both pupils and tutor put into the activities.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

97. Overall, standards have risen since the last inspection. This is because there have been improvements in the quality of the teaching and learning and the school is implementing a policy and a scheme of work which ensure that all aspects of the subject are rigorously taught and tasks are challenging. By the end of Year 2, standards are average in all aspects of the subject. Most pupils now achieve well and make good progress. Although pupils with special educational needs make sound progress as a result of the very effective class teaching, there is not always sufficient support to ensure that pupils with more complex needs receive additional support to enable them to make further progress.
98. The subject manager has worked with considerable rigour and enthusiasm to tackle the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. She has successfully worked with staff to raise their confidence and skills in teaching the subject. This has a very positive effect on improving individual standards and as a result pupils are very enthusiastic about the subject and produce finished work of a high standard. Planning and evaluation are now a particular strength of the teaching and learning in both year groups. Children have very good opportunities to examine their work to consider how it can be improved.
99. In Year 1 pupils make good progress in designing and making a healthy fruit salad. Teachers place considerable emphasis on using appropriate technical vocabulary and building up skills, knowledge and understanding. In Year 2 teachers build very effectively on pupils' skills, as they design, make and evaluate a colourful coat for a teddy bear. They have very good opportunities to practise their designing and joining skills. Templates, paper patterns, cutting and sewing skills are all used very effectively to produce a prototype. Boys and girls work with considerable concentration and effort to improve their skills of sewing and look forward with great anticipation to the next lesson when they will put their skills into practice 'for real'. Pupils' delight in their work was evident as they explained with pride how they had planned and made their creations.
100. Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Very well-structured activities provide pupils with a very good range of opportunities and resources to develop their skills. There is a good balance between designing, planning, making and evaluating. There are many good opportunities for pupils to solve their own design problems and to reflect on the quality of their work. Where teaching is particularly effective, challenging comments and questions encourage pupils to think and express their own ideas as they 'switch on their brains'. This encourages very confident learners, who are not afraid to ask questions to 'have a go' at solving difficult problems. Questions and comments such as 'What might you do?' or 'Let's think about it' give children ownership of their learning. This has a positive effect on the progress pupils make and increases their competence and ability to solve problems and improve their designs. Pupils are interested in the subject and produce quality work, which is a reflection of their effort and the skills, knowledge and understanding they

acquire. There are good links with mathematics and ICT as pupils are reminded of the need to be accurate when taking measurements for their designs or use the computer to create their own pattern for a design.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

101. During the inspection there was no opportunity to observe the teaching of history because the subject is taught in half termly blocks, and alternates with geography which was timetabled for this half term. In addition to lessons observed in geography, evidence of attainment was collected from a scrutiny of pupils' work in both subjects, teachers' planning, an interview with the manager for both subjects, and by talking to a group of Year 2 pupils about their work in history.
102. Attainment by the end of Year 2 is average in both subjects. Pupils can draw their route to school, spotting important features. They can draw a simple map and use a key of symbols they use on the map. They compare desert regions and the seaside with their own locality and they find out a little about countries such as Holland when their toy bear, *Barnaby*, visits. Teachers emphasise specific vocabulary for topic work and encourage the pupils to use terms appropriately. They make links between the two subjects well so that, for instance, pupils develop an understanding of geographical and historical aspects of the seaside.
103. In history, pupils compare buildings in London in 1666 with buildings today, and know there was no electricity or television then. They become more aware of how to use evidence to find out about life in the past, examining artefacts used in a Victorian household such as a carpet beater or flat iron, and talking about Samuel Pepys's record of the Great Fire of London. Although work sheets are used in both subjects, the pupils are encouraged to record information in their own words and to express their opinions. This provides good links with literacy and writing skills.
104. All pupils make good progress developing the relevant skills and understanding about some of the differences between localities and between the past and present. They talk enthusiastically about history, saying that they all enjoy the subject and look forward to the lessons. They were all keen to demonstrate how much they recalled about the Great Fire of London and Florence Nightingale.
105. Teaching in geography is good. Planning is good and makes good use of ICT, including the Internet, for research purposes, map work and aerial photographs. Teachers have good subject knowledge for the age range they teach and plan to challenge the thinking of higher-attaining pupils. As no lessons were observed in history, it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching, although the work scrutiny shows good coverage and the pupils' interest and knowledge imply that teaching is at least satisfactory, if not better. There is evidence that tasks are well matched to pupils' needs. Teachers expected more from the higher attaining pupils and provide additional support for those with lower-attainment so that they can respond and complete the task.
106. The recently appointed manager of both subjects has made a satisfactory start in the role. She has rewritten the history policy and, as part of the action plan, is currently reviewing the schemes of work put in place after the last inspection, to provide better links with other subjects, and to emphasise multicultural aspects. Visits are planned to give pupils first-hand experiences, thus enhancing the curriculum. The school has made good improvement in both subjects since the last inspection, when there were no schemes of work, planning was unsatisfactory and topics did not relate to each other. There are detailed schemes in place, which ensure that the relevant programmes of study are taught well. Assessment of pupils' progress has also been improved, and pupils are assessed at the end of each topic and against the lesson objectives.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

107. The school has made significant improvements to the provision for ICT since the last inspection, when pupils' progress was judged unsatisfactory and the subject did not meet statutory requirements. Standards are now average, when they were previously below average, pupils' progress is good, and the subject meets all requirements. Resources have been improved so that the pupils have satisfactory access to computers in their classrooms. Teachers' planning is now good, there are timetabled lessons in which pupils are taught skills directly by the teacher, and pupils have good opportunities to build on the skills they have developed in the Foundation Stage. Pupils use their skills well in other subjects such as English, science, and geography. Staff expertise has improved and is still going through nationally approved training. This good progress is the result of concerted effort by the school to implement successfully its post-inspection action plan.

108. All pupils make good progress developing skills of word processing, handling data and using control devices such as programmable toys. They have access to the Internet for research purposes in subjects such as geography, for example, downloading features of seaside towns from aerial photographs. They use art and graphics packages to good effect in art and design and mathematics. For instance they explore symmetrical and tessellating shapes. They know how to save and print their work and higher-attaining pupils can use the menu to select program files and open them. Staff make good use of their expertise to help lower-attaining pupils by pairing them together when they work on the computers. Pupils in Year 1 know about control devices in the home and the various sources of information there are. They create pictograms of animals successfully using a graphics program, and they collect data about favourite colours and use a program to record their findings. Pupils in Year 2 can use the various functions, such as brush, line, splash and infill in an art program; they understand simple branching keys; and they use a CD-ROM to research general information. They begin to learn how to ask questions of a database and use *floor turtles* to plot a course.
109. Teaching and learning are good. This judgement reflects evidence drawn from a scrutiny of pupils' books and displays, from lessons where ICT was used to support other subjects, as well as from one lesson of direct teaching. Teachers' expertise is developing well, as a result of good training received and back-up support from the local education authority's technical department. All staff are conscientious in planning for the subject and using the machines in group work, for instance in English and mathematics. As a result of the good features in teaching, pupils make strides in their learning. They have good attitudes to the work and enjoy their time on the computer. Because the school uses simple, pupil-friendly recording systems, which the pupils complete themselves, the pupils are developing a good awareness of what they can do.
110. Subject co-ordination is good by the subject manager who took over at the start of the school year. She has helped to carry important developments further and has the opportunity to monitor planning and pupils' work, which she uses to check on coverage of all areas of the subject. Teachers keep a track on pupils' progress by using the same procedure evident in other foundation subjects, namely end-of-unit assessments that show those pupils who have exceeded expectations and those who have struggled to master concepts and skills. The range of software is improving and the school has two microscopes linked to computers, which are used well in art and design and science.

MUSIC

111. There was no music timetabled for Year 2 during the inspection period so it is not possible to make any judgements about standards at the age of seven. What evidence was available was collected from teachers' planning, interviewing the subject manager, listening to tape recordings and talking to pupils. From the tape recording, singing was judged to be satisfactory, although the quality of the recording did not do justice to the overall quality of singing. Talking to pupils revealed that there is appropriate coverage of all aspects of the subject: they sing a variety of songs, have opportunities to compose their own music and listen to a range of music. However, they did not recall listening to any non-western music. They were able to name untuned percussion instruments they had used and talked of composing a piece of music about the weather. These pupils talked enthusiastically about their music lessons and obviously enjoyed them very much. Their preference was for singing, although one pupil preferred composing and playing instruments. They also expressed their opinions about the kind of music they liked to listen to: 'happy' music!
112. No overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching. From the tape recording, which was a singing assembly, there was evidence that the teacher leading the singing spent time discussing the techniques of singing and ways to improve the sound. This would indicate that the quality of some teaching is good.
113. There is a knowledgeable subject manager who has recently updated the policy and scheme of work adapting them to match the needs of the school. The range of untuned percussion has been extended to include some multicultural instruments. However, there is little opportunity for the manager to be involved in music teaching in infant classes, because of her teaching commitment in the nursery.
114. Pupils perform for their parents at Harvest, Christmas and Easter and in class assemblies. There are no extra-curricular activities presently available for the pupils, although previously recorders and choir sessions were held. Musicians have visited the school: a parent who played drums brought the kit to school and showed the pupils how they were played. Another group called *Earthsong* brought along a range of multicultural instruments

and songs for pupils to see and learn. This was enjoyed by all and gave the pupils first-hand experiences of instruments and songs from other parts of the world, thus enhancing their musical awareness.

115. The previous inspection report highlighted weaknesses in planning and length of time allowed for music. Planning and guidance given to teachers have improved and the length of time devoted to the subject has been increased.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

116. There was a limited amount of evidence with which to judge standards and progress. Two lessons were observed, one in each year, and both focused on games skills. A further *Keep Fit* session was observed at the start of one morning, in which all pupils in the reception year and Years 1 and 2 took part, and a photograph album about recent activities in the summer term was made available. Attainment in games skills is average and all pupils build on the good progress they make in the Foundation Stage. This finding is similar to that found at the last inspection.
117. In a lesson that featured a carousel of games activities, pupils in Year 2 showed satisfactory skills in rolling different sized balls to one another and between posts with one pupil defending. Skills of accuracy of direction and weight given to the passes were average. Pupils in Year 1 demonstrated satisfactory skills of throwing beanbags and quoits. In warm-up sessions, pupils showed good awareness of space as they moved around the hall and were careful not to collide with one another. They understand the effect of exercise on their bodies and throughout, were keen and interested in the activities. This was also evident in the *Keep Fit* session, when they took part for 15 minutes in one of many teacher-directed activities designed to make them alert and ready for lessons for the day.
118. From the limited number of observations, teaching is at least satisfactory with prominent elements being the quality of teachers' planning and how well basic skills are taught. However, there were shortcomings in the lessons observed. One lesson was too long and its pace fluctuated as a result. In the other lesson, the teacher was, for too long, busy teaching a new game to groups of pupils in the carousel of activities. As a result, there were missed opportunities to spot good or indifferent performances in other activities and to highlight them to pupils. The presence of classroom assistants would have helped in this aspect.
119. All aspects of subject management are good. Shortcomings found at the last inspection, in planning and assessment, have been improved well. The subject manager, appointed at the start of the school year, has had the opportunity to monitor teaching as well as planning and this has led to staff sharing ideas well and focusing on how they can improve the pupils' skills. Recent training for staff, which followed this monitoring, has led to improved expertise. Teachers assess and record pupils' progress well, and resources have recently been added to and are now good. There is football training, supplied by outside coaches, after school for older pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

120. Since the last inspection the school has worked hard to improve standards and the quality of teaching across the age groups. The last inspection report judged attainment to be low, as the pupils had little breadth of knowledge about key religious figures or practices and their progress was unsatisfactory. Teachers' knowledge was insecure and the subject did not make a satisfactory contribution to spiritual development. All aspects have been improved and the subject meets fully the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
121. During this inspection, there was limited opportunity to observe teaching, so evidence was gathered from a scrutiny of work and teachers' planning, an interview with the subject manager and discussions with pupils. Current standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The work scrutiny shows there is now good coverage of world religions, with an emphasis is on Christianity. Pupils are beginning to recognise the importance of the Bible to Christians and the Torah to Jews. Celebrations such as Diwali, Eid, Easter and Christmas have been included in the studies. Pupils have been introduced to the '5 Ks' of Sikhism, Buddha's enlightenment and the life of Mohammed. Although the written work indicates that the pupils have covered these different world religions, they find it difficult to discuss much detail about them, except for Christianity. In conversation, they recalled the story of Jesus' birth, some of the stories Jesus told and a little information about Moses. To them, friendship is important, as is sharing, caring and thinking of others. Despite the fact the topic currently being taught concerned Buddha, they did not comment on his life. All pupils make satisfactory

progress, as they begin to appreciate how religion is important to people and the way in which they celebrate special occasions such as a wedding.

122. It was not possible to judge the overall quality of teaching, as only one lesson was observed. However, this was a good lesson, well planned but a difficult topic for the pupils. Questioning was used effectively to extend or reinforce pupils' knowledge. The teacher had a good relationship with the class, which encouraged the pupils to answer questions and share their thoughts. The pupils interviewed said they enjoyed lessons and found them interesting. In the one lesson observed pupils were keen to respond to the teacher's questions and listened carefully to each other as they shared their own questions with the class. Although work sheets are used, the pupils have been encouraged to record in their own words and express their feelings, for example in writing about their special place or special people.
123. The recently appointed subject manger has reviewed the scheme and linked it more closely to the new locally agreed syllabus. Resources have been audited and improved, providing a range of artefacts for each religion. Staff training has taken place to increase teachers' knowledge so that they have become more focused on what pupils should learn. Visitors have brought their religions to the pupils. For example, a Muslim talked to the pupils about Islam and a Hindu is due to tell them how to create a Hindu shrine. These first-hand experiences enhance the pupils' understanding of different religions.