

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **KINGSLEY LOWER SCHOOL**

Northampton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121915

Headteacher: Brian Morgan

Reporting inspector: Brian Aldridge  
17454

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> April to 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2002

Inspection number: 194902

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wallace Road Northampton
Postcode:	NN2 7EE
Telephone number:	01604 713822
Fax number:	01604 718586
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	David Hughes
Date of previous inspection:	13 <sup>th</sup> May 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17454	Brian Aldridge	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs English as an additional language English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education	What should the school do to improve further The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed
13526	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents
20911	Judy Dawson	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Science Geography History Music Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>24</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Kingsley Lower School educates 121 four to nine-year-old pupils (65 boys and 56 girls); it is smaller than most other primary schools. A significant proportion of parents and carers are in low paid, part time occupations or are unemployed. At the time of the inspection there were 22 children in the reception class which makes up the school's Foundation Stage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (39 per cent) is well above the national average. Eighteen pupils are of minority ethnic heritage, all of whom speak English as their second language and three of whom are at the early stages of learning English. The largest minority group derives from Bangladesh. Of the above average number of pupils with special educational needs (49), only one has a statement. The school caters for pupils with a wide range of special educational needs, including moderate learning, emotional, behavioural and social, autism and physical difficulties. The number with moderate learning difficulties is above average. About one-sixth of the pupils change schools each year. When pupils enter the school attainment is below average.

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

This is a good school, well run by the headteacher and governors. Learning is good because teaching is good and members of staff, governors and, not least, pupils work very hard to create a good learning atmosphere. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve well and standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science
- Overall, the quality of teaching is good
- The school is well led and managed
- Pupils have very positive attitudes
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language is very good
- The provision for music is very good
- Learning opportunities are good in Years 1 to 4

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

- The development of speaking skills
- The quality of education for children in the first two years of the school

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

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

Since the school was last inspected in 1997 standards have risen substantially and all areas of the school's provision, including teaching, have improved in quality. The school has successfully addressed the issues identified in the last report. Good quality assessment systems, careful tracking of pupils' progress and monitoring and improving teaching have all had a positive effect on standards. The school has also instituted a system of target setting. The school's targets, once considered to be ambitious, are now thought of as the norm, and all individuals and classes have demanding targets. Learning opportunities are now good, including the provision for information and communication technology. The improvements brought about by better leadership are very good and the school has the capacity to make further improvements.

## 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	C	C	B	A
Writing	D	C	B	A
Mathematics	A	B	B	A

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

Standards have improved very well in the space of five years without a significant change of the attainment of children on entry to the school. At the last inspection standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT were judged to be below average for pupils in Years 2 and 4. Test results for Year 2 pupils show standards in reading and writing have risen from well below average to above average and in mathematics have been maintained at above average levels. Assessments in science show above average standards by the end of Year 2. In the current Year 2 standards are average in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Standards are lower this year because there are more pupils with special educational needs than in 2001. In Year 4 standards are above average in English, mathematics and science and average in ICT. In almost all of the other subjects standards are at the expected levels. The two exceptions to this are pupils' speaking skills, which are below average, and in music where standards are well above the expected levels for Year 2 and Year 4 pupils. Children's learning is satisfactory in the reception class; standards rise from below average when they enter the school to the expected levels in most of their areas of learning. The exceptions are in children's language and literacy skills, which remain below the expected levels, and in social development, which exceeds expected levels. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language learn very well and make very good progress. Pupils who learn faster than other pupils achieve well as teachers in most classes set work that is difficult without being too hard.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes are very good, pupils want to learn and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in the playground and in classrooms.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils develop well as individuals showing care to one another and are always keen to help their teachers.
Attendance	Attendance has improved and is now satisfactory.

Pupils care for each other and show respect and consideration. From the reception class onwards pupils develop very good independent working skills.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good. In general teachers have good subject knowledge and set work that makes pupils think and work hard. During interesting lessons teachers help pupils to behave well and listen attentively to adults and other children. Learning is more effective in Years 2, 3 and 4 because teachers in these classes expect pupils to do more and they plan work that is based on what pupils already know. In the reception class and Year 1 although the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, expectations are not high enough for those pupils who learn faster than others, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Carefully written lesson plans in Years 2, 3 and 4 show links between subjects, and teachers expect pupils to complete lots of work to high standards. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are well catered for. The school's work for these pupils is very good and they learn well. Because the teachers plan work that is built well on what pupils already know and can do, pupils are confident and very keen to learn. The skills of reading, writing, number and ICT are mostly taught well. A weakness in teaching is the development of pupils' speaking skills. Too often, pupils' mispronounce words or use incorrect words without being corrected. Additionally, at times teachers' own speech patterns do not help pupils to hear how words should be pronounced or how sentences should be constructed. Although all of the teachers know pupils well, records of children's day-to-day progress are patchy in the reception class and Year 1. The headteacher provides an excellent example of teaching; his high levels of skills and methods are beneficial in the drive to maintain the improvement in teaching seen since the last inspection.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Learning opportunities in the reception class are satisfactory and in Years 1 to 4 good. Children in the reception class are not given the opportunity to progress to the first stages of the National Curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good; children with special educational needs are identified early and have their needs met very well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good; pupils learn English quickly and successfully and those pupils who learn English and who have special educational needs have their needs assessed well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall with particular strengths in the provision for spiritual, moral and social development. In some cases the notes on pupils' personal development are of very high quality
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of its pupils.

Generally the relationship with parents is good. The information provided for parents is excellent. Some parents work hard to help their children. Too many parents choose not to attend the activities organised by the school.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the headteacher and senior teachers are good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors know the school well; they understand what the school does well and where it needs to improve.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school checks its work well; there has been a very good improvement in the assessment systems that the school uses.
The strategic use of resources	The school spends its money sensibly and there are excellent systems to manage the school's finances.

The school's building and resources are adequate and staffing is good. There has been a good improvement in the computer equipment available. The library is well furnished but does not have enough books. The school applies the principles of best value well.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like coming to school and their behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Children receive the right amount of work, are expected to work hard and are helped to become mature.</li> <li>• Teaching is good, children make good progress and they feel well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents felt they were not well informed nor that the school worked closely with them</li> <li>• Some parents wanted more activities after school.</li> </ul>

Very few parents attended the pre-inspection meeting or returned the questionnaire. Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments. However, the information parents receive is excellent and covers the school's work well. Inspectors judge the extra-curricular activities to be adequate for the age of pupils served by the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS**

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

1. At the last inspection standards were judged to be below average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) in Years 2 and 4. In all of the other subjects of the curriculum standards were judged to be at the expected levels with the exception of music, where standards were above expectations. Since that time there has been a considerable improvement. This is due to a number of factors.
  - Teaching is now good; a significant improvement since the last inspection when almost a quarter of the lessons were thought to be unsatisfactory. There were no unsatisfactory lessons observed this time and the proportion of lessons taught well has increased.
  - The school sets itself challenging targets, which are continually checked; if pupils are achieving well, targets are increased.
  - The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have helped to improve the rate of learning in English and mathematics.
  - The school has a much sharper focus on improving standards and ensuring each pupil achieves as well as possible.
2. In the space of five years standards have risen without a significant change of the attainment on entry to the school. In the 2001 Year 2 tests, results were above the average of all schools and well above the average of similar schools in reading, writing and mathematics. Assessments in science are well above average. Standards in reading and writing have risen from well below average to above average and in mathematics have been maintained at above average levels. Boys have done particularly well, showing a marked improvement to reach similar standards to those of girls.
3. Learning is good in Years 2, 3 and 4 and satisfactory in the reception class and Year 1. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Records of their progress are well maintained and provide a very good basis for teachers' plans. Children in their reception class achieve well in their personal, social and creative development. In their physical development and their understanding and knowledge of the world, children reach the levels expected of them at the end of the reception year. In communication, language and literacy and mathematical development they do not reach the expected levels because teaching does not extend children sufficiently. In other classes pupils who learn faster than other pupils are also well served. In these classes pupils are given practical and challenging activities that require them to think hard about what they have to do. As teachers' expectations are high, pupils work hard and learn well in lessons.
4. Pupils achieve well. They enter the school attaining below average standards and leave attaining above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Inspectors found that standards in the present Year 2 are in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science. These standards are lower than last year's Year 2 results because there are more pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2. However, as pupils enter Year 1 attaining just below the Early Learning Goals they achieve well. In Year 4 standards in the same subjects are above average, again showing that pupils achieve well. This confirms the assessment and tests the school

runs for Year 4 pupils. Pupils' speaking skills are slightly below average. Although confident, they have difficulty in talking about what they know and use colloquialisms inappropriately. Children and pupils do not have their speech corrected often enough and as a consequence do not understand when it is appropriate to use standard English. Pupils listen well, generally where teachers emphasise how important it is to listen to other people. They are patient as their peers explain their work and when working in pairs and small groups. Reading skills are not well developed in the reception class, and inaccuracies in teaching letter sounds do not help pupils to form words. In other classes pupils learn well. They use their reading skills in a number of ways, for example, when finding information in books and on the Internet. Pupils write good quality poetry and stories; work is challenging and they are given good examples from authors and poets as a basis for their work. Many aspects of handwriting, including letter formation, are generally satisfactory but the overall presentation of work is not as good as it could be. A strength of achievement in English is how well pupils use their skills in other subjects areas. In discussion in religious education, history and science, when making notes of pupils' opinions and when writing reports, pupils use their English skills to good effect.

5. Pupils learn well in mathematics. By Year 2 pupils remember number facts to help them calculate. They understand fractions and almost all of them use standard measures. They display information using graphs. By the end of Year 4 higher attaining pupils and some others work at the levels expected of average Year 6 pupils. They develop their own methods for solving problems and use negative numbers. Average and above average pupils understand the similarities between fractions and decimals. Science standards are average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 4. Pupils in Year 2 conduct their own tests and investigations, have a sound understanding of the life cycle of plants and construct simple circuits. In Year 4 pupils understand how to control the variables in investigations to isolate the important element of their tests. Pupils enjoy investigative work and they record their findings, although not enough is expected of brighter pupils when recording their work.
6. Standards in ICT are at the expected levels in Years 2 and 4. Pupils' work covers all of the appropriate aspects of the National Curriculum. They present their work in a number of ways; word processing, illustrations and copying pictures from commercial programs into their own work. A strength of pupils' work in ICT is the use of CD-ROMs and the Internet for research. Teachers ensure pupils have plenty of opportunities to develop their skills in this area. Pupils are skilled at transferring the techniques they have learned in English into ICT, for example, using reference books and skimming and scanning text for important words.
7. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, aspects of physical education and religious education are at the expected levels. Standards in music are above the expected levels in Year 2 and well above the expected levels in Year 4. This is entirely due to the high quality of the specialist teaching in the subject. Overall, there has been a significant improvement in standards and achievement since the last inspection.

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

8. Pupils' very good attitudes to school, good behaviour and very good relationships have a very positive impact on both their academic achievements and personal development. Standards have improved from the level reported at the time of the last inspection.

9. Pupils are keen to come to school, happy in their school and talk with friendly enthusiasm about their activities. Pupils who have recently joined the school including those from ethnic minority backgrounds say they have been made welcome by staff and pupils. The youngest pupils in the Foundation Stage have settled into school well and are developing good attitudes to learning, responding well to the range of activities provided. For instance, in the reception class the great enthusiasm and interest seen in a music lesson had a very positive impact on their creative development.
10. Throughout the school pupils show very good attitudes to learning in lessons and work very hard. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson all pupils worked very hard helping them understand that subtraction is the reverse of addition. Attitudes in music lessons are particularly good with a positive impact on standards in this subject. Pupils' very positive attitudes and enthusiasm for reading enhances standards.
11. Behaviour is good. No pupils have been excluded over the last two years, a figure well below the national average. Pupils have a strong sense of fairness and are developing a very good awareness of the impact of their actions on others. Pupils in Year 4 talk with good understanding and feeling about what they like and dislike about the behaviour of others. No bullying, racist or sexist behaviour was observed during the inspection and pupils show no concerns in these areas. Pupils talk about the family feel of the school and have no fears of bullying because they feel the school treats everyone fairly. Behaviour at lunchtimes and in the playground is good overall although a few pupils are a little over aggressive in the playground. The manners and politeness shown by younger pupils in the dining hall show immaturity and are of a barely satisfactory standard. Staff members work hard to improve table manners successfully as the behaviour of older pupils in the dining hall is good.
12. Personal development is very good. All pupils undertake duties and responsibilities keenly. Pupils develop a very mature and responsive attitude to the concern for others. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are made to feel special and important in their roles as "Bluecaps" and their response is very good in undertaking a range of helpful duties.
13. Relationships are very good throughout the school. Interactions between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves both in lessons and around the school are most productive as is the encouragement given to pupils to develop independence. Pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language are very positive about school and are fully included in and contribute very well to all lessons and activities. They are helped to develop their own self-esteem very well and are readily accepted by their peers.
14. Attendance rates are satisfactory, being about the average for primary schools. They have shown a significant increase from last year when high levels of sickness led to a poor overall level. The level of unauthorised absences is low. A significant number of pupils are away from school because of sickness.

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

15. During the last inspection the quality of teaching in a quarter of all lessons observed was unsatisfactory. Classified as being satisfactory overall, much of the teaching in English, mathematics and science lacked focus as too little attention was given to what was to be learned. Teaching is now good overall; it is satisfactory in the reception class and Year 1 and at least good in Years 2, 3 and 4. Good quality aspects were seen in all classes. In almost a tenth of the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was excellent. These were in music lessons all of which are taught by the headteacher. In

a sixth of the lessons the quality of teaching was very good; all but one of these lesson was observed in Year 2, the other in Year 3. Almost a half of the lessons were taught well and about a quarter taught satisfactorily. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection and has supported better rates of learning and higher standards.

16. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the reception class although areas for improvement in teaching are predominantly in this class. There are some minor elements that should be improved in all classes. However, the strengths in teaching far outweigh the aspects that require further support. In the reception class the quality and use of assessment is unsatisfactory. Although the teacher and learning support assistant have good levels of knowledge about how well pupils are doing during each day, there are few records to track progress over time and this means that planning cannot be based on what children have learned. This means that the teaching of basic skills, including reading and writing is at best satisfactory and does not rise to the high standards seen in other classes. In other classes the quality and use of assessment, including marking is satisfactory in Year 1, good in Year 4 and very good in Years 2 and 3. At times unhelpful marking in Year 1 does not promote effective learning. For example, in response to a pupil using the word 'been' to refer to edible beans, the teacher crossed out the word and wrote, 'the wrong kind of been'. In the reception class and Year 1 teachers do not expect enough of pupils who are capable of learning at a faster rate than others, partly because their planning is based on inadequate assessments. In Years 2, 3 and 4 where records are very good, and at times excellent, pupils gain a very good understanding of what they have to do to produce better work. In Year 3 the teacher asks pupils to evaluate their work by judging how well they have completed the set tasks and to evaluate their work rate. In Years 2, 3 and 4 teachers write helpful comments, often recording how well pupils have done but also offering advice about what to do next.
17. Teachers plan well for lessons. In the reception class, lessons about knowledge and understanding of the world are well planned. In other classes teachers make good use of resources. They deploy learning support assistants well and adults help pupils to learn effectively. Of particular note is the support offered to pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language. These pupils are supported very well. Lessons plans show what these pupils should do and pupils' work is based very closely on individual education plans. Teachers are particularly skilled at showing pupils links between their learning in different subjects.
18. Teaching methods are good across the school. Teachers use computers and the Internet well. They research the subjects well and come to lessons well prepared with good levels of subject knowledge. Teachers set good examples for pupils in the way they use technical vocabulary in subjects such as mathematics, science and ICT. Teachers do not always correct pupils' spoken English sufficiently well. Too often pupils use incorrect tenses and at times teachers' language is not modelled on correct pronunciation. In most lessons teachers give pupils good opportunities to think about their own responses to ideas. Lessons in literacy, science, art and music encourage pupils to develop positive attitudes about their behaviour, working with others and how people live different but equal lives. Many examples of this were seen and included the artefacts of Native Americans, the lives and achievements of the ancient Greeks and how playing music together with others is magical.
19. The management of pupils is very good in the reception class and good elsewhere. In the reception class children are encouraged to develop their social skills and often achieve above the expected levels for their age. They help and support each other,

play well together and manage their own snack time very well. They are impressively independent. In other classes teachers offer good support and help pupils to improve their behaviour. For example, in Year 2 the teacher and learning support assistant work very closely together to manage behaviour during carpet sessions. Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high across the school. Pupils are encouraged to become independent learners with success. They are responsible for their own resources and manage their work routines well. Pupils are also responsible for completing their homework, the quality of which improves, as pupils get older. In Years 3 and 4 the use of homework files is very good, providing parents with a very good insight into their children's progress. Targets, curriculum details, helpful reminders as well as homework are included.

20. Teaching of exemplary quality was observed in the music lessons taught by the headteacher. Pupils were often entranced as he led the pupils on a journey that was laced with excitement, humour and plenty of learning. As pupils in Year 4 were introduced to the term ostinato for the first time, the headteacher explained that he often became confused and said 'tin of tomatoes'. On cue, each time the headteacher slipped and said tin of tomatoes, the whole class delighted in correcting him. By the end of the lesson all of the pupils understood what the term meant and had produced a pattern of sounds in their groups. With reception children a host of methods were used to sustain learning and captivate the children. In all of the music lessons and in the assemblies taken by the headteacher, important aspects of learning are emphasised. How should we work together, how can we solve this problem, what would you do were real questions which encouraged pupils to think and dig deeply into issues. Subject knowledge, methods, expectations and pace are of the highest quality. However, no efforts are made to use the headteacher's skills to further improve the quality of teaching. Opportunities to pass on high quality skills and opportunities to continue the work in assemblies in the classroom are not taken up.

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

21. The school provides its pupils with a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. There is an appropriate curriculum for the children in the reception class, designed to lead the children towards the early learning goals for the end of the Foundation Stage. The curriculum for these children provides a good range of interesting activities, relevant to their experience. Personal and social development and creative development are particularly well planned for. All the subjects of the National Curriculum are planned effectively and the school meets the requirements of the Northamptonshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. A strength of the curriculum throughout the school is the way the subject planning includes relevant links to other subjects. ICT is used to support several subjects. There is very good provision for music because of the specialist teaching and challenging curriculum. A weakness in the curriculum planning is the lack of continuity between the Foundation Stage and Year 1. There are too few opportunities for the more able children in the reception class to work within the first stages of the National Curriculum. That these children cannot make the progress they are capable of is particularly apparent in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. The actual taught time falls below the recommended time for pupils in Years 3 and 4. A minor weakness is the lack of an overall plan to chart the skill development in geography and history.
22. The provision for literacy and numeracy is good, particularly from Year 2 to Year 4. Both the literacy and the numeracy strategies are planned effectively. The planning gives the teachers clear expectations for the different abilities within their classes and

provides challenging targets for all pupils. The three-part lesson structure is well established. Both literacy and numeracy provision, while sound, are less effective in the reception and Year 1 classes because the planning does not challenge all the children and pupils.

23. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language is very good. Carefully constructed records show that pupils make at least good progress and often their progress is very good. These records and the analysis of progress are exemplary and show exactly how pupils in each class are doing and what should be expected of them. Learning support assistants work very well with pupils in classrooms; sitting close to pupils during explanations, they whisper support and further explanations and help pupils to understand what needs to be done in their tasks. In literacy and numeracy lessons they work systematically through the carefully constructed individual education plans to help pupils learn letter sounds and basic number facts.
24. There is an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities for pupils of this age that includes an after school animal club and gardening club. The well-planned homework, which includes a good range of subjects, is effective at extending pupils' learning and research skills beyond the school day.
25. All classes provide personal, social and health education for the pupils. Pupils are taught how to keep healthy and there is appropriate provision for sex education within the science curriculum. There are relevant discussions to embrace personal and social issues. These include both planned work and response to day-to-day issues in school or at home. However, beyond the use of medicine, the school does not provide instruction about drugs and the dangers of drug abuse.
26. There are good links with the community. The friends of the school not only provide fund-raising events to, for example, purchase outdoor equipment for the reception class, but also contribute to pupils' learning. For example, grandparents give talks about World War 2 and the "Fifties". A grandmother helps with the swimming and there are good links with the site manager for Bradlaugh Fields. There are plans afoot for Golden Jubilee celebrations.
27. The nursery provides excellent records of the children joining the reception class. There is an exchange of visits before children start school. These, combined with part-time attendance in the first weeks of term, are effective in helping the children settle into school. Both schools are liaising to create a common format for monitoring the children's progress. This will provide continuity in learning for the new reception children. The school is establishing links with the secondary schools in preparation for the change to becoming a primary school for pupils up to eleven. Links with the present middle schools are less effective, in spite of the school's efforts. There are good curricular links with other first schools in the area. Kingsley Lower School has adopted and adapted common schemes of work created by a cluster of schools and the Local Education Authority. These, combined with government guidance for planning the curriculum, have been effective in improving the provision since the last inspection.
28. The schools' provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Cultural development is good. There has been a significant improvement in these aspects of the curriculum since the last inspection when the provision for moral and social development was good and spiritual and cultural provision was satisfactory.

29. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to reflect about and respond to issues within the curriculum. In a music lesson the reception children were interpreting the music they were listening to, selecting a happy or sad clown's face and showing, with movement and facial expression, how the music made them feel. One child's response was; "I heard a smile in the music". High quality assemblies are rich in opportunities for the pupils to explore feelings and to discuss their response to the themes. A clever use of an umbrella to tell the story of the Prodigal Son, for example, generated a range of relevant feelings. As the Prodigal Son took his dad's umbrella and walked away the pupil said he felt cold without his mum. The umbrella became a snooker cue, a chandelier, a table and a trough in turn as the story developed, extending imagination as well as reflection about the issues in the story. Candles mark the quiet reflection and prayer time in assemblies to which the pupils respond very well. Year 4 pupils, learning about Saul's journey to Damascus, not only discussed how he must have felt when he became blind, but also explored issues relating to persecution and what motivates the perpetrators. Achievement is celebrated and effort is respected throughout the school. At the end of a music lesson, for example, pupils and teacher alike knew they had created "a little bit of magic".
30. All the adults in school are consistent in providing good role models to support pupils' moral and social development. There are simple rules based on positive statements about appropriate behaviour, and good behaviour and attitudes are noted and praised. Year 4 pupils were encouraged to discuss ways to improve "youth problems" in their personal, social and health education lesson and the ways they, and governments, can promote positive behaviour. Many pupils have targets to support good behaviour and relationships and teachers work hard to ensure that pupils feel included and valued. Children in the reception class are encouraged to be independent and responsible for their actions and to work and play amicably and cooperatively. Older pupils have "thinking partners" in many lessons who share ideas and check answers. This helps to develop consultation and negotiation between pupils. Group work is a regular part of most lessons and pupils are expected to work with concentration and commitment. Pupils support charities and sing to residential homes within the community.
31. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills. The music lessons, taught by the headteacher throughout the school, promote high standards of performance and understanding of the music of our own and other cultures. Links with language, art and dance provide rich cultural and creative experiences for all pupils. Pupils learn about similarities and differences between major religions, times and cultures. Year 1 pupils compare Victorian life with life today. In Year 4, pupils interpret law through the Torah and Bible. Year 3 has examples of Aboriginal art and younger pupils have behaviour awards based on the Chinese calendar. Some pupils learn the violin or the keyboard. While cultural provision is good overall and the school prepares pupils well for life in an ethnically diverse society, there are few opportunities for pupils to have first hand experience of other faiths, although some pupils attend Mosque School. There are no visits to the Mosque or temple and no religious leaders from religions other than Christianity visit school. Other external cultural experiences are rare.

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

32. Pupils are very well cared for. The quality of care and welfare has improved from the good level reported at the time of the last inspection. Adults provide very good, sensitive personal support which enables pupils to feel secure and develop very confident attitudes to learning. Procedures and awareness in relation to child protection are very good. The headteacher rightly recognises the importance of regular reminders to staff



about awareness towards potential issues and careful and sensitive handling of any concerns.

33. The school has very good systems for assessing what the pupils can do and measuring how well they are achieving. Regular tests at the end of units of work as well as statutory and nationally accredited tests ensure that the teachers know how well the pupils are learning. Formal tests are correlated and generated in a clear and easily accessible computer-generated format. This data is used to track the progress of different groups of pupils, year groups, boys and girls differences in ethnicity and pupils of different abilities. A very effective colour coding system tracks individual pupil's rate of progress. The information is used to set targets negotiated with the pupils.
34. Procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs are very good and very well coordinated. The school makes every effort to offer support and guidance for pupils and parents as soon as possible. Discussions are held with the school's partner nursery school, children are closely observed in the reception class and if there are concerns, parents are contacted at the earliest opportunity. Individual plans are of very good quality and based precisely on pupils' needs.
35. The assessments in English, mathematics and science have enabled the teachers to plan work for pupils of different abilities and have been a significant factor in the improved standards over the last few years. Analysis of the results identified writing as a relative weakness and the school has this as an area for improvement. Pupils' achievements in other subjects are noted after each unit of work and include different expectations for different groups of pupils. Several teachers also make notes about pupils' progress, especially their personal and social development. The subject leader for mathematics has immaculate records and assessments and has analysed the response to different questions in the national tests. She has used the results of this to identify common weaknesses and adjusted the mathematics' curriculum to address this. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 now use coins regularly alongside their number work.
36. Assessment procedures are less well developed in the reception class where there is little assessment relating to the children's physical and creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. This prevents the teacher accurately matching the activities to the different abilities of the children.
37. Pupils' personal development is monitored very well. Staff know the pupils and their backgrounds very well and this allows them to give very good individual support. Personal needs are dealt with very effectively. The headteacher is particularly aware of the needs of looked after children and provides most sensitive and caring support. Good procedures and a warm, inviting environment help pupils to settle well in reception classes. At the end of sessions particular care is taken in ensuring all children remain in the school until collected by a responsible person. Health and safety procedures and monitoring are good. All appropriate risks are assessed very thoroughly. First aid and accident procedures are very good. The school is very clean, tidy and secure.
38. The school has a very good behaviour policy. The strong emphasis on developing pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem is having a positive impact especially on their personal development. Procedures to deal with potential issues, such as bullying or racist behaviour, are very good and parents and pupils feel confident that the school handles them fairly and effectively. Monitoring systems in relation to and training of staff in dealing with racial incidents are very good.

39. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good and have been helped to increase overall attendance rates by almost five per cent in the current year. Records are maintained very consistently and enable staff to pick up potential problems quickly.

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

40. The partnership with parents is very good and contributes very well towards pupils' attitudes to school and their learning; standards have improved since the previous inspection. Although relatively few parents passed on their views to the inspection team at the pre-inspection meeting, through the parental questionnaires and in discussions with inspectors, their views about the school were positive. They feel their children like school, they are making good progress and they behave well. Parents praise the leadership of the headteacher and the standards of teaching and believe the school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. A small number of parents want more activities to support the curriculum, better information on their child's progress, and felt the school could work more closely with parents. However, inspectors feel the school provides a satisfactory range of activities to support the curriculum. The information parents receive about the school's curriculum, activities and homework is excellent. The school works very closely with parents, valuing their views about the school and its provision for children and pupils.
41. The school provides parents with excellent information about their children's progress, and encouragement to be involved in their children's education, especially through the regular newsletters and homework files. Annual reports are excellent giving very helpful details on attainment and progress, excellent information on personal development, and precise targets for improvement, encouraging parents to help their children. For example, a pupil in Year 2 is encouraged to use known facts to help calculate unknown facts (e.g. use  $4+5$  to help calculate  $44+5$ ). This is very supportive of pupils' progress and helpful to parents. Information provided at the very well attended and regular consultation sessions is of a very high quality and is valued by parents. The school provides an "open door" to parents, who feel they are made very welcome. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved in their child's education very well. The school keeps them very well informed.
42. Most parents are involved well in their children's education by supporting homework, providing help in the classroom, attending consultation sessions and fundraising through the School Association. The school works hard to remind parents about regular, prompt attendance. Most are now co-operating well although a number still allow their children to be absent too often.

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

43. The headteacher is a good leader and manager. He has successfully led the school through a period of change and managed the improvements indicated as necessary by the last inspection. His consideration for members of staff, his own excellent teaching skills and the development of systems to assess pupils and track their progress has meant that the school has met its targets for improvement. This has resulted in raised standards and the quality of teaching and developed the learning opportunities available to pupils. He has developed a good team of hard working members of staff and has the support of the parents and the governing body. The headteacher is working without the support of a deputy headteacher but is very well supported by senior teachers. The

school's commitment to raising standards and tackling developments is very good. Staff members are in good heart and look forward to the school developing to accept the full primary age range.

44. The work of the governing body is good. Experienced governors provide very good support for the headteacher and the school, offering wise and watchful comments. They have a very good understanding of what the school does well and where it needs to improve. Further, they have a good understanding of what the school should do to bring about these improvements. This is because they study carefully the assessment information provided by the headteacher and coordinators. They have very strong links with subject areas and teachers. The targets they have set for the headteacher are pertinent and are aimed at improving the provision in the school. Governors are aware of the headteacher's workload and the steps they should take to prepare the school for transition to the full primary age range. They are good advocates for the school and recognise the need to plan ahead carefully.
45. The school monitors teaching, learning and standards well. The headteacher has developed very good systems for tracking pupils' progress and for identifying what areas of the curriculum should be improved to extend pupils' learning. The school's performance management processes now lag behind those of most other schools as new members of staff are given time to settle in the school. However, teachers are well supported and subject managers have good levels of understanding about their subjects.
46. The management of finances is very good. School-based systems are excellent and the school makes effective use of computers to manage its budget. Administrative support is very good and supports the work in classrooms very efficiently without being unduly obtrusive. The school development plan is properly costed; although coordinators do not bid for budgets they oversee the purchasing of resources well. The school uses its budget well to support learning and ensures that purchases are cost-effective and based on the principles of best value. The school's new ICT suite is a good example of this work. It has enhanced the quality of ICT provision and improved learning in the subject.
47. Staff are well qualified and there is a suitable mix of experience within the teaching staff. The coordination of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those who learn English as an additional language is very good. Excellent systems track pupils' progress and the coordination of these aspects is very effective. The school building is adequate and governors have plenty of good ideas to improve the standard of the accommodation to meet the needs of ten and eleven-year-olds. The library, although well furnished, is a little cramped and does not have enough books.

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

48. In order to improve the standards and quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
  - 1) \*Improve speaking skills throughout the school by:
    - ensuring adults always use correct pronunciation and grammar so that they consistently act as good models for pupils
    - providing more opportunities for pupils to speak formally in lessons and at other times
    - ensuring adults correct pupils' articulation and grammar
    - expecting more than one word answers to teachers' questions

*(Paragraphs 4, 18, 50, 54, 56, 68, 70)*

- 2) \*Improve the quality of provision in the first two years of the school by
- ensuring that assessments and records of children's and pupils' progress are kept in all aspects of learning
  - using these assessments and records to ensure that children in the reception class have access to the National Curriculum where appropriate
  - provide in-service training to support the teaching of the literacy and numeracy in reception and Year 1

*(Paragraphs 3, 15, 16, 21, 22, 50, 57, 59, 75, 77, 80, 89)*

Minor issues which the governors may wish to include in their action plan:

Review the amount of time available for teaching in Years 3 and 4 - *(Paragraph 21)*

\*Improve the stock of library books - *(Paragraphs 47, 71)*

\*Provide education in drug abuse - *(Paragraph 25)*

\*Map the development of skills in geography and history - *(Paragraphs 21, 99)*

**\* Issues already identified by governors and staff and in the process of development.**

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	33
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	13

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	5	16	9	0	0	0
Percentage	9%	15%	48%	27%	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. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR-Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		121
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		47

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR-Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		49

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	18

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

%
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#### Unauthorised absence

%
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School data	11
National comparative data	5.6

School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	19	7	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	19	19
	Girls	6	6	7
	Total	23	25	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (84)	96 (94)	100 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	17	19
	Girls	6	6	6
	Total	21	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (81)	88 (90)	96 (94)
	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	3
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	3
Indian	0
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	7
Chinese	0
White	103
Any other minority ethnic group	3

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

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

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.5
Average class size	24.2

#### **Education support staff: YR-Y4**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	124

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***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.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	303,575
Total expenditure	293,209
Expenditure per pupil	2,065
Balance brought forward from previous year	16,420
Balance carried forward to next year	26,786

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0



*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	121
Number of questionnaires returned	16

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	19	0	0	13
My child is making good progress in school.	44	56	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	63	0	6	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	56	13	6	0
The teaching is good.	31	63	6	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	19	56	19	6	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	13	6	13	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	31	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	38	38	13	13	0
The school is well led and managed.	50	44	6	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	31	63	6	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	0	50	25	19	6

## **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**

49. There has been an improvement in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the previous inspection when aspects of the children's learning were restricted because some activities were over-directed. The children in the present reception class have access to a good range of interesting activities that support the areas of learning for children in the reception year. The provision for children to develop independence and social skills is good, as are the activities promoting the children's creative development. Music lessons are exemplary. Children learn well in these aspects of the curriculum and most exceed the early learning goals for social and creative development. Their knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical development are similar to other reception age children.
50. In communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development, however, the more able children do not have appropriate access to the early stages of the National Curriculum to extend their learning. The teacher is inconsistent in encouraging children to speak in complete sentences. Inaccuracies in the use of grammar and the teaching of skills to use letter sounds when reading, prevent the children making any more than sound progress during the year. The majority of the children do not achieve the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy and mathematical development by the end of the reception year. The teacher does not make enough use of assessment to establish what the children can do across the areas of learning so some children do not have sufficiently challenging work. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall.
51. Children with special educational needs are identified early. Excellent records from the nursery that most children have attended enable the school to take swift action to support these children. Individual education plans set small targets for learning and the special educational needs coordinator monitors progress carefully. These children make good progress as the activities in the classroom support children at the early stages of the foundation stage curriculum very well.

### **Personal and social development**

52. The children enter the reception class with social skills that are below the expected levels although they are similar to the average of the local education authority. The teacher and classroom assistant are very successful at encouraging the children to be responsible for their own actions. The arrangements for snack time, for example, where children serve each other with drinks and help themselves to snacks, are very good. Children are polite and share and help each other. They have well-established conventions for snack time, washing their hands and clearing away. The teacher arranges the equipment in the classroom well, enabling the children to get their own materials to make models involving glue, scissors and sticky tape without adult intervention. Children play and work together well, almost always considering other children when planning their activities. They all enjoy their activities and try to do their best usually staying with the activity for sustained periods.
53. The adults provide good role models. They are polite to each other and the children. Children feel their efforts are valued and their comments and questions are responded to with appropriate seriousness and consideration. As a result, children respect each other's points of view and are sensitive to the feelings of characters in the stories they

hear. In the story of “Don’t Forget the Bacon” the children knew exactly what mum might have said when her son, having remembered everything else on the shopping list, forgot the bacon.

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

54. The children are confident speakers, making statements and answering questions appropriately. Most use single words well, often selecting good descriptive words. For example, children used, “angry” “disappointed” “sad” to describe mum’s bacon-less shopping basket. Children are beginning to negotiate with each other although they are less competent in giving reasons why their wishes are better than their peers. They rarely use complete sentences in class discussions. The teacher promotes the use of new words and technical vocabulary, for example “letter” and “speech bubble”. However, the adults do not do enough to encourage the children to speak and answer in full sentences. There is some inconsistency in the use of grammatically correct English that prevents the children establishing good habits when constructing sentences. Many children do not achieve the early learning goals for speaking.
55. Children listen well. They respond to the stories they hear by spontaneously joining in with repeated phrases. They listen with concentration to adults and to each other. In their music lesson the children’s listening was of a high standard. Here they demonstrate high levels of both listening and interpretation. One child for example, when asked why she thought the music she heard was happy, replied; “I heard a smile in the music.” The children expressed their response to the music with high quality movement and described the variations in the pitch of their compositions with words and drawings. The teacher in this lesson had very high expectations of the children’s listening skills that were fully justified by the quality of the performance.
56. The teacher ensures that the children share books with adults regularly. There is a class text daily and the teacher discusses features such as the author, speech bubbles and punctuation. All the children handle books with care and turn pages accurately. The majority identify the writing on a page and know that it conveys meaning. Many children know the sound that individual letters make. However, the teacher is inaccurate in the way she teaches the children to decode words by identifying the sounds within the words. This makes it extremely difficult for the children to read words where a sound is produced by more than one letter, for example “ea” and “br” in “bread”. More able children who have achieved the early learning goals for reading do not have access to more difficult books to extend their learning and they do not read as well as they should. The majority of children do not achieve the early learning goals for reading.
57. Children have access to paper and pencils throughout the day and have plenty of opportunities to “write”. Most children have an attempt at writing their names and some do so accurately. The teacher encourages her class to practise letter and numeral formation in enjoyable ways. For example, in a mathematics lesson, children formed numbers in dry powder paint or a tray of thick liquid. Children made a shopping list and listed “healthy” and “not healthy” food. There are good opportunities for the children to experiment with writing, but the teacher does not expect enough of them. The more able children do not attempt to form sentences and produce efforts at extended text such as stories, sentence captions and accounts. The curriculum, while supporting communication, language and literacy for children in the Foundation Stage, does not make provision for children to progress to the first stage of the National Curriculum. This prevents some children making the progress they should.

## **Mathematical development**

58. The teaching of the early stages of mathematical development is good but is just satisfactory overall. There are plenty of relevant opportunities to extend learning. The teacher is skilful in making the most of opportunities for counting during the school day. Children count as the register is taken to the office. They count the number of children sitting in the circle. In one lesson during the inspection the teacher generated enthusiasm and interest as she asked the children to guess what a partially hidden numeral was and then to put the numerals in order of their value. As a result, later in the week the children spotted that the numbers hanging on a washing line had mysteriously jumped out of order.
59. Children understand mathematical language accurately. They point to the largest teddy although some are insecure about the position of objects and could not put the teddy behind the box. Most children name common flat shapes accurately and sort objects by size and colour. Many count to 10 and some to 20 and beyond. However, the teacher does not extend the children's mathematical skills sufficiently for them to achieve the early learning goals or to enable the more able children to access the National Curriculum. The mathematical experiences are almost always the same for all children. There are very few examples of the children beginning to calculate to find one more or one less than a small set of objects or numbers, combining objects to find the total or taking objects away to subtract.

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

60. The teacher's planning, teaching and organisation of resources for this aspect of the curriculum is good. Children join the reception class with a basic general knowledge. The teacher provides a range of interesting and stimulating activities and follows a series of relevant themes. Children make good progress and most will achieve the early learning goals for knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of the reception year. Children know what foods are healthy and understand the importance of clean hands for cooking or eating. They explore patterns and movement including different types of vehicles. The play area has generated role-play with themes related to their learning. It has been a clinic, for example, and is now a shop. The children have collected pictures of electrical objects. Most have an appropriate understanding of the relationships within families and at school. They have visited the petrol station and, with an adult, bought the class snacks at the local shop. They look at changes in the locality. Some children understand the different needs of babies, children and old people and know some aspects of "a long time ago".
61. All the children use the computers confidently, combining the keyboard and the mouse to move objects on the screen. They know how to use mathematical and letter programs without prompting. They have used a graphics program to create pictures. The children's mouse control is appropriate for their age.

## **Physical development**

62. The provision for outdoor play has improved since the last inspection and teaching is good. There is now a range of wheeled toys and climbing apparatus and a semi-covered area outside the classroom. Wet weather prevented this being used to any extent during the inspection but the children had a lesson in the hall using the large apparatus and a lesson outside where they ran, hopped, skipped or galloped, stood on one leg and practiced throwing and catching. The children have appropriate skills for their age, although the teacher does not do enough direct instruction to help the

children improve their skills. In their music lesson the children demonstrated a very good use of their bodies to express mood and feelings and showed a good use of space and awareness of others.

63. Children cut, stick materials together and handle small tools well. They use woodworking tools, with adult support, to saw wood. The children mould malleable materials like pastry, dough and wet sand. Almost all hold pencils, brushes and crayons correctly and the teacher ensures that the children who find this difficult have appropriate tools to help them. The independence the children demonstrate when using tools in the classroom shows that they are confident in their skills and apply them well.

### **Creative development**

64. The many opportunities provided for the children to paint and make models, puppets, cards or other objects independently and to their own design are effective in promoting the children's creative development. During one session, for example, a child chose a square on paper to make a face, cut his paper to shape and attached a strip at the back with sticky tape to create a finger puppet. He used this for a while, pretending to be the character he had created. Alongside him a girl made a good stick puppet using a straw for the stick and wool for the hair. The children's artwork consists of a range of painting and printing, collage, pattern making and pictures with different textures.
65. In an exemplary music lesson, the children created music using tuned percussion. Their partners listened and attempted, with some success, to copy the melody, identifying high and low sounds. They sing tunefully and enthusiastically, again spotting when the music gets lower. They learn swiftly and with total commitment and enjoyment. Eastern European music was used for the children identify the mood and sad and happy clown faces danced to the children's prompts. This was particularly challenging because, although the music was rhythmical and lively, it was in a minor key, adding a touch of melancholy. This very clever choice of music led the children to explore different movements and expressions and to think carefully about their movements. The children's achievements were well above average for their age due to the excellent teaching and the very high expectations of the teacher.

### **ENGLISH**

66. In four years the standards achieved by Year 2 pupils in the national tests in reading and writing have moved from well below average to above the average of all schools and well above the average of similar schools. Brighter pupils achieve well in reading and writing. Since the last inspection, boys have achieved particularly well as the school has concentrated on increasing their rates of learning in lessons.
67. Inspectors found that in the current Year 2 standards in listening, reading and writing are average and in Year 4 standards in these aspects are above average. In Year 2 standards are lower this year than last because there are more pupils with special educational needs in the year group. At the last inspection standards and progress were judged to be unsatisfactory. All pupils, whether they learn quickly or have particular educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. Now inspectors find there are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. The only aspect of English not to have made this significant improvement is speaking, in which standards are below average in Year 2 and Year 4.

68. Though standards in speaking are not as high as other aspects of English, pupils achieve well given their abilities on entering Year 1. Often children speak in single words and with errors in pronunciation and articulation and in turn this leads to errors in writing and how words are pronounced when reading. Pupils make adequate progress in Year 1 and do well in Years 2, 3 and 4. The consistent application of the national strategy for literacy ensures that pupils learn the conventions of spelling, handwriting and grammar. Skilled teaching and high expectations in Years 2, 3 and 4 shows in the high quality of the content of pupils' writing and in their understanding of what they have read. However, mispronounced words are insufficiently corrected and at times some teachers use colloquialisms and dialect grammatical construction in sentences. This does not develop in pupils a model of spoken English which will help them identify sounds when reading, spelling and constructing sentences correctly as they grow older. When teachers intervene, for example in a Year 1 ICT lesson, pupils' learning is effective and they learn not to repeat mistakes.
69. In most lessons pupils are given opportunities to talk about their work. In Years 2, 3 and 4 this is particularly effective. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils spoke clearly but words were mispronounced. The teachers' high expectations of pupils adding to their vocabulary helped develop a sense of learning. Pupils became more skilled at using technical words after they had scanned a piece of writing for key words. Higher attaining pupils asked important and interesting questions – Why do snakes hiss? – which caused further discussion and research. In this class the teacher and learning support assistant work very closely to very good effect to develop pupils' concentration and listening skills. Pupils are reminded about the class 'carpet rules' as the teacher shows a series of illustrated cards. If a pupil is seen not to be listening, the learning support assistant discreetly shows the child the listening card and immediately concentration is resumed. Listening skills are further developed in Years 3 and 4 and in the latter year group pupils are asked to record the opinions of others in note form.
70. Reading is average in Year 2 and above average in Year 4, showing pupils make good progress in both key stages. By Year 2 pupils are competent readers. Pupils read with expression and understanding. At times their sounding of letters to form words is unsure and often bring errors in their spoken English into their reading; for example, 'fing' for thing and 'wiv' for with. They enjoy reading and talk about their books. They say why a particular book is their favourite and above average pupils talk about their favourite authors and why they like reading certain books. Above average pupils see differences in the characters in stories and along with average readers begin to predict what might happen to the storyline.
71. Throughout the school pupils understand the difference between fiction and factual writing. They develop good research skills so they are able to find information in books and when using the Internet. If pupils are asked to find a piece of information they have a very good understanding of how to locate information in books. They understand the significance of the contents page, the index and glossary. From Year 2 upwards, pupils understand the similarities and difference between finding information in books, when using CD-ROMs or the Internet. However, pupils find it difficult to say how they would find a book in the first place. The school's library is well furnished and although there are books in classrooms, there are too few books in the library. The school's use of computers in English is good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their reading. Their individual education plans are very good and identify clearly what each has to learn. Learning support assistant help during lessons and run individual programmes for pupils to help them learn letter sounds and sentence construction.

72. Standards of writing are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 4. Pupils learn well in lessons and achievement in writing mirrors the quality of teaching. By the time they are nine most form letters correctly and hold their pencils and pens well. However, the standard of presentation is no better than satisfactory across the school as pupils lack a fluent style, which would help them write for different purposes. This has been recognised by the co-ordinator and since the beginning of this term an improvement has begun. Spelling is secure; pupils know about letter sounds and when they are not sure they use dictionaries to support their work. Pupils in Year 1 are not expected to write enough. Often their work is short and consists of a few sentences, which have not been presented well. The work of low attainers and pupils with special educational needs is limited to a few words in most cases. In Year 2 the quality of handwriting, spelling and the amount of work completed improves. Learning experiences are extended and pupils have practical tasks, for example, letter writing, invitations and writing up work in other subjects such as design and technology. Progress is rapid in this class as pupils are required to use punctuation and the conventions of spelling and grammar. For example, the letter to the lazy farmer asked the farmer some awkward questions in which pupils used question marks.
73. In Year 3 handwriting is improving very well since the beginning of the term and there is good progress in grammar and punctuation. Pupils write in complex sentences and progress is particularly good in the content of their stories. The Dinosaur's Friend was a notable example, well told and with a telling moral to the story. The change from working on paper to working on exercise books is proving to be particularly effective as this teacher asks pupils to grade their work on a three-point scale. Looking back at the previous work is easier in exercise books and teacher and pupils are able to judge the progress accurately. This is a very effective tool to improve pupils' understanding of their own learning. In Year 4 pupils' writing matures because as in Years 2 and 3 the teacher sets challenging activities for all groups of pupils. High expectations are set as pupils look at the poetry of Keats and attempt their own versions. Pupils have lots of opportunities to use English skills when taking notes, writing the responses of other pupils during discussions and writing a good range of poetry and stories. Some class work in this class is at the average level expected of eleven-year-olds.
74. Teaching is good in general and ranges from very good to satisfactory. Teachers know how to teach the skills of reading and writing. They set good homework in Year 1 and very good homework in Years 2, 3 and 4. There are certain key elements present in those lessons, particularly but not exclusively, in Years 2, 3 and 4 when learning is good.
- Lessons are interesting and capture pupils' imagination
  - Teachers and learning support assistant work well together to support pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language
  - Marking is good and details what pupils have accomplished and what they should do next
  - ICT is used well to reinforce learning and to promote effective ICT skills
  - Lessons are brisk and pupils are expected to complete a high volume of work.
75. Where teaching is generally satisfactory in Year 1, some marking is unhelpful and lessons lack the crispness seen in other year groups. Records of pupils' progress are exemplary in Year 2 and in Years 3 and 4 are good. Records of how well pupils are doing help teachers to plan work that is pitched correctly at the next stage of learning.



76. The co-ordinator is very new to the school but has already decided where the priorities must lie for the subject. She has gained an accurate picture of what needs to be improved based on the very good systems for tracking pupils' progress. All the areas of weakness highlighted at the last inspection have been addressed very well.

## **MATHEMATICS**

77. Children enter school with lower than average mathematical skills. By the end of Year 2 they attain the standards expected of their age. By the end of Year 4, pupils' achievements are above the average of other nine-year-olds. Last year's National Curriculum test results for pupils in Year 2 indicated that standards in 2001 were above average. They are lower this year because there are more pupils with special educational needs in this year group than last. Pupils' learning is good in Years 2, 3 and 4. This is because the teachers have high expectations of their pupils' abilities and plan work that is carefully constructed to challenge pupils of all abilities. The National Numeracy Strategy is taught very effectively in these classes and pupils have targets that help them achieve well. The teaching and pupils' progress is satisfactory in the Year 1 class as the work is not so closely matched to the needs of different groups of pupils.
78. There is no marked difference between the girls and the boys. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets and pupils with English as an additional language receive good support to enable them to learn effectively.
79. By Year 2 pupils have a good recall of addition and subtraction facts within 20 and are beginning to understand the relationships between addition and subtraction, using this knowledge to check results. Most apply these facts to solving problems with larger numbers and use patterns, such as multiplication tables, to solve problems. They understand fractions and use decimals when recording money. Almost all the pupils use standard measures of length and capacity and these skills are applied to their work in science and design and technology. Throughout the school pupils organise information in charts and graphs to make records and graphs for other subjects, often using ICT. By Year 4 a significant minority of the pupils are working within the average level for Year 6 pupils. They develop their own methods for solving problems, read scales, for example, thermometers, accurately, including negative numbers, group data appropriately and interpret line graphs and work confidently with four figure numbers. Average and more able pupils understand equivalent fractions and convert fractions into decimals. Less able pupils and pupils with special educational needs make good progress, building on their skills. They are confident learners as the work set is matched to their needs but is challenging enough to give them a sense of achievement.
80. The teaching and learning is satisfactory in Year 1 and at least good in Years 2, 3 and 4. In Year 1, the teacher implements the National Numeracy Strategy effectively and provides work at an appropriate level for pupils of this age. However, the teacher does not match the work closely enough to the different abilities in her class for the pupils to make any more than sound progress throughout the year. In one lesson, for example, the more able pupils had the same equipment, number lines and 10 X 10 squares, to support counting in 2s to 20. In discussion, they could achieve this mentally. Less able pupils struggled with the same worksheet and needed a lot of support.
81. The teachers of the older pupils throughout the school know their pupils' abilities very well. They direct questions to individual pupils or groups of pupils that challenge and consolidate learning. There is good pace in the lessons and the teachers expect their pupils to work hard. Pupils respond by eagerly answering questions, applying their

skills to new learning and producing meaty amounts of work. These teachers, especially the subject leader, make very good use of the way the pupils learn in the lesson to fine-tune the teaching to match the pupils' needs. Questions like "How do you know?" encourage the pupils to explain their work. A Year 2 pupil, for example, looking at the relationship between 4, 6 and 10, instantly knew that 10-4 could not be 7. She gave a very clear explanation of the way she used the 3 numbers to check the answer.

82. All the teachers share the targets for the lesson with the pupils and most ask them how well the target has been achieved at the end. In one class the teacher expects the pupils to evaluate their understanding and their effort on a three-point scale. As a result, the pupils have a very good understanding of their own learning. The three-part numeracy lessons are managed effectively, especially in Years 2, 3 and 4 where teachers have good subject knowledge and very effective methods for measuring what the pupils can do. Mathematical vocabulary is used effectively throughout the school but some teachers do not insist that their pupils give clear explanations and full answers to the questions, missing opportunities to extend the pupils' speaking skills. The teachers of the older pupils make excellent use of homework. Targets are set and explanations and hints to support their child are provided for the parents and carers as well as appropriate learning aids for the pupils. The work set relates to the learning in the lessons but is often applied to practical tasks to extend and deepen pupils' understanding.
83. Regular, accurate assessments at the end of units of work and impeccable record keeping enable the teachers to match the work to pupils' needs. The subject leader has used an excellent analysis of the national tests at the end of Year 2 to identify areas for improvement in the curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2. However, she has not had the opportunity to share her expertise with other teachers or to monitor the teaching of the new teachers in school.
84. The standards, the progress the pupils make and the teaching have all improved since the last inspection. The school now needs to provide training and support for the teachers of the youngest pupils and the reception class teacher to ensure that the provision for mathematics is consistently good throughout the school.

## **SCIENCE**

85. The assessments made of the attainment of last year's Year 2 pupils indicated that their achievements were above average for their age. The present Year 2 pupils have made good progress and achieve average standards for their age, while standards are above average in Year 4. Good progress has been made since the last inspection when the curriculum was too narrow so that pupils' achievements were below average in Years 2 and 4. The teachers use national guidance for planning the curriculum, adapted to the school's circumstances. High expectations on the part of the teachers, combined with an emphasis on scientific enquiry and the comprehensive and relevant curriculum have been effective in raising standards.
86. In Year 2 the pupils examine seeds closely. They discuss the germination and growing cycle of the plants and explain how the seeds are dispersed, based on their observations and research. In their lesson, the pupils gave sensible reasons for the arrangement, shape and surroundings of the seeds in response to the adults' very good questioning. The teacher has high expectations of the pupils' work, insisting on accurate drawings and clear explanations. ICT was used to support the less able pupils and those with special educational needs as they used a commercial program to order

the life cycle of the bean. Pupils' knowledge of simple circuits, forces and how to keep healthy is appropriate for their age.

87. In Year 4, much of the work covered is above the level normally achieved in Year 4. Pupils use scientific terms like "evaporation" when designing experiments to insulate ice. Most pupils understand the effect of the earth's rotation on shadows and know that materials can be transparent, translucent or opaque. Pupils work together very well, discussing ways to set up experiments and sharing equipment. They understand the importance of a fair test and the need to control all elements of the test so they can isolate the effects of their experiments.
88. Throughout the school pupils enjoy investigative work and they are taught how to record their findings. Teachers make good use of standard recording sheets for the pupils to record experiments. This is particularly helpful for pupils with special educational needs, releasing them to concentrate on the science. However, older, more able pupils do not have enough opportunities to record their work in their own way.
89. Science is generally taught well throughout the school. The Year 1 teacher provided a good range of interesting activities to enable pupils to explore the force of the wind. Pupils enjoyed this lesson but there was not enough challenge to extend the more able pupils and the teacher has the same task and expectations of all pupils, whatever their ability. This is not the case in the rest of the school where teachers provide work at different levels for their pupils. The teachers have good subject knowledge and very good relationships with their pupils, generating enthusiasm and the will to work hard. Mathematics, especially measurement and data handling, is applied very effectively within the subject, often linking with the work in the numeracy lessons. ICT is used as a tool for recording information and pupils retrieve data from CD-ROMs and the Internet.
90. Teachers keep records of the pupils' progress, which are completed at the end of each unit. Homework is used very effectively and often contributes to the work in the classroom. The subject leader has established links with the site manager of Bradlaugh Fields and is developing a programme for environmental work throughout the school. She does not yet extend her role to monitor the work of the teachers and pupils throughout the school, supporting teachers when appropriate in order to ensure that teaching and learning are consistently good.

## **ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

91. In both subjects the standards observed at the last inspection were at the expected levels in Years 2 and 4. There was only one lesson in design and technology during the four days of the inspection and that was in Year 2. This, with the three lessons in art and design, discussions with pupils and reviews of the work held in the school, make up the evidence that provides the basis for the judgements.
92. In art and design in a good lesson in Year 1 pupils used card frames to limit their field of view to make observations of a bicycle. This was based on previous work during which they looked carefully at a painting of Lowry. Pupils again looked at the work of an artist, Robert Delainay in this lesson, and discussed his use of colour and the composition. Their teacher led them to consider the mood and the season depicted in the painting. Their subsequent drawings were of good quality, large in scale and well proportioned. In Year 2 pupils observed flowers using hand lenses. Their sensitive use of pastels and chalks produced sound drawings. The teacher's explanations of how colours could be blended and mixed were good and led to some interesting and colourful

compositions. In both lessons pupils were asked to talk about their work and evaluate their drawings. This helped other pupils improve the quality of their own work.

93. In Year 4 pupils designed Greek pots and vases. In a very good introduction pupils remembered which two seas surround Greece and how the ancient Greek civilisation grew. The teacher's use of a CD-ROM to introduce the lesson was good and helped pupils understand how Greek pottery was produced. This was very good tuition and very helpful in furthering pupils' learning. Listening skills were developed as pupils recalled the Greek myths and legends which they might use to illustrate their designs. Pupils were well managed in this lesson and show good levels of industry as they selected the books that would help them design their pots and vases. Pupils worked well together, discussing how to achieve the correct proportions of their vases after further good quality direction by their teacher. At times in these discussions pupils used incorrect tenses. Their drawing skills were at the expected levels for Year 4 pupils.
94. In a very good lesson in design and technology in Year 2, pupils looked at patterns in textiles, rugs and illustrations prepared by their teacher from the Internet. This very good use of computers captured pupils' interest and set a high standard for their work. The teacher cleverly linked pupils' work to their shape work in mathematics and literacy. One pupil noticed that the carpet illustrations and patterns of the Navajo Native Americans looked very like the patterns on a rattlesnake. This work had been started in literacy as pupils used the Internet for research. This lesson not only improved pupils' design and technology and skills but also improved their cultural knowledge and understanding. As pupils designed their bookmarks they understood the need to choose the glue carefully and how, for instance, PVA glue might not be suitable for sticking hessian. In this lessons pupils showed above average skills of designing and pattern making. For example, above average pupils were not content to use the patterns and sizes suggested during their discussions but measured their own patterns. Pupils understood that a large bookmark might be needed for one of the class's 'big books' used in literacy. They offered good evaluations of other pupils' work and explained their own designs well. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 understand the designing and making process and work contains all of the elements of the National Curriculum, including learning in food and construction kits.
95. The teaching observed was of good quality or better. Clear explanations were given and pupils were successfully encouraged to explain their work. Not enough is done to raise the quality of oral presentations by asking pupils to pronounce words carefully and use correct sentence construction. However, art and design and technology skills were well developed and learning was at least good in all lessons. Resources, including computers, were used well and learning support assistants and teachers gave very good support to pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language. Design and technology is managed well and art and design is being managed by the headteacher on a temporary basis. Both subjects are in capable hands.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

96. Pupils' attainment in both history and geography is similar to those of other pupils in Year 2 and 4, as they were at the time of the last inspection. There were no geography lessons during the four days of the inspection but an analysis of pupils' books and discussion with the pupils indicted that pupils have appropriate skills for their age. Pupils in Year 2 make plans of the classroom and playground, using symbols and a key. They suggest ways to improve the playground and discuss the likely cause for the

worn patches of grass. In history lessons they have studied family trees and compared Victorian England with life today. In a lesson where they were studying celebrations, Year 2 pupils discussed religious festivals and local events such as the balloon festival and St. Crispin's Fair. Pupils used their understanding of celebrations, for example, special food, to plan Golden Jubilee celebrations.

97. By Year 4, pupils understand the reasons why people travel. They have studied life in Germany and groups of three pupils have pursued their own studies of the history of transport, often using the Internet to access information. Mapping skills have developed from earlier work, now containing more detail, routes and standard symbols. Pupils have made a map of Bradlaugh Fields. Pupils study tales of Greek heroes and legends and these are used very effectively in the literacy lessons. ICT is used for both research and to support artwork. For example, pupils have used a graphics program to generate firework pictures. A good lesson in Year 3, the teacher encouraged her pupils to predict who won the Iceni revolt between Boudicca and the Romans. At the end of the lesson, pupils hypothesised the reasons for the Roman victory. This was a challenging lesson where the teacher developed pupils' historical skills effectively and pupils made good progress.
98. The teaching was good in both history lessons observed during the inspection. Teachers make good provision for pupils with special educational needs and learning support assistants support these pupils very well, encouraging them to voice opinions as well as consolidating the historical facts. The school has a range of artefacts to support historical themes and has access to external resources from the library and local museums. Teachers make good use of photographs, books, videos and ICT to support the curriculum and the community is very supportive. For example, pupils have had a visit from a participant in the Second World War. The locality is used well and children throughout the school explore the area to support geography and history.
99. The school uses a comprehensive scheme of work for both subjects, agreed by local schools and adapted to the school's circumstances. A strength of the curriculum is the links with other subjects. They make a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Although the school has adopted good quality plans, a weakness observed at the last inspection remains. There is no overview of the development of historical and geographical skills. As a result of this, pupils' progress, although satisfactory, is not as good as is in the core subjects.

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

100. At the last inspection standards were judged to be below average for pupils in Years 2 and 4. Inspectors now find that attainment is average in both year groups. This good rate of improvement is due to higher quality learning resources, better teaching and good quality learning opportunities. Pupils in all year groups have computers in their classrooms and have regular sessions in the computer suite. Teachers ensure that pupils use computers in lessons where it is appropriate and that they are taught the skills they need to understand how computers can be used in their work. As pupils are taught keyboard skills, how to use the mouse, load and save their work, they look on computers as part of their everyday equipment.
101. Standards in Year 2 are at the expected levels for this age group. In Year 1 pupils used a graphics program to create an illustration of an imagined world. This work was derived from the class's literacy lessons and formed a good link to learning in reading and writing. Pupils used stamp tools and brush, pencil and other illustration tools to produce their pictures. They worked well together, composing their pictures, changing

and modifying as they discussed what each should contain. Pupils learning English as an additional language did well in these discussion, making their opinions heard and negotiating well. In a good lesson in Year 2, pupils were taught the similarities and differences between using books and CD-ROMs for research purposes. The teacher showed good subject knowledge and a careful explanation of how to scan writing for information and where this information is most likely to be found. The very carefully structured lesson encouraged pupils to work with their thinking partners. This was a very helpful exercise, developing social and speaking skills as well as ICT techniques. The link between research techniques developed in literacy lessons was particularly helpful.

102. In Year 4 pupils used the Internet and museum sites in particular to find photographs of Greek artefacts. This work was linked closely to history and pupils copied the illustrations from the web site and pasted them into a word processing program. As the teacher asked pupils to help demonstrate this technique, displayed on a large screen using a projector, pupils gasped in wonder as a Greek vase appeared in the word processing program. The teacher offered clear explanations as to how two photographs, which looked as if they have been pasted over each other, could be moved and resized. Pupils found the web site by using the address, and when they had copied their illustration added an explanatory text.
103. Teachers use the computer suite well. Their plans are of good quality, showing how subjects link together to improve pupils' understanding and how skills will be developed. Lessons are well organised and keep up a good pace. As the explanations are clear and precise pupils learn well, they enjoy using the suite and are eager to work together. Resources are always to hand and learning support assistants support pupils well, particularly those with special educational needs and who learn English as an additional language.
104. The school has made a very positive improvement in the amount and quality of resources and the quality of teaching in ICT. The learning opportunities are now good and teachers' confidence is growing. The use of computers to support learning in other subjects is good.

## **MUSIC**

105. Music teaching throughout the school is excellent. The headteacher teaches all the classes. His exemplary skills and high expectations result in pupils' achievements being above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 4 where knowledge and skills exceed those expected of much older pupils. The way pupils evaluate and interpret what they hear is particularly impressive. Pupils are encouraged to use words, movement, including facial expression, written symbols and art both as a stimulus for composition and to express their response to music. Music from other times and cultures is used regularly and pupils discuss and play a rich variety of instruments.
106. Pupils in Year 2 used a picture of three characters in the countryside as a stimulus for dance. They listened to "The Gnome" from "Pictures at an Exhibition" and interpreted the music to move in the role of the different characters, searching, moving with a mission and as warriors. Pupils demonstrated complete empathy with the characters and the music. The suggestions came from the pupils, which gave them ownership of their learning. The teacher joined in with them, raising the quality of movement even higher. The pupils were utterly committed to their work, enjoying the lesson immensely. Their learning was rapid.

107. In the Year 4 lesson, the teacher's high expectations and his excellent relationships with the class resulted in excellent learning. His props, including a tin of tomatoes, his way of remembering the term 'ostinato', created humour and an effective way to ensure that pupils never forget, as they corrected him every time he mentioned 'tin of tomatoes!' Pupils used tuned percussion and other instruments to create melodies using a five-note scale so that they could play harmoniously together. By the end of the lesson, pupils composed and played repeated melodies to illustrate "Great Lake, Mighty Water", sustaining their melodies when playing with others and when singing. They had learnt a new song with both African and English words. Pupils identified the structure of the song and their listening skills are very good. Their singing was sensitive and tuneful. Pupils evaluated their performance very effectively. The pupils and the teacher were delighted with their music, aware that they had created "a little bit of magic". Other teachers are not given the opportunity to observe this excellent teaching, which demonstrates how much their pupils can achieve.
108. This excellent specialist teaching and comprehensive planning for all aspects of the music curriculum makes a substantial contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as well as standards and learning in the subject. Pupils perform for senior citizens and parents. The school also provides opportunities for pupils to play the violin with tuition provided by a peripatetic local education authority violin teacher. A few pupils learn the keyboard with tuition paid for by parents. There is a good range of resources including music and instruments from other cultures.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

109. Standards are at the expected levels in gymnastics at Year 2 and above the expected levels in swimming at Year 4. This maintains the standards observed at the last inspection. These were the only aspects of physical education observed during the inspection period.
110. In Year 2 pupils showed average control of their movements as they constructed a series of movements first as individuals and with partners. Pupils tried hard to extend their arms and legs to make interesting bridges. As pairs they worked around each other, discussing how they should develop their sequences and work safely. Teaching was good in this lesson and a key element was the examples chosen for demonstration purposes. Pupils tried hard as they demonstrated to the class how their pattern of movements had developed. The classteacher skilfully asked pupils to judge how well the work was proceeding while praising good quality work and offering suggestions how other work might be improved. Pupils polished their work and improved the balances and their movements. Higher attaining pupils balanced asymmetrically and made very interesting and complex shapes.
111. In Year 4 swimming tuition is very good and teaching is good. Learning in both groups is very good and pupils attain above the expected levels for Year 4 pupils. Teachers, tutors, helpers and pupils have very good awareness of health and safety procedures. Good quality support is available to each group. For example, above average swimmers developed their leg movements well, given high quality coaching points. All adults gave precise, clear instructions. Pupils' positive attitudes, good quality teaching and instruction and lots of adult support and encouragement ensured pupils developed techniques and confidence.

112. The subject is managed well on a temporary basis by the headteacher. Resources are adequate and the school is considering how facilities will need to be upgraded as it caters for the full primary age range.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

113. Pupils' achievements are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Only one religious education lesson was observed during the inspection, but work in the pupils' books and the depth of the pupils' knowledge observed in history, literacy and assemblies indicates that pupils have a sound understanding of similarities and differences between Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism by the time they leave school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress throughout the school.
114. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of God's rules based on the Bible and the Torah. They understand the importance of festivals and the significance of, for example, the Passover and Easter. They have studied different creation stories and events in the life of Jesus. Pupils have discussed the meaning of some of the parables. Pupils have visited St. Matthew's Church.
115. In a lesson in Year 4 the pupils heard the story of Saul's journey to Damascus. This led to a profound discussion about the ways people interpret their beliefs and the action this leads to. The level of discussion was high as the teacher encouraged pupils to discuss what Saul must have felt. She introduced the word "persecution". Pupils remembered their World War 2 study in history, discussing Ann Franck and Hitler's reasons for the holocaust. However, this level of debate was not sustained when the pupils came to complete their task and they were unable to distinguish their everyday actions from significant events in their day's journey. The teaching and the pupils' overall progress in this lesson were satisfactory.
116. A strength of the provision for religious education is the way the teachers plan opportunities for pupils to develop their spirituality. There is emphasis on reflection and themes common to mankind, whatever the religion. Pupils explore worship, prayer, the journey of life, the creation and celebrations. Teachers actively promote a respect for all religions. Local Christian leaders regularly visit school to lead assemblies and to share their beliefs with the pupils. A good range of religious artefacts supports learning and there are strong, supportive links with pupils' personal, social and health education, history, literacy and music. Several pupils attend Mosque School but the school does not provide opportunities for pupils to visit the mosque or temple and there are no visitors from other religions.