

INSPECTION REPORT

KENSWORTH CE (VC) LOWER SCHOOL

Dunstable

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number:109602

Headteacher: Mr D McKeand

Reporting inspector: Mrs Shelagh Halley
8203

Dates of inspection: 7 - 8 May 2002

Inspection number: 194915
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 category: Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Common Road
Kensworth
Dunstable
Bedfordshire

Postcode: LU6 3RH

Telephone number: 01582 872336

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs P Frazer

Local education authority: Bedfordshire

Date of previous inspection: June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
8203	Shelagh Halley	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Music Religious education	What kind of school is it? How high are standards? School's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
10049	Michael McCarthy	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16918	Margaret Goodchild	Team inspector	Special educational needs Foundation Stage Art and design	
28065	Alex Miller	Team inspector	English Design and technology Geography History Physical education	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Kensworth is a small village school not far from Dunstable in Bedfordshire. It serves the population of owner-occupied and social housing in the village with a very few scattered houses elsewhere. Since the previous inspection in June 1997, numbers on roll have almost halved, largely due to the static nature of the housing stock in the village. There are now 51 pupils on roll, between the ages of four and nine. The school is, therefore, much smaller than other schools of this kind. There are no pupils from refugee or travelling families. There is a very small proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and none of these has English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average. There are ten pupils on the register of special educational needs, and no pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need. Both these proportions are below the national average. Children enter the Foundation Stage (reception class) in the term after their fourth birthday. They arrive with a range of abilities that are generally below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a sound education for its pupils. Pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve broadly average standards throughout the school. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and, sometimes, good. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Unit costs are relatively high, but this is not unusual in a small rural school. Taking all these factors into account, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in art are above the national average for pupils of these ages
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and have a significant impact on the quality of their learning
- Teachers and classroom assistants, especially the nursery nurse, work well together for the benefit of pupils
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good with very thorough arrangements for identification and support

What could be improved

- Standards in the core subjects of writing, mathematics and science are below those found in similar schools
- Teachers' planning is not always clear as to how the needs of pupils with special educational needs or higher attainment will be met
- The use of information and communication technology is not widespread across all subjects of the curriculum
- Data obtained from assessment is not always recorded and used in future planning
- There is insufficient time for science, religious education and personal, social and health education

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997, and the governors' post-inspection plan thoroughly addressed weaknesses then identified. Schemes of work are now in place to bring the curriculum into line with national recommendations and provision for information and communication technology now meets statutory requirements. The school improvement plan has been thoroughly overhauled and is now a useful, comprehensive working document. Satisfactory procedures for monitoring and reviewing provision and classroom teaching have been implemented, with a positive impact on pupils' standards of attainment. Accommodation has been improved with the addition of a toilet block to the existing hall. However, there are still some issues outstanding; for example, some planning still does not meet the needs of all pupils and there is still an over-reliance on the use of worksheets in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Satisfactory standards in most subjects have been maintained in

the current year groups since the last inspection. Overall, improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

Key

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

The number of pupils taking the National Curriculum tests in Year 2 is very small. Each pupil's result has a ten to fifteen per cent effect on the grade so interpretation of the grades is not wholly reliable. Last year, pupils attained results that were average in reading, below average in mathematics, and well below in writing. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in reading was above the national average, however, in writing they were below average, and in mathematics well below.

In comparison with similar schools, the results were in line with the average in reading, and below in writing and mathematics. These pupils' attainment when they started school was well below the county average, there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and almost one-fifth of the year group joined the school during Year 2. In these circumstances, pupils achieved well in all three areas of the curriculum.

In the work seen, standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average in Years 2 and 4, with some pupils attaining higher levels. Pupils achieve to a satisfactory level, but do not always meet the challenging targets set for them. The standard of writing is improving, but is still below average. Standards in art are above average, but standards in religious education are below average, and information and communication technology skills are not developed well in all subjects of the curriculum. A particular strength in mathematics and science is the quality of pupils' investigative work, although there is still scope for improvement. Children in the Foundation Stage are likely to meet the national Early Learning Goals in knowledge and understanding of the world and communication, language and literacy. The majority are unlikely to meet most of the goals in mathematical understanding, creative and physical development and personal and social development, but their achievement is still satisfactory from their below average starting point.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils come willingly to school and settle quickly to work with enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils conduct themselves well in the classroom, on the playground and on outings.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The quality of relationships is very good. Pupils become more mature and responsible, but there are not enough opportunities for them

	to develop independence in learning.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance is above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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 overall standard of teaching in English and mathematics is satisfactory in both the infant and junior classes, with some instances of good teaching. This apparent decline in the standards of teaching since the previous inspection is due to the greater rigour of the inspection framework. Teachers plan their lessons according to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, but have not yet fully adapted the schemes to suit the needs of their particular pupils to enable them to achieve as well as possible. A particular strength in teaching is the good management of pupils by teachers, which ensures that classrooms are good environments in which effective learning can take place. Ongoing assessment and marking are generally satisfactory, but more should be done to increase written comments to help pupils to improve their work. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Pupils with prior higher attainment are not always suitably challenged and encouraged to achieve their best. Children in the Foundation Stage are satisfactorily taught and make appropriate progress towards the national Early Learning Goals.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. All subjects meet requirements. Personal, health and social education, religious education and science should be given more time in order to raise standards.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall. Pupils needs are identified early and they are given good support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for social, moral and cultural development is good. Religious education, along with some National Curriculum subjects, does not yet make its full contribution to pupils' spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good pastoral care for its pupils. Teachers' assessment of pupils' progress is intuitive rather than systematically recorded.

The school has a good relationship with parents. There is insufficient time for science and religious education. Provision for personal, social and health education is currently unsatisfactory because there are no written guidelines for teachers to follow.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher, ably supported by his hard-working staff, has correctly identified most areas for further development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and how to address the latter.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The monitoring of teaching should be more rigorous and identified areas for development more closely followed up.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Governors make prudent financial decisions for the benefit of pupils.

The school has an adequate number of well-qualified teachers who are ably supported by a small team of experienced classroom assistants. Accommodation is good and has been very much enhanced by the new toilet block in the hall. Outdoor provision for the Foundation Stage is good although the space and equipment provided could be more stimulatingly used for imaginative play. Resources for learning are adequate, except for shortages in geography and some problems in bringing the school's computers up to date. Governors apply the principles of best value when making large purchases or hiring expensive services.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress, becoming more mature and responsible and behaving well • The teaching is good, with high expectations of what pupils will achieve and pupils receive the right amount of homework • They are kept well informed about their children's progress and feel very comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems • The school is well led and managed and works closely with parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant number of parents feel that there are not enough interesting activities outside lessons

Inspectors agree with parents' favourable views on the quality of information from the school and the good partnership with parents. They disagree about the provision for extra-curricular activities, including after-school clubs, which is judged satisfactory and is about average for small schools of this kind.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the current year groups, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science in Years 2 and 4, but below the recommendation of the Locally Agreed Syllabus in religious education in Year 4. Standards in information and communication technology have improved since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory.
2. The 2001 statutory attainment tests for pupils in Year 2 showed attainment in reading to be broadly average, with mathematics below and writing well below. In reading, a goodly proportion of pupils reached the higher levels, but not in writing and mathematics. Comparison should be treated with caution, however, since the number of pupils involved was small, and abilities fluctuate from year to year. It is difficult to identify a trend in improvement in such a changing situation. In comparison with similar schools, standards of reading were about average, with writing and mathematics below. This represents good achievement from a below average attainment on entry, although pupils do not always meet the challenging targets set for them.
3. In the lessons seen, standards were broadly average in English, mathematics and science in Years 2 and 4, and pupils of all abilities achieve to a satisfactory level from their below average point on entry. There were no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. A particular strength is pupils' library and research skills. Handwriting and presentation would be better if teachers' expectations in this aspect were raised. Writing, although improved, is still below average because there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise extended writing. Literacy skills are used satisfactorily in a range of other subjects and activities in the curriculum, for example, geography and history. There are some particularly good examples with pupils in Years 3 and 4 writing about life in Anglo-Saxon times.
4. A relative strength in mathematics is the development of mathematical language and the many opportunities for investigative activities. Pupils are encouraged to use their numeracy skills in subjects like science and geography, but this use is underemphasised in design and technology. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in mathematics is broadly satisfactory, but computers are not used in all lessons because of difficulties posed by accommodation and resources.
5. In science, pupils are also encouraged to investigate, but opportunities to involve pupils in asking their own questions and devising their own experiments are underdeveloped and fail to stretch the higher attaining pupils. In Year 4, pupils show good investigative skills when they study what foods make a healthy diet.
6. In information and communication technology, standards are broadly average in both Years 2 and 4. A particular strength is in data handling and control technology. However, the use of skills in information and communication technology in other subjects of the curriculum is not yet fully embedded in either class. This is because the computer suite forms part of a classroom that is in use for half of every day to ensure that Year 2 have a separate entity and more focused lessons. The school is

working to update the computers for greater speed in processing and to cope with further developments in software. This is prioritised in the current improvement plan.

7. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about attainment in music and physical education in either infant or junior classes. Standards in art are above average in both year groups. In all other subjects, standards are broadly average, except in religious education in Year 4, where standards do not reach the recommendations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus because insufficient time is given to the subject. This restricts pupils' attainment and progress.
8. Children in the Foundation Stage are likely to meet the national Early Learning Goals in knowledge and understanding of the world, and in communication, language and literacy. The majority are unlikely to meet most of the Early Learning Goals in mathematical understanding, physical and creative development, or in personal and social development.
9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the good level of support they receive and targets that are specifically matched to their learning needs. Higher attaining pupils make satisfactory progress in the core subjects, but more should be done to extend their learning in the non-core subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils are very keen to come to school and appreciate its welcoming and stimulating atmosphere. They readily express appreciation for the help their teachers and support staff give them and display pride in the school's environment. They appear very well motivated and are genuinely pleased by the care and affection shown to them. Many parents commented on the positive values that the school promotes, such as sharing and giving, and its encouragement of mature and responsible attitudes. The inspection findings support these views. Overall, pupils' attitudes are very good.
11. Behaviour is good. Pupils in general show attentiveness and diligence in class and behave well between lessons at break-times. Lunch is well ordered and effectively supervised. Behaviour around the school is also good. Pupils were mutually supportive and many friendly and helpful actions were observed. No evidence of bullying or other antisocial behaviour emerged during the inspection and the level of supervision, together with the overall high expectations of the staff and parents, suggests that this is an accurate reflection of the school's daily life. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
12. Pupils interact very well with adults and each other and a significant number demonstrated a high level of understanding and concern for other pupils. They display confidence and self-esteem and the very good relationships across the age groups reflect favourably on the older pupils. More opportunities to undertake further responsibilities should be afforded to pupils as they progress through the school to assist their personal development. Pupils have a good awareness of right and wrong. They are aware of the consequences of their actions and, as a result, are caring of each other. As part of Harvest celebrations pupils raise money for charities.

13. Overall the school promotes very good attitudes and values and a good attendance rate, which is above the national average. Behaviour is good and the school's ethos of inclusiveness in a caring environment promotes a good level of personal development and relationships.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The overall quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory, with some instances of good teaching in both infant and junior classes. The consistently satisfactory teaching is particularly difficult to achieve because teachers have to teach three age groups in one class and two in the other, which renders their planning of work for differing ages and abilities challenging. Teachers do this satisfactorily and try to ensure that the work they set is suited to the individual needs of pupils, so that they make satisfactory progress at all stages of their lower school education. Although no unsatisfactory teaching was observed, there were several occasions when lessons contained unsatisfactory elements that prevented them from being good or better. During the two days of the inspection, because of timetabling arrangements and the emphasis placed on collecting evidence for the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, religious education and information and communication technology, it was not possible to collect sufficient evidence to make reliable judgements on the quality of teaching and learning in music and physical education. Homework is insufficiently used to support learning in the classroom.
15. Teaching in English is satisfactory and occasionally good, although there are some variations in a few lessons because of the three age groups involved, where teachers are challenged to meet the needs of all pupils. In these lessons, not all tasks are suited to the needs of individual pupils and they do not make the good progress that could be expected. Teachers make effective choices of books and activities and, as a result, pupils of all ages are enthusiastic about the texts they read in the literacy hour. Teachers offer good additional support to pupils with special educational needs. There are occasions, however, when pupils are set to work on undemanding tasks on worksheets that do not sufficiently challenge higher attainers. Support staff and volunteer helpers are well briefed and make a positive contribution to the quality of learning. Lessons are satisfactorily planned and based effectively on the National Literacy Strategy, suitably adapted to meet the needs of pupils, although the school is aware that this adaptation could be taken further. Throughout the school, teachers conscientiously assess the progress pupils make, but they do not always use their assessments to adjust their planning. Teachers do not always ensure that the correct size and spacing in writing is practised and emphasized. They provide many suitable opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy skills in subjects other than English, particularly in the development of appropriate vocabulary, although few opportunities are given for extended writing.
16. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory overall, and teachers have successfully adapted the National Numeracy Strategy to meet the needs of most of their pupils. Teachers make good use of art skills to reinforce learning in mathematics in, for example, looking for and creating repeating patterns. Teachers use effective questioning to allow pupils to explore and understand the work they are doing, giving reasonable explanations of how they arrive at the answer. In the junior class, previous work is progressively built upon and pupils make effective use of a variety of strategies to solve problems set by their teachers for instance, finding the areas and perimeters of shapes by counting squares. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to ask their own questions and suggest their own investigations. Pupils' numeracy skills are used effectively in other subjects like

science and geography, but not to the expected degree in design and technology. The use of information and communication technology is generally satisfactory, although computers are not used in every lesson because of difficulties with accommodation and resources. Teachers' planning also includes appropriate assessment opportunities so that the teachers have a clear knowledge of what pupils know, can do, and understand. This knowledge is, however, largely intuitive and the data obtained should be recorded in a more clearly systematic manner to assist in planning future lessons. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and have a significant impact on target-setting for individual pupils and, consequently, their attainment and progress, although recording is not as systematic as it should be and sometimes tasks are not best suited to the needs of individuals, especially the higher attainers. The school is aware that this is an area for further development.

17. In science, the quality of teaching is satisfactory with a clear emphasis placed on investigative and experimental work, which enhances pupils' knowledge and understanding so that pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress. Here also, more opportunities should be offered to pupils to ask their own questions and devise their own experiments, especially in the junior classes. Teachers' good questioning techniques in directing enquiries to pupils of differing abilities make a positive contribution to the development of literacy skills in the subject; for example, when describing surfaces in an early experiment on friction. Teachers' planning is appropriately based on national guidance and the subject meets statutory requirements.
18. The quality of teaching in information and communication technology is satisfactory overall with pupils achieving to a satisfactory level. Pupils use their information and communication technology skills to support their learning in mathematics, art and literacy. Their skills in data handling and control technology are well developed. As teachers' expertise improves, they convey their enthusiasm well to pupils to engage and sustain their interest.
19. In art, the quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and sometimes very good. In design and technology, geography and history, teaching is satisfactory overall and teachers have a satisfactory understanding of the basic skills. They manage pupils, including those with special educational needs, well so that almost all make satisfactory progress.
20. Although in the lessons seen in religious education, the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory in the infant classes, it was unsatisfactory over time in the junior classes because learning is not built upon progressively and in sufficient depth. There is insufficient time allotted to the subject and it is too often subsumed into personal, social and health education instead of being taught as a separate subject.
21. The quality of marking by teachers is satisfactory overall. Within English there has been recent good practice when teachers have identified the strengths of the work and how the pupil could further improve it. However, in some areas of the curriculum, like history and geography, errors in spelling are highlighted rather than acknowledging achievements in these subject areas and explaining the areas for improvement.

22. The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs are good overall. A specialist teacher provides very focused support to pupils with special educational needs for one afternoon a week. This, together with precise targets in individual education plans and early diagnosis of learning difficulties, leads to good progress. However, class teachers do not always match work sufficiently to the different learning needs within a class, so that in some lessons the progress of pupils with special educational needs is no better than satisfactory.
23. Although there is no formal identification of gifted and talented pupils, teachers plan work that appropriately challenges and extends the learning of higher attaining pupils, ensuring that they achieve their best in the core subjects. There is a need to extend this better practice to all the non-core subjects so that pupils achieve as highly as they do in art.
24. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, although the difficulties caused by planning mean that they often do the same work as the older children in the class. This ensures that they make satisfactory progress towards meeting the requirements of the nationally expected learning goals, although many will not achieve them by the end of the Foundation Stage.

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

25. Since the last inspection the government has introduced new guidance for the curriculum taught to children in the Foundation Stage class and introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. The school has used these new initiatives satisfactorily to plan what is to be taught to the children in these areas. The government has also changed some of the requirements for the other National Curriculum subjects and the school has satisfactorily responded to these changes.
26. The curriculum for the reception children is sound and is based on the six areas of learning recommended by government guidance. Children have a sound start to their formal schooling.
27. The curriculum for pupils aged five to nine includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented. With the exception of physical education, music and art, planning for other National Curriculum subjects is based on national guidance. This guidance is intended to provide support for teachers enabling them to plan satisfactorily the development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding as they progress through the school. However, there is an imbalance of time, which results in the amount of time used to teach science being insufficient. Religious education, which is based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus, also does not have enough time devoted to it as the school has yet to identify those aspects of the curriculum that are religious education and those which should be allocated to the school's programme for personal, social and health education (PSHE). The school has no written guidelines for the implementation of its PSHE work, although there is some good practice currently in the school.
28. Overall, planning for the curriculum is satisfactory. For subjects other than English and mathematics, the school's long-term programme is based on a two-year rolling programme. Schemes of work are now in place for all subjects, although some subject policies need updating. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, these schemes need further adaptation to ensure that the needs of all pupils, particularly the higher attainers, are met during individual lessons. The use of

information and communication technology is underdeveloped across the subjects of the curriculum.

29. The school provides a satisfactory range of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum. For example, there have been visits by the fire and rescue service to the school and visits to Chiltern open air museum and Bekonscot model village. Pupils have also enjoyed performances by professional drama groups. The provision for out of school activities for a school of this size is satisfactory and includes sporting and musical activities.
30. The school makes provision for personal, social and health education, but there are no clear written guidelines on this for teachers to follow. Questions on sex education are answered by teachers if pupils ask them and aspects of drugs education are discussed. Pupils have some opportunities to take responsibility in the school such as when the Years 3 and 4 pupils act as prefects or take responsibility for operating the music system during assembly.
31. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Their early identification helps them to make good progress. Individual education plans provide very good information. They contain targets that are specific and measurable, along with very useful strategies for class teachers and support staff. This means that the individual roles and responsibilities of staff involved with the pupil are clearly defined. The school has a very small percentage of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and their needs are also well met.
32. The school has satisfactory links with the local community. The school supports events like the Kensworth Carnival. Appropriate links are made with the local middle schools to enable pupils to transfer there successfully at the end of Year 4. There are also well-established links with the local cluster of small schools and this has enabled some joint projects to be carried out; for example, the formation of teams to compete in local sporting leagues.
33. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Provision for moral, social and cultural development is good. Moral and social guidance is provided through an agreed code of behaviour. Teachers value their pupils and this is expressed through the positive relationships they have with them. When required, pupils work well together. There are, though, too few opportunities in subjects like science and design and technology for pupils to develop their own ideas.
34. Pupils' social development is also fostered well through the programme of extra-curricular activities including the opportunities provided by the residential trip to Cuffley camp.
35. The quality displays of work around the school reflect its cultural values. In geography teachers provide opportunities for pupils to understand how different people live. Drama is also used effectively to promote cultural values and the Christmas productions are well performed by the pupils and appreciated by parents and visitors. Pupils also perform folk dances learnt in physical education, publicly. Although some opportunities are missed, the school makes appropriate attempts to help pupils to understand, appreciate and celebrate the diversity of cultures in Britain.

36. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Development is fostered through the programme for collective worship and by links with the local Anglican and Methodist churches. Art makes a very good contribution to spiritual development through the emphasis on pupils' creativity and opportunities for self-expression. Pupils' literacy skills are not sufficiently adequate to contribute in reflective writing in religions education, music, history and geography and there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to experience awe and wonder in mathematics and science. The contribution that these areas of the curriculum can make to pupils' spiritual development is not fully utilised by the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. Overall, the school takes good care of its pupils. Teachers and support staff work co-operatively to achieve the best possible outcome for the pupils. They know the pupils very well and make use of this knowledge to handle and guide them in their learning and welfare needs. This thorough knowledge of individual pupils is encouraging in cases of concern.
38. The school has a thorough understanding of each pupil's educational, development and emotional needs. Its family atmosphere is valued and nurtured by a staff whose primary concern is to provide a setting that encourages a spirit of personal achievement and progress. This is clearly appreciated by the pupils whose relationships with their teachers and other staff are characterised by warmth and consideration.
39. A secure child protection policy, in accordance with local authority guidelines, with the senior teacher as the named person, together with thorough arrangements to ensure the health and safety of the pupils, provide a dependable environment for learning and progress. Training for members of both teaching and support staff is held regularly. Discussions take place at staff meetings on matters concerning child protection issues. The health and safety policy of the school is well met in practice. Regular risk assessments are made. Fire precautions are sound and well rehearsed and fire equipment is regularly inspected and serviced. First aid equipment is readily accessible throughout the premises and the school provides training to the nationally accepted basic standard to sufficient personnel.
40. Registration, monitoring procedures and attendance records are good. There are very good measures for promoting attendance. Recognition of good attendance is appropriately acknowledged. The monitoring of attendance is rigorous. Teachers and support staff have a good knowledge of the individual circumstances of the pupils. Registers and registration procedures meet statutory requirements. The attendance rate, which is above the national average, reflects the value and impact of these measures. Attendance, above the national average, is good. The registers and registration procedures are sound and meet statutory regulations. The school's attendance procedures are audited regularly by the local education authority and fully meet the required standards. Follow-up procedures for unexplained absence are secure and strengthen already comprehensive child protection procedures.
41. Pastoral care is central to the ethos of the school. Parents were in general agreement that the school has a pleasing atmosphere and that it effectively helps their children to become more mature and responsible as well as providing a good standard of education. Pupils are happy to approach the staff with their concerns and many instances of such contact were seen during the inspection. Assemblies together with personal and social education lessons are used effectively to reinforce the school's

core values of good behaviour and care for others. The school uses a wide range of reward schemes to encourage effort and celebrate achievement.

42. The 'open door' policy of the school offers parents the facility of prompt contact with the teaching and support staff in matters of concern. This facility presents further reassurance in respect of the high level of care that the school provides. Overall, the school delivers a good level of welfare with some very good features for promoting good attendance and conduct along with monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour.
43. The school has worked soundly on its approach to assessing the academic progress of the pupils. For example, records of observations undertaken by reception staff are made and these build into a satisfactory profile of the child. Across the rest of the school, progress is monitored in English and mathematics and records are kept in information and communication technology. However, this good practice in systematic recording is not extended to all other subjects of the curriculum.
44. The school makes satisfactory use of its formal assessment outcomes in English and mathematics to predict future attainment for pupils. Their progress towards their individual targets are monitored by the school at the end of Year 3 and a further improvement target set. However, there are no clear steps in communicating to the child what he or she has to do in order to achieve his or her target. It is also not clear in the day-to-day planning of teachers, what steps are needed for higher attaining pupils to achieve all of which they are capable.
45. The school has good systems for identifying pupils with special educational needs. Class teachers are active in identifying pupils with special educational needs at an early stage. A range of different types of tests and assessment methods are used to arrive at a precise diagnosis of a pupil's learning difficulties and support needs. The school makes appropriate use of a range of external specialists in assessing and supporting pupils' special educational needs. Individual education plans are regularly reviewed and the progress of pupils with special educational needs is systematically tracked.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. Parents' views of the school are very positive. The parents' meeting and their response to the questionnaires show a very high level of satisfaction with the way the school cares for and educates their children. They consider that the sincerity of the staff, their helpfulness in both academic and personal matters and the strong bonds they have with them have created a supportive environment in which their children do well.
47. The school has a good range of links with parents that help pupils to learn and assist their personal development. An extensive range of meetings, both formal and social, together with an active parents' association, ensure regular and useful contact between staff and parents. Parents themselves find these meetings a useful forum for sharing mutual concerns and problems and for sustaining the community values of the village that the school serves. Additionally the parents, by their support of fund-raising activities, provide valuable financial assistance to the school.

48. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is satisfactory. Parents highly regard the efforts the school makes for their children, but contact for the majority of parents is typically limited to the formal triannual progress meetings arranged by the school and social events organised by the parents' association. However, those who do play an active role are exceedingly productive and energetic. They are pragmatic in their views of the direct input of others and appreciate the strong conventional support that most parents give.
49. The information that the school provides for parents is good. Parents receive a well-presented prospectus prior to their children joining the school. This fully meets statutory requirements. Links with the middle schools to which their children will transfer are well established. Newsletters, progress reviews, regular personal contact and the approachability of the staff further underpin a commitment by the school to provide comprehensive information about the school and its pupils.
50. The contribution of parents to pupils' learning at school and at home is satisfactory. The school itself places great importance on the involvement of parents and encourages them to help in practical ways. However, the input is limited in terms of active academic assistance in school time and at home. Parents enthusiastically support the school's social functions that ensure it is well placed to fund many projects that assist the personal and educational development of their children.
51. The school has a close relationship with parents of pupils with special educational needs. They are involved from the beginning when their child is believed to have special educational needs, and are consulted throughout.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall and are a positive improvement on the previous inspection. The headteacher has a clear vision of what the school should be about and he is well supported by his team. This has a positive impact upon pupils and staff alike and contributes to the way teachers and other staff work to improve pupils' social skills and academic performance. As a result, the standards of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and consideration for others are a strength of the school. It is a feature of the school that its aims and Christian values are reflected in the daily lives of the pupils through a sense of confidence that there is equal access for all pupils to the opportunities provided by the school.
53. The governing body is satisfactorily effective in carrying out its legal responsibilities and takes an interest in shaping the direction of the school. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well and are fully involved in the management of finance, ensuring that monies are appropriately spent on agreed priorities. The Chair of Governors and headteacher meet regularly to track progress and discuss issues that arise. All governors have regular involvement in the school.
54. The headteacher conscientiously monitors the quality of teaching and learning and gives written feedback to the teacher involved, identifying strengths and areas for further development. However, it is not clear how well these suggestions for improvement are implemented, since inspectors observed the same flaws.
55. As is usual in small schools, class teachers are responsible for co-ordinating several subjects or aspects of the curriculum. They have responded conscientiously to this challenge. With the headteacher, they have started to monitor standards in many of the subjects for which they are responsible and introduce curricular improvements.

For example, they see their subject roles as monitoring, advising and providing resources for subjects. They have scrutinised planning and pupils' work and have recently introduced the initiative of exchanging classes to ensure that they have a good idea of what is going on in both phases. However, when they observe each other teaching, their evaluations are not sufficiently rigorous to make a significant improvement in the quality of provision. This is because this aspect of the role is in its early stages and the school is aware of the need for further in-service training to improve lesson observations.

56. The school improvement plan has been thoroughly revised since the previous inspection and is now a good working tool. It has clear targets for improvements based upon good quality reviews of the school's work. Targets, dates for completion, the people responsible and the money needed are all identified and positive action is taken to ensure that the initiatives are successful.
57. The headteacher, in his role as special educational needs co-ordinator, is very effective in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs are identified early and well supported. He has very good knowledge of special educational needs and makes very good use of a specialist support teacher for one afternoon each week. The school is well ahead in implementing the revised Code of Practice, which schools must have in place by September 2002, and has only minor adjustments to make to its existing practices. A special educational needs governor is closely involved in developments and governors are kept well informed about the school's provision. Funding for special educational needs is appropriately spent, to good effect.
58. Financial planning is good and the headteacher works very hard to ensure that money is spent where it is most required. The finance committee of the governing body meets regularly to fulfil its duties. Expenditure is discussed and linked to priorities in the school improvement plan. Governors and staff carefully apply the principles of best value when considering expenditure.
59. The accommodation at the school is good, with ample classroom space and plenty of outdoor space, both grassy and hard surfaces. There is a well-kept garden, a secure play area for children in the Foundation Stage, and climbing and balancing equipment for both work and play. Unfortunately, the pond is overgrown with weeds and cannot be used for science investigations. The detached hall has been improved by the addition of a toilet block that also serves as a changing room. There is good access for pupils with physical disabilities. Difficulties inside the main building arise, however, because one of the classrooms has to be used as a dining room, which makes the positioning of computers awkward and not always accessible to pupils. Also, the computer suite shares space with a classroom for Year 2, so that this is also inaccessible to pupils for half of every day, limiting opportunities for them to practise their computer skills.
60. The school's resources are satisfactory, except for shortages in geography and physical education, and some problems in bringing the school's computers up to date. Some are outdated and incompatible with modern software. The school was fortunate enough to have several computers donated by a local firm, and these also are being updated for greater speed in processing and to cope with future developments in software. This area for development has been prioritised in the school improvement plan.
61. The qualifications and experience of the teachers and support staff are a satisfactory match for meeting the demands of the curriculum. Sound arrangements are in place

for the induction of new staff, although these have not been required for some time. Satisfactory performance management strategies are in place and opportunities for professional development are appropriately linked to the school's needs as identified in the improvement plan.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. In order to improve further the quality of education offered, the headteacher and governors should:

- 1) raise standards in writing, mathematics and science in Year 2 to bring them into line with those in similar schools by:
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to practise extended writing skills in English and in other subjects of the curriculum;
 - creating further opportunities for pupils to develop independence in learning;
 - further extending investigative activities in mathematics and science by allowing pupils to ask their own questions and solve their own problems. (Paragraphs 2 - 3, 5, 15 - 17, 34, 83, 88, 93, 100, 102, 155, 117)
- 2) increase opportunities for pupils to use their skills in information and communication technology in all subjects of the curriculum and in all lessons and for the more effective use of the specialist computer suite.* (Paragraphs 4, 6, 15 - 16, 29, 60 - 61, 92, 98, 106, 114, 117, 125)
- 3) ensure the closer match of work to the needs of individual pupils, especially higher attainers by:
 - developing a suitable recording system for assessment data;
 - helping teachers to use this data to greater effect in setting appropriate tasks.* (Paragraphs. 9, 15 - 16, 22 - 23, 29, 44 - 45, 85, 87, 89, 91, 94 - 95, 97, 101, 112, 119, 122, 124 - 125)
- 4) review and revise curriculum timings to ensure that science and religious education are given enough time so that pupils make better progress and attain higher standards. (Paragraphs 7, 20, 28, 108, 133, 135 - 136)
- 5) continue to develop a coherent scheme of work for personal, social and health education that reflects the current good, though fragmented, practice in school.* (Paragraphs 28, 31, 132, 136)

* These issues have already been identified by the school and are prioritised in the current improvement plan.

In addition, the governors should also consider the following minor issue:

improve the contribution of curriculum subjects to pupils' spiritual and multicultural development. (Paragraphs 36-37, 100, 108, 114, 119, 127, 135)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
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	0	1	11	13	0	0	0
Percentage	0	4	44	52	0	0	0

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

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)	0	51
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	5*

FTE means full-time equivalent points,

*Since each pupil therefore accounts for almost 2 %

the percentage of FSM is 19.6%

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	10

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	4.2
National comparative data	5.6

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	38
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14.8
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	36

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	169,146
Total expenditure	178,428
Expenditure per pupil	3,878

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0

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	51
Number of questionnaires returned	13

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	23	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	23	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	46	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	46	8	0	0
The teaching is good.	54	46	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	62	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	85	15	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	38	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	46	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	69	31	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	31	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	46	31	0	0

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

63. Children enter the Foundation Stage with below average attainment. The majority are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals¹ in communication, language and literacy and in knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of the Foundation Stage. Boys and girls achieve well in these areas because they are given good opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge. Although some children make good progress in counting and recognising numbers, the majority are unlikely to meet the Early Learning Goals in mathematical development by the end of the Foundation Stage; overall progress in this area is satisfactory. The school identifies social development as a relative strength for many children when they enter the school. Progress in some aspects of personal, social and emotional development is good, but overall progress is satisfactory and the majority of children are not on course to achieve all aspects of the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Their progress is satisfactory in physical development and creative development; they are unlikely to meet the Early Learning Goals in these areas.
64. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and some teaching is good. Children are managed well and learn in an orderly environment. Expectations for behaviour and concentration are made very clear to them. Planning for communication, language and literacy is good. Careful attention is given to the teaching of reading; children read regularly to the nursery nurse and take books home to share with their parents or carers. Children are given regular practise in developing their writing skills, although opportunities to write for a range of purposes through role-play are limited. The small numbers ensure that children have the opportunity to develop good listening skills and they have some opportunities to speak at length. However, teaching does not extend their language as much as it might. Interaction between adults and children is often quite brief and there are some missed opportunities for language development. The best adult modelling of language occurs when the nursery nurse shares books with individuals or groups. In an art lesson, where Foundation Stage children took part with pupils from Years 1 and 2, the teacher paid very careful attention to extending their vocabulary and opportunities for language development were rich. All children in the Foundation Stage would benefit from sessions of this type, within the context of the six areas of learning.
65. There is satisfactory planning in the nursery to ensure the inclusion of a range of activities that promote the other areas of learning, but opportunities for free choice from a range of materials and structured activities are limited. Children are closely organised into specific activities most of the time and, therefore, have few opportunities to develop as independent learners. At times, they are guided into activities that offer only passing interest to them. For instance, children displayed limited motivation for some of the activities that followed the television programme on adding 'one more'. Opportunities for creative development and physical development are satisfactory; children would benefit from greater variety of activities in both these areas. The outdoor area is pleasant and spacious for the small number of children in the nursery, with appropriate provision of pedalled and wheeled toys and a small

¹ The Early Learning Goals state what children are expected to be able to do by the end of the Foundation Stage or by the time they leave reception classes. The Foundation Stage refers to provision made for children in the nursery and reception classes.

number of other stimulus materials. This area could be made much more stimulating to develop children's imaginative play and offer greater physical challenge. In contrast, opportunities for gaining knowledge about the world, for example, through planting seeds and watching them grow and learning about other living things, are good. In the reception class, more attention needs to be given to ensuring that children have sufficiently broad experiences suited to their age and stage of development. At present, the curriculum is rather academic for children of this age and does not wholly reflect national guidance.

66. The teacher responsible for the Years 1 and 2 class, which includes a small number of reception children, co-ordinates provision in the Foundation Stage, whilst a qualified nursery nurse teaches the younger children for most of the time, in the adjoining nursery accommodation. There are regular meetings between the teacher and the nursery nurse, with good support from the teacher, who also plans the curriculum. She has little time, however, to monitor provision in the nursery, teaching a class of her own that spans a wide age range. Closer monitoring is necessary in order to improve the quality of teaching in some areas of learning and to ensure consistent practice. The six areas of learning are included appropriately in weekly and daily plans and planning includes reference to extension activities for higher attaining children. However, entries under the heading of 'extension' are actually potential outcomes and planning does not make clear what activities will be used to promote this higher achievement. In the nursery, daily notes are kept, which provide some evaluation of how sessions have gone and indicate how children responded to a given activity. A profile for each child contains a section on each area of learning. Assessment information is added quite frequently, but the profiles do not reflect the totality of each child's attainment and development. Some sections have no entries and others refer only to quite limited aspects of some areas of learning. This either reflects gaps in the coverage of the Foundation Stage curriculum or insufficiently detailed assessment.

Personal, social and emotional development

67. The majority of children are unlikely to meet the national Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. This is a decline since the previous inspection when children were expected to exceed the goals, but this reflects the lower abilities of children on entry. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and children achieve to a satisfactory level from their below average attainment. Children learn in an environment that is well ordered; they are secure and gain in confidence. Some children play together, negotiating roles, and others show a preference for playing alone. They are learning to take turns and most share well. There are occasional acts of kindness from one child to another; for example, when a child brought an imaginary 'cup of tea' from the home corner for another who was 'working' in the shop. Children are all making good progress in developing self-care skills and most can put on their coats and do them up on their own. Children's good behaviour supports their learning and most know right from wrong. They concentrate well when they sit on the carpet to hear a story or watch television, and behave very well when they sit together to eat a snack. They know that it is important to eat nicely and that litter should be put in the bin. They are familiar with the routines and are usually quick to follow instructions. When activities include an element of fun, they show a delight in learning. However, faced with free choices, children are not entirely confident that the freedom is genuine and have some difficulty responding spontaneously. One child said to another, 'I want to do a drawing. We can do any picture we like, can't we?' They are quite dependent learners who are sometimes reluctant to join in with activities. For instance, several children hold back from singing with the class and they were slow to join in with the television programme on counting.

Communication, language and literacy

68. The majority of children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy. This is a decline since the previous inspection, reflecting the lower abilities of children on entry. The majority of children speak clearly and are able to express themselves reasonably well. A minority do not pronounce words clearly.
69. Children in the reception class are making good progress in reading. They enjoy looking at books, handle them appropriately and can talk about what is going on in the pictures. They listen carefully to stories and some older children join in with familiar refrains. They are able to retell or re-enact a story immediately after they have heard it, although they are not able to say much about books they have read. Higher attaining children can read simple texts mechanically and accurately, but with limited expression. They have a good understanding of the development of the plot and sometimes echo developments, as in 'He pulled and pulled and pulled, but it (the turnip) didn't come out'. They are not able to talk about books they have read on earlier occasions. Average attaining children can read a few words slowly, with prompting. Lower attainers are at an early stage of recognising words, but understand that print carries meaning.
70. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, and sometimes good. Children in the reception class are making good progress in writing. Younger children are learning to control a pen or pencil, often overwriting or tracing letters, and are beginning to recognise some letters and know their sounds. Higher attaining children form letters accurately and know most of the letter sounds. They can already write a sentence, and are beginning to use a capital letter to start the sentence and end it with a full stop. They can identify the missing first letter from a short single-syllable word from a list of options. Average attaining children are making good progress towards this. Lower attaining children overwrite their names by tracing and are at a very early stage of forming letters. Some good questioning by adults encourages children to think about how to spell words and develop an awareness of the letters that go together to make up particular sounds.

Mathematical development

71. The majority of children are unlikely to meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. This is a decline on the previous inspection reflecting the lower abilities of children on entry. Higher attaining children can order and write numbers up to ten. They are able to fill in missing numbers and find two more than a given number. They know how to produce a two-colour repeating pattern. Other children are learning to recognise some numbers and can count up to ten using their fingers or objects to help them. They are developing an awareness of what 'one more' or the 'next' number would be, although some children have to count from one to find out, for example, which number is one more than five. They match simple shapes, but need help to reproduce a simple repeating pattern. They show an understanding of the vocabulary for size and height, so that something is taller or bigger than something else, and positional language such as 'in front of' or 'behind'. Some children join in with counting songs. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and children achieve to a satisfactory level from their below average attainment on entry.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

72. The majority of children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage and this reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Children know about the changing seasons and the weather, and the need to wear different clothes at different times of the year. Higher attaining children are aware of patterns in the weather from week to week, and ask pertinent questions. Children observe changes in ingredients in cooking, and learn how to weigh and mix ingredients, then roll and cut out the pastry. They know that bees produce honey and when they went out to play, they were fascinated to find dew on the cobwebs under the wooden benches. They learn about the human body and about the needs of living things. They experimented with blowing the cobwebs and several of them looked very closely for the spider that had made each web. Displays, for instance, on Chinese food, help children to understand something about cultures outside their immediate experience. They use computers to practise their basic skills. They can control the mouse to click and select menu options and to move objects around the screen, for instance, when using a program that involves matching objects. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and sometimes good, and children achieve to a satisfactory level from their below average attainment on entry.

Physical development

73. The majority of children are unlikely to meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. This is a decline on the previous inspection, reflecting the lower abilities of children on entry. In the nursery and reception class, children make good progress in using pencils, pens and paintbrushes, and in cutting, sticking and joining. They are developing good hand-to-eye co-ordination. Children are further developing their physical skills through the use of toys that can be ridden or pushed, and through playing with construction materials. They pedal and negotiate their way around the garden area with ease, sometimes racing one another, without crashing. However, the equipment available to children at playtimes and in physical education lessons is limited and does not challenge them sufficiently. They are given some access to climbing apparatus in the playground for older pupils, but would benefit from regular access to equipment suited to their age range. Children have an awareness of others in space; they are developing their ability to co-ordinate more than one action at once; for example, reaching up with their arms while they stoop down. Few are able to do this yet. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and children achieve to a satisfactory level from their below average attainment on entry.

Creative development

74. The majority of pupils are unlikely to meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. This is a decline since the previous inspection reflecting the lower abilities of children on entry. Higher attaining children draw lively pictures that show good use of colour, and include facial features and some other representational details. Other children make marks and are beginning to be able to say what is 'happening' in their drawings. Children engage in role-play in the home corner or the shop. Some are quite limited in their ability to play imaginatively and would benefit from more props to support role-play in a range of contexts. The home corner is satisfactory, but could be more stimulating. A 'shop' area provides valuable opportunities, but not all children take an active part when playing there. The nursery nurse asks some questions about what children are doing in their role-play, but adults do not model role-play as much as they might. Children in the nursery area have satisfactory opportunities to paint and make things in two and three dimensions. In the reception class, children have opportunities to take part in art in timetabled lessons, but resources are not set up to allow for any spontaneous creativity amidst the more

academic learning in communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. There is a particular lack of materials to stimulate imaginative development; for example, readily accessible clothes and props for dressing up, in the reception classroom.

75. Some children join in with well-known songs and some follow the actions that accompany particular songs. Assessment records make little or no reference to progress in music, however, and there is limited evidence of attainment beyond these very early musical skills. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and children achieve to a satisfactory level from their below average attainment on entry.

ENGLISH

76. Overall, standards in English are broadly in line with the national average in Years 2 and 4. The picture for reading was broadly similar at the time of the last inspection, but standards in writing have declined. However, pupils in the current Year 3 have made good progress since the 2001 tests and, by Year 4, standards in reading and writing are more in line with the national averages. Progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory overall.
77. Overall, therefore, there has been satisfactory progress since the previous inspection.
78. By the end of Years 2 and 4 standards in speaking and listening are average. Pupils listen well in class and, when given opportunities by the teacher, they answer questions clearly. In class discussions pupils can speak about books they have encountered previously such as 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf'. They also speak well about experiences such as when the school visited the local church for the end of year service. Higher attaining pupils can give expansive answers to questions, but too often the teacher's question does not require an expansive answer.
79. By the end of Years 2 and 4 standards in reading are average. Most pupils join in with reading new texts within literacy lessons. When reading individually, most pupils in Year 2 use their phonic knowledge when encountering new words. They have limited use of other strategies that will help them with unfamiliar words, but they do realise when they have made errors. Below average readers are still unsure of familiar words, but enjoy reading even though they haven't built up enough phonic knowledge to attempt words with any confidence. Higher attaining Year 2 pupils can use punctuation marks to give appropriate emphasis when reading aloud. Pupils know what an author does, but they have difficulty recalling names of any favourite authors.
80. By Year 4 pupils can apply their reading knowledge to using an index and thesaurus successfully and are familiar with the school library. They can locate books on specific subjects within it. The higher attainers are very confident readers and those with special educational needs receive good support.

81. There is satisfactory home–school communication about reading with some support being provided by parents, but there is scope to extend this in order to raise standards further. Reading records are kept and parents and teachers write comments on them.
82. Overall standards in writing are below average, although standards are higher in Year 4 than the rest of the school. This is an apparent deterioration since the last inspection when overall standards were judged to be sound. However, the school is taking appropriate action to address this. There is still much to be done, though, to achieve the standards found nationally especially at the end of Year 2.
83. By the end of Year 2 all pupils have followed a similar programme of work irrespective of ability. Many can write in sentences and can identify adjectives. In Years 1 and 2 all pupils have an understanding of the setting of a story and can contribute words to describe one. In Year 1, pupils with special educational needs gain good support from the learning support assistants and also through access to computer equipment to aid their writing development.
84. Year 2 children follow a structured spelling programme and this is successful for many pupils, but for the higher attaining ones it could be more challenging and have more variety.
85. By the end of Year 4 pupils have encountered a wider range of writing activities than they do in the infant classes. Through this they develop their sentence building further and can use tenses appropriately. Adverbs are used well by most pupils and some higher attaining pupils are using speech marks correctly. There are some opportunities to consider the audience for writing through the production of books for younger children. In geography, guidebooks for travellers to various destinations in the world are produced.
86. The standard of presentation across the school is variable. There is a wide use of worksheets and pupils do not always complete the tasks on these as neatly as they could. The presentation in exercise books in Years 3 and 4 is generally better, but with scope for improvement. In some instances the wide use of worksheets is having a detrimental effect on the achievements of pupils. This is because most tasks require a limited response and teachers do not always ensure that the correct size and spacing of letters is reinforced and practised. There is more evidence of work being matched to ability during Years 3 and 4 and these worksheets are helpful in allowing teachers to achieve this. Nevertheless, these commercially produced worksheets should be used more judiciously throughout the school.
87. Across the school opportunities for extended writing are limited. The contribution that other subjects, like history and geography, can make to the development of literacy skills has yet to be fully exploited by the school. There are, though, some good examples happening within the school such as in history in the junior class when pupils give accounts of life at the time of the Anglo-Saxons. The school is well placed to build on this.
88. The overall quality of teaching and learning across the school is satisfactory, but with some good teaching, leading to good achievement, in both infant and junior classes. There is a consistent approach to teachers' planning with all elements of the National Literacy Strategy being catered for. Individual lesson objectives could be more specific to enable teachers and pupils to know what it is they are expected to know, understand or do by the end of the lesson. The quality of marking has recently been good with teachers giving the pupil an understanding of how their work could be

improved. Some of the questions teachers ask, and some of the activities given to pupils, need to be more open-ended so that pupils can develop their answers. Teachers' knowledge of pupils' achievement is largely intuitive and not systematically recorded.

89. When available, support staff make a good contribution to all English lessons. They work intensively with individuals and groups and are effective in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
90. Assessment procedures for assessing standards in reading and writing are satisfactory and are used to set whole-school and individual pupil targets using the steps identified within the National Curriculum. There is, though, a need to break these down so that the steps towards achieving these targets are clearer to the pupils.
91. Leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of her role. Although she takes a full part in the monitoring of planning and the sampling of pupils' work, her monitoring of classroom practice is still developing and her lesson observations should be more rigorous to help in the development of the subject and improving standards. Accommodation and resources for the subject are satisfactory and include a newly refurbished library. Pupils sometimes use word-processing to present their work, but there is scope to develop the use of information and communication technology in the subject. The school regularly holds book fairs that are organised by the co-ordinator and these accrue additional resources for the school.

MATHEMATICS

92. Although standards in the national assessment tests at the end of Year 2 are below average compared with similar schools, in the lessons seen, standards of attainment were broadly average in Years 2 and 4. These standards, despite the fluctuating abilities of pupils on entry from year to year, have been maintained since the previous inspection.
93. By Year 2, most pupils are confident and accurate in counting on and back in multiples of five, two and ten, although at the beginning of lessons, some were not entirely sure of the number bonds. However, they quickly grasped the principle of rounding up and down to ten and most had no great difficulty in completing the initial task. Pupils' written figures are correctly-formed, and most are consistent in size and space. Most pupils have a good understanding of estimating as 'guessing'. Year 1 are also clear on number bonds up to 10p although most had some difficulty in extending this to 20p. However, the teacher's planned activity reinforced her explanation and most pupils had grasped the concept by the end of the lesson. In the scrutiny of pupils' past work, there is much evidence of investigative work and pattern seeking, along with regular testing in mental mathematics. Pupils present some of their data handling investigations as block graphs. They show a clear knowledge and understanding of both simple shapes and more complex polygons. Pupils identify patterns of odd and even numbers, and describe shapes in terms of the numbers of faces, edges and corners. They make good use of number lines in developing sequencing skills. However, there is not a great deal of difference in the work of pupils of differing ability except in terms of volume produced, so that some lower attaining pupils find the work demanding, but higher attainers are not always sufficiently challenged.

94. In Years 3 and 4, most pupils are accurate and confident when working with factors of 24. The majority know how many millilitres there are in a litre and ably calculate one quarter, one half and three-quarters. They made good estimates of the capacity of a drink bottle when investigating which containers held most. This also developed their skills of reading scales on measuring cylinders correctly, noting that the reason for such precision was, for instance, 'so that you can make cakes properly'. Higher attainers coped well with the work, although they took some time to settle to work. Lower attainers were still unsure of how to read the scales, but they, nevertheless, made satisfactory progress in the development of their understanding of capacity. Scrutiny of pupils' past work showed an abundance of worksheets on number and investigations including pattern seeking. Pupils show a clear understanding of multiples and factors in their multiplication work. They use their mathematical knowledge and understanding in solving problems to do with shape, division, multiplication and length. They show a clear understanding of rounding up and down to ten and 100s, and finding the areas and perimeters of shapes by counting squares. Higher attainers produce a good volume and variety of work on all strands of the subject, but there was no evidence of the use of information and communication technology in workbooks. However, display around the school shows that most pupils competently use computer programs for control and modelling to support their learning in mathematics. There was only the occasional difference in the level of work set for Years 3 and 4, much being common to both age groups and all abilities. Average and lower attaining pupils produce less work, indicating that some lower attainers find the work too challenging, and that higher attainers are not always sufficiently challenged.
95. Pupils work together satisfactorily in pairs and small groups with all joining in the work enthusiastically. Pupils with special educational needs are generally given good support and make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
96. Class teachers are generally enthusiastic and convey their liking for the subject well to engage and sustain pupils' interest. Expectations are similar for all age groups in the class, so that sometimes work is not demanding enough for older, higher attainers. The practice of separating Year 2 to give them a separate entity, and more focused instruction by the headteacher, is a good initiative. However, some lessons have too slow a pace, lacking stimulation, which makes pupils restless because they find the work easy. All teachers use effective questioning to allow pupils to explore and understand the work they are doing, giving reasonable explanations of how they arrive at the answer. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by experienced classroom assistants and in withdrawal sessions by the part-time specialist teacher.
97. The use of information and communication technology is broadly satisfactory when pupils have their weekly skills lessons in the computer suite. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use computers in the classroom to support their learning. Teachers provide good opportunities for developing literacy skills in the form of the correct mathematical vocabulary; for example, factors, multiples, and the various ways of describing subtraction or addition. There is satisfactory development in the recording of mathematical problems and the work is generally satisfactorily presented, although written conclusions drawn from investigations are often brief. Teachers' marking is, however, quite sparse and there are few written comments to tell pupils how well they are doing, or how they could improve their work. The use of homework to support learning in the classroom is unsatisfactory.

98. Pupils use their numeracy skills to satisfactory effect in other subjects of the curriculum like geography, science and food technology, but not to the expected degree in the design aspects of design and technology.
99. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory and occasionally good and pupils achieve accordingly. Teachers have successfully adapted the National Numeracy Strategy to meet the needs of the pupils and go to great lengths to ensure that the work set is suited to the needs of the two or more age groups in their classes – no easy task. Numeracy hours embrace all the elements of the framework and group activities are suitably planned and carried out. Satisfactory use is made of the plenary sessions at the end of lessons to check on progress and reinforce what has been learned. There are, however, too few opportunities for pupils to learn about, and appreciate, the contribution of other cultures to the development of mathematics. The last factor and the limited independence in learning mean that the subject does not yet make its full contribution to pupils’ spiritual and cultural development.
100. Teachers’ planning also includes appropriate assessment opportunities so that the teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of what pupils know, can do and understand. However, planning does not always make clear what provision is made for the needs of pupils with special educational needs or higher attainment. The evaluations teachers make of the lessons they have taught should be more tightly focused on the recording of individual strengths and weaknesses so that future planning is clearer. The co-ordinator has a satisfactory understanding of the role of monitoring and evaluating teaching and the coverage of the curriculum.

SCIENCE

101. Owing to the time constraints of the inspection, it was possible only to see one lesson in the infant class. Judgements are, therefore, based on the examination of teachers’ planning, pupils’ past work, work on display and discussions with staff.
102. Although standards in teachers’ assessment tests at the end of Year 2 are below average in comparison with similar schools, standards of attainment are broadly average in Years 2 and 4, and pupils achieve to a satisfactory level from their below average starting point on entry to the school. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
103. By Year 2, pupils have a good grasp of the effect of forces such as electricity and of materials and their properties. There is some satisfactory work on sources of light and reflection. Although pupils’ written conclusions improve over time, there is little systematic method in recording and presentation is untidy. Higher attainers produce a reasonable volume of investigative work. Average attainers produce less and do not provide written conclusions, although they fill in worksheets accurately. Lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs produce a limited volume of work.
104. In the lesson seen, pupils finally agreed on how much easier it was to push a loaded box on a tiled floor, describing it as ‘smooth and slippery’. The highest attainers could explain why some surfaces are easier to push on than others. All pupils learned the terms ‘rough’ and ‘smooth’ and applied them appropriately to the various surfaces they experimented on, drawing oral conclusions from the table drawn up as a group.
105. By Year 4, higher attaining pupils produce good work on healthy eating and a balanced diet. Their labelling of skeletons indicates a clear knowledge and

understanding of many bones. They successfully complete an abundance of worksheets on friction, floating and sinking. They draw some written conclusions from their investigations, but there is no evidence of recording predictions or of a systematic method of recording. Average and lower attaining pupils identify fewer bones and present their findings on similarities and differences between human and animal skulls as a table. Year 4 higher attainers work on the same topics at no greater depth, and presentation is disappointingly poor. Opportunities to involve pupils in different forms of measurement using different units and of recording, including information and communication technology, are underdeveloped and fail to stretch the higher attaining pupils. Teachers' marking is only occasionally encouraging and rarely gives pupils an idea of how well they are doing, or how they might improve their performance.

106. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory and in the lesson seen, it was good. The teacher encouraged pupils to predict how the box would move on various surfaces and reinforced pupils' recent learning on pre-setting findings in tables by helping them to construct a class table on the board. Most pupils listened well and concentrated hard in order to offer well thought out suggestions that helped to take their learning forwards. However, their enjoyment of the activity turned to excited calling out and lively discussion, which slowed the pace of the lesson. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the contribution to learning made by the use of homework.
107. Curriculum planning meets statutory requirements well, taking good account of recent national guidelines. It is appropriately planned on a two-year cycle to avoid unnecessary repetition for pupils in the same class in subsequent years. However, the time allocated to the subject is low in comparison with national averages, and this restricts pupils' attainment and achievement. Further, there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to experience awe and wonder in science, and so the subject does not yet make its full contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and assist teachers in preparing future lessons. The subject co-ordinator is an enthusiastic teacher with a good knowledge of the subject who exercises his role in monitoring of teaching and learning effectively to ensure equality of provision throughout the school.

THE FOUNDATION SUBJECTS

108. Because of the small number of inspection days and the emphasis on inspecting the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and religious education and information and communication technology, it was only possible to see a relatively small number of lessons in the remaining foundation subjects. No lessons in music or geography were seen, although much work was on display and pupils were heard singing in assembly. Physical education was observed twice in the junior class, once in dance and the other in games. One lesson each was seen in information and communication technology, history, design and technology and science. Two lessons in art were observed. While it is possible to comment on standards in the lessons and work seen, the small sample of work and lessons does not provide a secure evidence base on which to make judgements about overall standards. However, what is clear is that pupils could make better progress in many of these subjects if more time was given to them. The school is aware that this is an area of development and has identified it as a priority in the current improvement plan.

Art

109. Pupils' attainment in art is above that found nationally for pupils of the same age. The displays of pupils' work show that they achieve well. Boys and girls, including those with special educational needs, make equally good progress. The school has sustained and further developed the good standards of work reported in the last inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 experience a broad range of materials and techniques. They select and combine materials imaginatively to produce expressive work in three dimensions and to illustrate familiar stories. Coil pots and tiles, made out of clay, show good technical skill and include vibrant decoration. Pupils in Year 2 have produced some striking pictures on the computer, on the theme of 'fireworks', showing that they have grasped a number of key functions in the computer graphics program. In Years 3 and 4, pupils continue to develop their skills in a range of media and techniques. They know about shape, composition and line. Pupils produce imaginative drawings to illustrate their written work. Their skills in working in three dimensions to solve problems are well above average, as evidenced by photographs of hats made out of folded paper, where they arrived at innovative and effective designs. Art is frequently used as a vehicle for learning in other subjects, and the varied contexts this provides help to enliven and stimulate pupils' creativity. They have produced exciting prayer mat designs as part of their study of Islam. The use of colour, line and composition in these designs is well above the average for pupils of their age. Similarly, they have produced highly innovative jack-in-the-box constructions as part of the study of springs in science. Their choice and combination of materials have resulted in very personalised work that is technically effective.
110. Teaching and learning in art are good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and appropriately high expectations. They are particularly skilled in giving pupils the chance to experiment and express their feelings and ideas. Teachers plan effectively so that time is used well. Pupils try hard and take a pride in their work. The best work shows that they are interested, motivated and able to concentrate well. In some projects, teachers make good use of the work of other artists and of imagery from a range of cultures as a stimulus for pupils' practical work. In the one art lesson seen during the inspection, in a class for pupils spanning reception, Years 1 and 2, teaching was of very good quality. The teacher asked probing questions and paid careful attention to developing pupils' subject vocabulary. She made very good use of visual references to extend pupils' thinking and used music imaginatively to lead them to a personal experience on the theme of 'the sea'. Her good subject knowledge meant that the introduction was packed with valuable information, which led to very good progress in understanding. When pupils began to paint, their efforts were encouraged and they were given the confidence to experiment freely.
111. The art co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and provides valuable support and guidance to other staff. Teachers follow a scheme of work that is appropriately informed by the National Curriculum and provides a good range of learning opportunities. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, although more should be done to record individual strengths and weaknesses in the evaluations of lessons. The subject is well resourced and individual teachers make use of good quality visual reference materials to inform and stimulate pupils' learning. Information and communication technology is used very effectively in the teaching of art. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

Design and technology

112. Standards attained in design and technology at the end of Year 2 are in line with those normally found nationally. The picture is the same at the end of Year 4. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. It was only possible to visit two lessons in

the infant class during the inspection. Judgements are based on these lessons, the scrutiny of school planning and pupils' work, photographs of previous work and displays, and discussions with staff.

113. During Years 1 and 2 pupils have opportunities to design such items as houses, clay pots, fruit salads and glove puppets. In the lessons observed, pupils were designing and making hand puppets. Year 1 pupils produce simple drawings with very basic labelling; for example, the colours to be used. They are becoming adept at cutting out material after drawing around a template supplied by the teacher. They choose their own materials for clothing the puppet, but are not given the opportunity to suggest alternative methods of joining. Year 2 pupils were making independent choices of materials to be used, becoming increasingly skilful in cutting and joining. They produce labelled drawings, those by higher attainers being more detailed, but there was no evidence of the use of rulers or other forms of measurement. Pupils practise various sewing stitches to make the clothes for their puppets, although few are able to thread the needles independently. In discussion, pupils were a little hesitant in describing their methods of construction, but they understand that puppets need to be recognizable characters and that adding features helps to establish the personality of the puppet. By the end of Year 4 they have designed items like storybooks and photograph frames. Some of these finished products are good. There is no evidence that pupils are offered the opportunity to explore and appreciate the contributions made by other cultures to design and technology. The use of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory since computers are rarely used to support learning in the classroom.
114. The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory. The school has adopted national guidelines for design and technology and teachers use this as a basis for their planning. The lesson observed in the infant class on puppet making was well planned and organised. However, it was too prescriptive in the ways pupils could develop their ideas. The scrutiny of work in both infant and junior classes also indicates that pupils need more opportunities to develop their own ideas. Good features of the planning in design and technology are the links made to other subject areas such as literacy and science.
115. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has a satisfactory understanding of the role and is effective in monitoring teachers' planning and sampling pupils' work. However, there is a lack of monitoring teaching during classroom observation because of a shortage of release time and this is unsatisfactory.

Geography and history

116. Only one lesson was observed in history and none in geography during the inspection. Evidence was taken through scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils. From these sources of evidence it was possible to judge that standards in geography are in line with national expectations. This is the same as at the time of the previous inspection. By Year 2, pupils have made maps, including one of their own locality. Their mapwork shows good progression of skills. Pupils also study other localities such as the Isle of Struay and they can offer their thoughts on such places. For example, some think it will be lonely there as there are not too many people, whilst others think the roads would be safer due to less traffic. In Years 3 and 4, studies are made of other contrasting localities including a study of India. Pupils use their computer skills to word-process their writing on aspects of India like education and schools. There are shortages in

resources for the teaching of the subject; for example, up-to-date atlases and modern texts. Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in the classroom in either history or geography.

117. Standards in history are below average in the infant classes and this is a decline on the previous inspection reflecting the school's recent emphasis on national initiatives in literacy and numeracy. They are broadly average in the junior classes and this reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Infant pupils study famous events such as the 'Great Fire of London' and the lives of famous people. Much of this work is a result of watching television programmes. The work produced is similar for all abilities using a variety of commercial or teacher produced worksheets. Pupils, though, have difficulty discussing their work and their sense of the passing of time or understanding why things happened as they did is underdeveloped and achievement is unsatisfactory. During Years 3 and 4 pupils develop their historical understanding through studies of the Vikings and Anglo-Saxons. They begin to understand the nature of historical investigation through interpreting information provided by archaeological finds. In the lesson seen, pupils had a good grasp of how much the Ancient Egyptians depended on the River Nile. There are some good opportunities to develop writing skills. By the end of Year 4 standards are in line with those found nationally.
118. Indications from the evidence seen show that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and, in the lesson observed, it was good. There is, however, no evidence that higher attaining pupils have had the opportunity to produce work different from those pupils of lesser abilities. There are too few opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning and try to put their thoughts into writing, particularly empathetic writing in history and about, for example, the effect of pollution on the environment. Thus, these subjects do not yet make their full contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Teachers' marking in history and geography is unsatisfactory overall. The feedback given to pupils does not help them to develop their understanding in these subjects.
119. The leadership and management of both subjects are satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has a satisfactory understanding of the role and is effective in monitoring teachers' planning, sampling pupils' work and the monitoring of teaching.

Information and communication technology

120. Standards in information and communication technology are broadly average in Years 2 and 4, and pupils achieve to a satisfactory level from their below average point of entry. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. In the Year 2 lesson seen, pupils wrote programs for a programmable toy, developing and recording a sequence of instructions. Higher attainers used a complementary program on the computer to write their programs, using appropriate abbreviations. Most tried out their programs successfully, although some programmed the toy to move through mountains rather than around them. However, pupils persevered and rewrote the program to ensure success. No opportunities were provided for pupils to take their learning further once they had completed their initial task and pupils had to wait to take their turn to practise with the toy, whilst others, who were initially successful, no longer took an active part in the lesson. Pupils with special educational needs were supported by the teacher, but their problems in deciding which was right and left meant that they did not successfully arrive at their destination.
121. The scrutiny of past work in the infant class shows extensive use of computers to support learning in several subjects, including work on control. Pupils successfully

use word-processing to improve their presentation, incorporating photographs scanned in by teachers. There is evidence of pupils successfully changing the colour and font of type, using a CD-ROM for research purposes, making graphs from a mathematical tally chart, writing shopping lists supporting their work in literacy (illustrating their work with an art computer program), and creating abstract pictures using flood-fill in art. The only differences between differing abilities, though, was in the choice of graphics to illustrate the poem 'The Jolly Postman'.

122. In the junior class, pupils use their word-processing skills to produce Christmas cards, incorporating imported images. Their work on India shows some personal research carried out using a CD-ROM. Year 4 pupils are developing images, using repeating patterns. They also use an art program to develop the computerised image of a symmetrically designed prayer mat to support their learning in religious education. Pupils produce written evaluations of a science program they use, and print out their directions for programming a toy. Their work in mathematics and science is supported by their data handling on minibeasts, presented as block and pie graphs.
123. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, and pupils enjoy working with technology. In the lesson seen, the teacher's subject knowledge was good and this aided pupils' learning. Teachers have attended much in-service training to improve their knowledge and expertise and this has had a positive impact on pupils' learning. Lesson planning does not, however, make it clear what is expected of either the lower or higher attaining pupils, so that some find the work too demanding, and others are insufficiently challenged.
124. Curriculum planning shows that the subject now meets statutory requirements and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, although more should be done to record individual strengths and weaknesses when lessons are evaluated, to assist teachers to match work to the differing abilities of pupils. Problems with accommodation and resources referred to elsewhere in this report, limit pupils' access and use of computers in lessons across the curriculum.
125. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has a satisfactory understanding of the role, which is exercised effectively in the monitoring of teachers' planning, sampling pupils' work and the monitoring of teaching, in order to improve pupils' performance.

Music

126. No lessons were seen in music and the only opportunities to inspect the subject came in attendance at an assembly, through the scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussion with staff. There was no written work, although it might be expected from older pupils, particularly pupils' thoughts about the music they hear and compose themselves. Consequently, there is little evidence for the subject's contribution to pupils' spiritual development. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements on standards or the quality of teaching and learning in the subject. Planning shows that all music tuition is based on radio and television broadcasts, so that all strands are covered in both infant and junior classes. The two-year rolling programme is in the process of being matched to national guidance and, although little mention is made here of critical listening, it is apparent that this happens during assemblies. In assemblies, specific pieces of music from all cultures and times are played during the week. The leader gives information about the music, the composer

and the instruments used. In the assembly attended, some pupils correctly identified the form of music as a concerto. Pupils' singing is a little hesitant, and not always tuneful, although they kept a steady tempo as they sang along with the taped song. Assessment is informal, but teachers know their pupils well and should have no difficulty in recording evaluations of individual strengths and weaknesses. Pupils have the opportunity to learn to play recorders and other instruments, and the school makes them and their parents aware of the local authority provision for extra-curricular music on Saturday mornings. All pupils have the opportunity to perform in public in school productions.

Physical Education

127. It was not possible to judge the overall standards in physical education from the evidence collected during the inspection.
128. Two lessons in Years 3 and 4 were observed and teachers' planning scrutinised. In both lessons, pupils' attitudes to the subject were good. In one of the lessons, pupils practised folk dances for a public performance later in the year. They polished their performances of these dances and worked together well. In a games lesson, the same pupils passed balls in a variety of ways including chest, underarm and overarm. Higher attaining pupils performed to a higher standard by making movements to anticipate where the ball could be caught.
129. Resources for the subject, whilst satisfactory overall, would benefit from additional purchases so that pupils have access to a larger variety of quality apparatus. This is recognised by the school and is prioritised in the current improvement plan. The physical education curriculum is enhanced by an extra-curricular club in football.

Religious Education

130. Only two lessons were seen in religious education, both in the infant class, so judgements are based on these two lessons, scrutiny of pupils' past work, teachers' planning and discussions with staff.
131. By Year 2, standards are broadly in line with recommendations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus, but below by Year 4. This is a decline since the previous inspection reflecting the school's recent emphasis on the national initiatives in literacy and numeracy. By Year 2, pupils have some knowledge and understanding of the similarities and differences between Christian and Hindu wedding ceremonies. They make studies of what is special about their family and friends, and places that are special to religious communities. Their written work shows some knowledge of the Jewish Sabbath and of stories from the New Testament like Zacchaeus and the events leading up to Easter. In the lessons seen, pupils were writing about a personal experience of visiting local Christian churches. They knew that the vicar was in charge of the church, and the name of the vicar. Some remembered visiting the Anglican church previously for a Christingle service and most know why people attend church; for example, funerals, christenings, weddings, or just to pray. Pupils with special educational needs were observed using a word-processing program to write about their visit to the Methodist church. There was no indication of any other form of house of worship.
132. By Year 4, pupils produce a small volume of written work. Higher attainers produce good reflective writing when they imagine themselves as 'The Good Samaritan'. However, the work on Jewish beliefs and the Sabbath was copied from a common

source, and there was little or no evidence of independent writing. Much of the work was undated, and there was no difference in the tasks set for the differing abilities. Although much work is oral, too much is subsumed into lessons on PSHE, leaving little time to study the subject in sufficient depth.

133. The quality of teaching and learning is overall satisfactory in the infant classes, but unsatisfactory in the junior classes because learning is not built upon progressively and in sufficient depth.
134. Curriculum planning for the infant class takes account of both learning about religion and learning from religion, also covering other major religions. It is appropriately based on national guidance and the Locally Agreed Syllabus. In the junior class, however, the two-year rolling programme combines with PHSE and the scheme of work is prioritised in the current school improvement plan. More time is needed to ensure that pupils have a greater knowledge and understanding of the syllabus, and there should be more recorded work, especially in Year 4. The subject does not yet make its full contribution to pupils' spiritual development through the expression of pupils' thoughts and feelings, particularly in reflective writing.
135. Although the co-ordinator has a satisfactory understanding of the role and the strengths and weaknesses of the subject throughout the school, the monitoring of pupils' performance, and the strategic use of resources for the subject are unsatisfactory. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is also unsatisfactory, along with the subject's use of information and communication technology. All these defects are largely due to the confusion of religious education with personal, social and health education and the low amount of time allocated.