

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MOUNT STEWART INFANT SCHOOL**

Harrow, Middlesex

LEA area: Brent

Unique reference number: 101501

Headteacher: Miss C A Howard

Reporting inspector: Mrs M Fitzpatrick  
24326

Dates of inspection: 19 – 22 November 2001

Inspection number: 194921

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Carlisle Gardens Mount Stewart Avenue Kenton Harrow Middlesex
Postcode:	HA3 0JX
Telephone number:	020 8907 5113
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs D Hancock
Date of previous inspection:	9 June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
24326	Mrs M Fitzpatrick	Registered inspector	English History	What sort of school is it? School's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9457	Mrs G Bindoff	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes and values How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18370	Mr K Johnson	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology Religious education Special educational needs Equal opportunities	
25787	Mr E Morris	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

1951	Mrs Y Crizzle	Team Inspector	English as an additional language	
19026	Mr B Downes	Team inspector	Geography	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is average in size, with 270 pupils aged four to seven on roll. There is no nursery and children join the school in the year in which they are five. The school has a rich cultural mix, in which Indian and Pakistani heritages predominate (55 per cent). Just over 20 per cent of children are from white heritage groups and the remainder are from black African or Caribbean or Chinese heritages. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language (60 per cent) is much higher than average and 14 pupils are at an early stage of learning the language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils on the register of special educational needs (13 per cent) is average. There are three pupils with statements of special need, which is about average for this size of school. The majority of special educational needs are associated with literacy and two pupils have physical or emotional needs. Overall, the attainment of pupils on entry to the school is average. The school is heavily over-subscribed.

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

Mount Stewart School is a good school, which achieves good standards for the majority of its pupils. Teaching is good and pupils work hard. The headteacher provides clear and positive leadership and has established very good relationships with parents. The school works hard to celebrate its cultural diversity. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- The school achieves good standards in most subjects; they are above the national average in reading and writing and in mathematics.
- The headteacher provides positive leadership focused on raising standards and improving provision.
- Teaching is good; there is outstanding teaching in science in Year 1 and in religious education in Year 2.
- Provision for learning within the playground is excellent and is a result of the very good partnership with parents.
- Relationships within the school are very good and support good learning and good behaviour.
- There are very good links with the community through the work of the governing body.

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

- Assessment and teachers' planning.
- Provision for pupils who learn English as an additional language.
- Provision for the Reception classes.<sup>1</sup>
- The quality of the learning environment.<sup>1</sup>

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

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

The school has made satisfactory improvement since it was last inspected in June 1997. All of the issues raised at that time have been addressed, though there is a need to continue to improve planning for pupils in the Reception classes. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved and, under the leadership of the new deputy headteacher, is continuing to improve rapidly. Pupils have frequent opportunities to work together in lessons and are developing independence in their learning, although some classes have fewer opportunities than others. The

<sup>1</sup> *These items are already contained in the school's development plan.*

good standards found at the last inspection have been maintained. The headteacher, together with the newly appointed deputy headteacher and other senior managers, forms a team that is enthusiastic and well capable of improving the school further.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

The school's performance in the national tests in 2001 was above the national average in reading and writing and well above the national average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools<sup>2</sup> the school's performance was broadly average in reading and writing and above the average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level was well above the national average in all of these tests. Teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment in science, when they are seven, shows that they are average at the expected level and above average at the higher level. The school has sustained these standards since the time of the last inspection and they are reflected in the standards seen in these subjects at this inspection. By the time they are seven, pupils exceed the expected standard in all subjects, except music and physical education, where they reach the expected standard. Pupils achieve well because they are taught well and they work hard. For a few pupils, who are at the early stage of learning English as an additional language, achievement is only satisfactory. This is because teachers are not skilled in assessing their needs and the level of support is not always sufficient to match their needs or to help them develop fluency in their speaking and understanding of the language. This, in turn, sometimes slows their rate of learning. Children in Reception make satisfactory progress and the majority are on course to achieve the expected standard in all areas of learning. The school has set appropriate targets for its pupils based on the assessments made at the end of the Reception year and is confident of meeting these targets for 2002.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	These are very good. Pupils are eager learners who enjoy all that school offers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is good in and out of class. Behaviour in the playground is friendly and harmonious.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good; they support good learning and good social inclusion. Personal development is satisfactory; some teachers could provide more opportunities for pupils to show independence.
Attendance	This was below the national average in the last school year. Punctuality is good.

<sup>2</sup> Schools which have similar proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals.



The low attendance is due to a few parents taking children on extended visits overseas during term time. There has been a marked improvement in attendance in the current term which brings it into line with the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good. During the inspection, it was satisfactory or better in 47 out of 49 lessons seen. There was outstanding teaching in a Year 1 science lesson and in a Year 2 religious education lesson. When teaching was unsatisfactory, it was the result of weak planning and inadequate assessment of pupils' needs. Teaching in literacy is good and pupils learn to read and write quickly in Year 1 because of the brisk teaching and good expectations shown by the teachers. However, there are relative weaknesses in teachers' planning for pupils who are learning English as an additional language, with the result that these pupils learn at a slower rate than others in the class. The teaching of numeracy is good. Teachers present lively challenges at the start of lessons to develop their pupils' mental agility and they make good use of assessment of pupils' progress to plan what they will learn next. As a result, all pupils achieve well and reach high standards in the subject. In all other subjects, pupils are supported to achieve well because teachers plan interesting activities and pupils work hard to meet their good expectations. In Reception learning is satisfactory, with pupils making the expected progress in all areas of learning. With more careful planning and timing of activities, plus better use of learning support assistants, children would learn at a faster rate.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This is satisfactory, though there are some weaknesses in the use of time. Planning is good in geography and science. Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. There is good enrichment of the curriculum through the many visits that pupils make to museums and art galleries.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is satisfactory. Pupils' needs are assessed and teachers write appropriate individual education plans. However, these are not always reflected in the planning teachers do for lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	This is satisfactory. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning the language have the support of a specialist teacher in Year 1 and 2 and make satisfactory progress. Teachers need training in assessing and supporting these pupils in class and there is a need for planned support for pupils in the Reception classes.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good and that for social development provision is satisfactory. There is still scope for increased opportunities in some classes for pupils to develop their social skills through planned sharing.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is satisfactory. The school has good procedures for promoting good behaviour and for eliminating oppressive behaviour. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress.

The school has a very good partnership with parents, who, through generous fund-raising, do much to support their children's learning and the work of the school. There are some aspects of health and safety that the school needs to give attention to through its risk assessment procedures.

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides clear direction for the development of the school. The newly appointed deputy headteacher has brought welcome new expertise to the school, which is being well used to develop systems to improve standards and the quality of provision. The senior management team gives sound leadership, based upon the effective monitoring of standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for development. Some improvements are needed to the procedures of risk assessment. All statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has sound systems for monitoring its performance and acts appropriately upon the findings to improve provision.
The strategic use of resources	Funds are used appropriately to raise standards, as are the grants awarded to the school for pupils with special educational needs and who have English as a second language. The school has plans to make use of its large surplus of funds.

The school has enough teachers with appropriate expertise and experience to teach the curriculum. There is an adequate number of learning support assistants in Reception; there are none in Years 1 and 2 where pupils who are learning English as an additional language need more support. Accommodation is adequate and so are learning resources. The school is careful to get good value in what it does and what it buys.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That their children love coming to school.</li> <li>• That behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• That their children are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• That the school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• That the teaching is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of information they receive about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The amount of homework their children are given.</li> <li>• How the school works with them.</li> <li>• The range of extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agree with parents' positive views of the school. Inspectors do not agree with parents about the amount of homework, which is sufficient. Nor do they agree with the small number of parents who feel that the school does not work closely with them or that the school does not give parents enough information about their children's progress. Annual reports are satisfactory and parents have good opportunities to discuss children's progress with class teachers. The headteacher and teachers make themselves accessible at the end of each day to see parents. Provision for extra-curricular activity is about average and could be increased.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children enter the school with average attainment. They make satisfactory progress and the vast majority reach the expected standard in all areas of learning by the end of Reception. When they enter Year 1 pupils' attainment is average overall, with a few pupils who are learning English as an additional language below the expected level in language and communication.
2. The performance of seven year olds in the national tests in 2001 was above the national average in reading and writing. It was broadly the same as the performance of similar schools.<sup>2</sup> The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level in both tests was well above the national average. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Pupils who were at the early stage of learning English as an additional language did slightly less well than the majority of pupils, though the majority achieved the expected level. Standards in the subject have risen in line with the national trend since the last inspection and have been above the national average during that time. Standards achieved by pupils currently in Year 2 are above the national average. The vast majority of pupils read well, with good understanding. They write legibly, with correct spelling of common words and appropriate use of punctuation. They are able to write for different purposes such as accounts of their work in science, as well as stories and instructions.
3. Pupils' performance in the national tests in mathematics was well above the national average and above the average of similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level was well above the national average. There was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls or between different groups of pupils. Standards in the subject have risen faster than the national trend since the last inspection, due to good leadership of the subject and the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils currently in Year 2 are achieving similar standards. They have a good knowledge of number and are quick to solve number problems mentally. They have good knowledge of three-dimensional shapes through their practical activities.
4. In the statutory teacher assessment for seven year olds in science in 2001, pupils' performance was about average at the expected level and above average at the higher level. Pupils currently in Year 2 achieve standards above the national average in their knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, but their investigation skills are only about average. This is because there is less attention to practical science in Year 2 lessons, so pupils do not develop the good investigation skills they learn in Year 1.
5. Pupils achieve well and exceed the expectation for their age in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology and religious education. In music and physical education their achievement is satisfactory and they reach the expected standard for their age.

<sup>2</sup> *This refers to schools with a similar proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals.*

6. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in relation to the targets set for them and their achievement is sound. The majority reach the expected standard in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. Targets are well focused on the pupils' specific needs and are manageable. Following assessments and reviews, those who no longer need extra support are removed from the register. Pupils who are recognised as having particular talents, for example in mathematics are supported to achieve well.
7. Pupils who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress by the end of Year 2 and reach the standard expected of their abilities in mathematics and science. They do not all reach the expected standard in English because the level of support and the planned work is not always appropriate to their needs. In most other subjects, they make satisfactory progress, because of the support they get from teachers. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English, are supported in the development of basic fluency by the specialist teacher, who visits the school once a week. Pupils' progress would be improved if there were more adult support to help them with their speaking and listening in the early stages.
8. Literacy is well promoted in other subjects. Pupils improve their reading skills by reading for information and to follow instructions in history, religious education and science. They are given opportunities to discuss and explain what they are learning in science and design and technology lessons. They have many opportunities to write for different purposes by writing about their investigations in science and how they made things in design and technology. They describe life in other countries in geography and compare things from the past with those of the present in history.
9. Numeracy skills are well developed in other subjects. Teachers ensure that pupils make use of their skills to measure accurately in design and technology. Pupils draw graphs to show their findings in science and to summarise class surveys about what foods they like and how they travel to school. Some Year 2 pupils realised that counting while they watched chocolate melt would give them more information for their investigation.
10. The school has maintained the high standards found at the last inspection. The successful implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies has helped teachers maintain the school's results and the monitoring procedures have ensured that the quality of teaching has also been maintained. The school has set appropriate targets for next year's national tests for seven year olds and is on course to meet them.

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

11. The pupils' enthusiasm for learning is a strength of the school and contributes significantly to their good achievements. Parents say that their children love school and do not want to stay away, even if they are feeling poorly. Pupils have very positive attitudes and there are no variations between different groups of pupils. As a result of good teaching, pupils are very interested in all that they do. They work hard, sustain their concentration well and persevere when the work is challenging. They take a pride in their work and value the awards and praise they receive.
12. Pupils enjoy opportunities for activities outside lessons. Year 2 pupils were excited about a recent visit to the Science Museum and were keen to recount the experiments they had tried. They were also delighted by the chance to play African instruments when a group of musicians visited the school and they were able to try out various rhythmic patterns for themselves.

13. The youngest children respond well to the orderly environment provided for them. They are keen to learn and are developing some independence. They are able to select the activities they want to take part in and to record what they have done. They enjoy books and are keen to choose one from the school's library to take home to read. In a music lesson, they were very excited about using percussion instruments. They handled the instruments with care and learned how to play them properly. All of the children were fully involved and their behaviour was very good because of very good teaching.
14. Pupils have the capacity to develop as independent learners and respond very well when opportunities are provided. In a Year 1 class, pupils have set and agreed their own targets for improvement. They are able to review them and to assess how well they have progressed towards them. They have a clear idea of their own learning and of what they need to do to improve. They are very supportive of each other and celebrate each other's achievements. Opportunities for pupils to develop their own ideas and take responsibility for their own learning are limited in some classes and the good practice described above could be usefully extended to other classes.
15. Pupils in the school come from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds, but they all work and play well together. The relationships between them are very good. They behave well and there are very few instances of bullying or other oppressive behaviour. Pupils have the confidence to talk to an adult in the school if there are any problems and they know that problems will be dealt with quickly. In lessons and at playtime, pupils are friendly and sociable and they collaborate well on tasks, especially in music, design and technology and information and communication technology.
16. Pupils respond well to the school's strong emphasis on social responsibility. Year 2 pupils are able to explain why some things are right and others are wrong. They understand that their actions can have an effect on others. In religious education, Year 2 pupils showed respect for the beliefs of others. They were interested in their study of Judaism and asked sensible questions to extend their understanding.
17. Attendance was below the national average in the school year 2000 / 2001. The school's records show a good improvement for the autumn term 2001, with an average weekly attendance above 95%. There is an established pattern in the school's community of families taking children for extended holidays and visits overseas, which adversely affects the school's attendance figures. The school is sensitive to local expectations, but encourages parents to keep the time their children are absent from school to a minimum. Pupils are punctual and lessons start on time.

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

18. The quality of teaching is good in the school. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in over nine out of ten lessons. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen in two lessons out of fifty observations. Teaching was good or better in over six out of ten lessons and in about one sixth of lessons it was very good or excellent. The quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection.
19. Teaching in Reception is satisfactory and, in four out of ten lessons, teaching was good or better. The quality of teachers' planning has improved since the last inspection and there is now better provision for pupils to learn from practical activities. When developing literacy skills, teachers and classroom assistants actively encourage children to talk and share ideas. During one story-time, the teacher questioned children well about the book, by asking, 'What happened?' 'How do you know?' in order to encourage the children's thinking. However, medium term planning

for communication, language and literacy does not sufficiently take account of the full range of pupils' abilities, so that all pupils are not fully challenged or supported in all lessons. This is especially the case for pupils who have English as an additional language. For these children, a lack of planned speaking and listening opportunities slows their acquisition of the language, which, in turn, slows their progress in other areas of learning.

20. Teachers' termly planning for mathematical development is based upon the Framework of the National Numeracy Strategy for Reception children. However, because their daily planning is not supported by regular assessment of what children know, teaching in mathematics does not always reflect what the children need to learn next. A shortage of exciting resources to encourage independent exploration of mathematical ideas in weight, measure and number hampers the range of methods that teachers use. The Foundation Stage staff work hard as a team, but their relative inexperience highlights the need for further training and development. Better and more imaginative use of resources is needed to help children explore their own potential more fully. There is a need for even clearer planning which will provide appropriate learning for all children in all areas of their learning.
21. The quality of teaching in the infants is good, with almost two in ten lessons very good or excellent. In all subjects teaching is good overall, except in physical education where it is satisfactory and in information and communication technology where it is very good. In Year 1, teachers' plan together for all subjects, so that pupils in each of the three classes have similar learning experiences. The benefits of this joint planning are seen in the range of methods and resources used by teachers to make learning challenging and fun. For example, pupils were delighted to examine each other's 'electric' toys, as part of their investigations about light in their science and design and technology lessons. After a lively discussion about the toys, which was well managed through the teacher's skilful questioning, they were able to explain how each toy worked and one high-ability boy concluded that the circle (circuit) was broken when a torch went off. In such lessons, pupils learn at a very good rate and have good retention of their learning, because experiences are so memorable. Not all planning is so well matched to pupils needs and, in both Years 1 and 2, there is a need for more specific planning for pupils of different levels of attainment to ensure that the work set for all groups in a class is both challenging and accessible for pupils. In an unsatisfactory science lesson, lack of careful planning to meet the needs of all led to unsatisfactory progress for most pupils. In this lesson, there was little to stimulate pupils' thinking and tasks were not graded to challenge pupils of all abilities.
22. Teaching in literacy is good, with some very good teaching seen in Year 2. The majority of pupils' achieve well and quickly master basic skills because of teachers' good expectations and the reinforcement of learning through careful questioning. Pupils who do not achieve well include some pupils with special educational needs and some pupils who are at the early stage of acquiring English. Teachers' planning for these pupils is not based closely enough on assessment of their learning needs. Consequently, these pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress. When teaching is occasionally unsatisfactory in literacy lessons, pupils do not make enough progress because they are not clear about what is expected of them. Again, the teacher's understanding of what the pupils needed to do to move forward was not soundly based.
23. Teaching in numeracy is good. All teachers follow the National Numeracy Strategy and conduct their lessons at a brisk pace. Pupils enjoy the challenges of the mental tasks at the start of lessons and develop good mental agility as a consequence of these sessions. Teachers plan together effectively for all groups in their classes and pupils are usually provided with work that is appropriate and allows them to make

good progress. In this part of the lesson pupils work well, concentrate hard and persevere to solve problems. When pupils are not provided with suitable tasks, as in a Year 2 lesson on factors, then the learning of a few pupils is reduced to satisfactory from good. In most lessons seen, teachers ask questions of a range of pupils and gain information about how well they understand the work. However, teachers generally do not make enough use of resources during whole class teaching to assess the proportion of pupils who need further teaching in a topic.

24. Pupils learned at a rapid rate in an excellent science lesson in Year 1, where the teacher's expert subject knowledge led to high challenges and exciting learning for all pupils. In the course of their investigations into how to get power from a battery to make a bulb light up, pupils overcame many obstacles and persevered with wires and connectors to complete a circle of power to light the bulb. Their joy at their achievement was evident and prompted many to investigate further, for example, how loosening the light bulb could break the 'circle' and make the light go out. Throughout this lesson, the teacher's skilful intervention with challenging questions ensured that all pupils were learning at a rapid rate and that their understanding of what they learnt was secure.
25. In a Year 2 religious education lesson, the teacher's excellent knowledge of Jewish customs, combined with her very effective use of resources, led to excellent learning for all pupils. The teacher's methods of allowing the pupils to experience the rituals of the Sabbath ensured that they fully understood what each part in the celebration signified. Pupils were genuinely excited by the experience and asked many relevant questions, confirming their interest and enthusiasm for the learning.
26. Teachers' use of assessment to track pupils' progress and to decide what to teach next is satisfactory overall, but is sometimes inconsistent. For example, there is good use of assessment in mathematics by most teachers, who use their findings to set the correct level of work for all pupils in their classes. However, teachers' assessment of what pupils need to learn in English is not as sharp, and this is reflected in the tasks they set for pupils. These are sometimes too general to meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs or who are learning English as an additional language. While these pupils make satisfactory progress, with more structure in their activities and more planned support from classmates, they would make good progress. In science, better use of assessment while a topic is being taught would show teachers where additional support was needed for differing groups of pupils and help them all make good progress.
27. Relationships are very good and make a positive contribution to learning. In classes where relationships are very good, teachers and pupils work in close harmony and have high expectations of each other. The effect of very good relationships was well demonstrated in a Year 2 science lesson, where the teacher planned investigations for the class. Although space in the room was cramped and the children were very excited at the prospect of conducting their own experiments, the lesson was very well managed and pupils learned at a very good rate because they respected the teacher's requests for calm and were very disciplined about safety. In such lessons, pupils' respect for the teacher leads them to strive hard to reach the challenges set. The quality of relationships supports the good behaviour seen in school. Teachers are seldom heard referring to pupils' behaviour and, as a result, learning is uninterrupted in the majority of lessons.
28. Overall, pupils with special educational needs are taught satisfactorily. Teachers write individual learning plans for pupils on the register so they are aware of their needs, Small groups are taught within the classroom, usually by the special needs support teacher. Pupils with more specific needs receive individual support as required. Their

progress is carefully recorded. Pupils' progress is hampered when tasks are set that do not focus clearly enough on their needs.

29. Pupils learning English as an additional language are adequately supported by class teachers and have full access to the curriculum. The specialist support teacher who works with pupils at an early stage of learning the language gives satisfactory support to these pupils. Pupils who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. Their achievement is sound in English and often good in mathematics and science. This difference arises because teachers are not expert at assessing the needs of pupils who are learning English as an additional language, nor are they supported in their planning for them. As a result, pupils are not given enough opportunity or support with their speaking or listening in the new language and do not always fully understand instructions and explanations. In mathematics and science, they are able to learn from practical activities and to give a clearer picture of their ability. The rise in the number of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English has produced a demand for more training for teachers in how to assess and plan for these pupils.
30. The provision for homework has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Teachers set appropriate reading and mathematics homework and pupils are given interesting tasks to complete for science and technology. The school has a very good partnership with parents who give very good support to pupils' work at home.

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

31. All National Curriculum subjects and religious education are taught to pupils aged from five to seven. There is an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics that enables all aspects of these to be taught throughout the school. However, due to the structure of the school day, some lessons in these subjects are too long for the age of the pupils and the time is not used as effectively as it could be. For example, the time from morning play to lunch is an hour and fifteen minutes and this is often used solely for a numeracy or literacy lesson. These lessons are sometimes stretched to fill the time, thereby losing useful curriculum time that could be used to improve the provision in other subject areas. The amount of time allocated to the teaching of science is too short for pupils to be given regular opportunities to carry out their own investigations and learn the principles of science through a practical approach.
32. The curriculum for the children in Reception, covers all six recommended areas of learning. The planning of the curriculum for these children is satisfactory, though there is a need to improve the use of time and planning with support assistants. The national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are firmly in place and are proving effective in raising standards, particularly in numeracy, where attainment is above that found in similar schools. There are policies and schemes of work in place for all subjects. Teachers work together in year groups to plan the curriculum and this enables them to share ideas and expertise, as well as ensuring that all pupils receive similar coverage. However, the quality of the planning of units of work for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is variable. In geography, it is good and in most other subjects, including mathematics, it is satisfactory. It is less effective in English where teachers do not plan sufficiently for different groups in their classes and science where some Year 2 teachers do not plan enough investigative work for pupils.
33. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils on the special educational needs register have individual plans designed to meet their



learning needs. These plans generally focus on literacy and numeracy skills and personal development. Pupils are well integrated in all school activities and make satisfactory progress in their overall development as a result of the provisions made for them. Detailed assessment records are kept so that the school can build an accurate profile of pupils' development and progress but there is room for improvement in the use of information gathered to focus on the next steps in learning.

34. The provision for pupils who have English as an additional language is satisfactory. All pupils are fully included in the life of the school, enabling them to benefit from the learning opportunities provided. A few pupils are occasionally withdrawn from lessons for specific learning support in English. Care is taken to ensure that they do not miss any important class work and the benefits they receive from this extra help outweigh any disadvantages. There is a need for more detailed assessment of their needs to help class teachers plan more appropriately for them.
35. There are designated governors for literacy and numeracy who visit the school regularly to observe lessons and talk with the subject co-ordinators. The governors have adopted appropriate policies for sex education and for personal, social and health education.
36. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of visits to places of interest, which are linked to the work in class. Recent visits have been made by Year 2 pupils to the Science Museum, Tate Modern, the Grange Museum and a local wildlife centre to study pond life as part of their science work. Pupils in Year 1 visited the Bethnal Green Toy Museum and go on local walks to study the environment and support their work in geography. Visitors to the school also help to enliven and extend the curriculum. The African drummers this term were particularly effective, thoroughly enjoyed by all, and involved all pupils in the school. There is evidence in pupils' work of the benefits of these visits to their learning. Links with the community are very strong. For example, the school has received assistance with the setting up of the new play area from a nearby hardware superstore and a bank. A local hotel and the town hall have allowed pupils to visit them and observe people at work. Parents are also used by the school as a valuable resource and willingly give of their time to come in and talk about their cultural heritage and religion. The annual International Evening is well attended by parents and their children. This celebrates, through dance, costume and food, the rich diversity of cultures found locally. There are several after-school clubs for pupils to attend and improve their skills in football, dance, French and drama. These activities are selected by the school and are provided by an outside agency which parents pay for their children to join. There is also a lunchtime recorder group, organised and run by a teacher, which all pupils in Year 2 attend for a half a term during the year, so that when they leave the school all pupils can play a simple tune on a tuned instrument. Pupils have corresponded with a school in Cornwall to find out about life in an area very different to their own. There are also plans to use the Internet to make contact with schools, possibly in other countries, to help pupils understand more about the world. The school has satisfactory links with the junior school which shares the same site.
37. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision for spiritual development is good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. School assemblies encourage pupils' spiritual awareness through a variety of experiences which allow them to reflect on their own and other's beliefs and feelings. The weekly celebration assembly provides a very good opportunity for pupils to applaud each others voluntary efforts in sharing their achievements. Pupils from all classes respond respectfully and with interest to the work, certificates and mementoes that other pupils bring to share with them. Teachers make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development in their experiences they provide for

pupils. For example, pupils have many opportunities to discover the wonders of nature through the different subjects they study. Year 1 pupils' delighted response when a bulb lit up during their work on electricity is typical of the sense of wonder that pupils are developing about the world in which they live.

38. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. There are clear and sensible rules about how children should behave. Teachers are careful to explain these rules to children and to allow pupils to discuss the need for such rules. Through sensitive handling of thoughtless behaviour teachers ensure that pupils are taught to do the right thing, by reflecting on how their behaviour might affect others and learning to say sorry in an appropriate way. Pupils are also taught to respect the environment and property and in many classes are given responsibility for looking after their learning materials and keeping the room tidy. They are careful with displays and Year 1 pupils showed great care when examining each other's toys in a science lesson, to discover how they worked.
39. Provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory and there are some developing strengths. One of these is the provision of some very imaginative play equipment in the playground. Children play amicably and share the equipment well with a minimum of adult intervention during the long lunch break. Groups of children are seen working together very well to create music on the instrument frame and are developing very good attitudes to sharing as a result of these opportunities. The building equipment offers further opportunities for pupils to develop good social skills as groups work together constructing bridges and castles from the blocks and crates. In many classes teachers are careful to give pupils responsibilities and expect them to clear up independently and thoroughly. This is not consistent across the school and in some Year 2 classes there is a need for more involvement of pupils with these matters. The practice of sitting children in corridors before dismissing them for playtime is another example of teachers restricting pupils' personal development, by removing the responsibility for getting themselves outside to play.
40. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. They listen to a variety of music from around the world and have the opportunity to make music using a range of instruments from many cultures. They learn about the work of famous artists in western culture and in cultures from across the world. In religious education they have a good experience of all world faiths and benefit from seeing having classmates share customs from their cultures. A nice example was seen in a Year 1 class where two children showed a dance to celebrate Diwali. Pupils have opportunities to enhance the school's environment with their ceramic designs and so gain an understanding of how culture enriches the lives of everyone. The school makes very good links with all parents and celebrates their ethnic origins and the cultural diversity of the school's community. The annual International Evening demonstrates very well to children how different and exciting other cultures are in their food, dance, dress and music. Pupils also have many opportunities to learn about other cultures from visitors to the school, such as a local poet and a band of African drummers.
41. The school has made good progress in improving these aspects of pupils' personal development since the last inspection and has improved the quantity and range of bi-lingual books in the library and in classrooms.

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

42. The school's provision for pupils' welfare is satisfactory and has several good features. Pupils and their families are well known by the school and parents value the very good contact between parents, carers and class teachers who share information about pupils' individual circumstances. For example, parents are always

informed when their child has been injured at school, however slightly. The provision of two welfare officers sharing a full time post contributes very well to the care for pupils and supports their personal needs. The welfare officers provide reassurance and comfort when needed and help pupils to resolve difficulties with other children when these arise, especially at playtimes.

43. Pupils in the Reception year settle well into school life and soon learn school routines. They develop independence and self-confidence. Provision for pupils' individual needs is satisfactory and, sometimes is good. Some visiting specialists support individual pupils very well, for example, in speech therapy; others, such as the English as an additional language specialist give satisfactory support. Good provision is also made for pupils with reading difficulties in the reading recovery programme.
44. Attention to aspects of health and safety is satisfactory, but improvement is needed in the systematic provision of risk assessments to cover all areas of the school's work. Provision for first aid treatment is good. Pupils are well supervised at playtimes and there is good concern for safety in the use of the new playground equipment. Some very good work on safety is included in lessons and there is an excellent display of the work done by Year 1 pupils on the safe use of electricity.
45. Arrangements for child protection are satisfactory and meet the locally agreed procedures. Good provision has been made for all members of staff to have some training in the recognition of the signs and symptoms of abuse. Procedures for recording and monitoring points of concern are not rigorous enough and need some improvement. There is some good practice to build on, for example, the opportunities for pupils in Year 1 to think about and record their feelings in a special 'feelings' book.
46. Pupils' personal development is not systematically recorded and monitored, although there is good practice in some classes. The personal profiles in Year 1 are good examples of what can be achieved.
47. There are good strategies for promoting good behaviour. Expectations are made clear to pupils and are frequently reinforced in lessons, in assemblies and around the school. Good use is made of praise and encouragement and pupils value the rewards they receive. Class teachers manage the behaviour of pupils well, but there are times during the school day when school routines become too regimented, for example, when pupils wait in the corridors for lunch or to go out for play. On these occasions, the opportunities for pupils to develop independence are reduced.
48. Some good strategies are in place to improve levels of attendance and parents are effectively encouraged to bring their children to school on time. Few pupils are late. Improvement is needed in monitoring patterns of absence to ensure that no particular groups of pupils are disadvantaged and to assess the impact of absences on learning. Improvement is also needed to distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence, to clarify the time when the registers are closed and to ensure that all registers are completed correctly.
49. The procedures used to assess pupils' attainment and progress, are satisfactory overall. They are usually good in mathematics, where teachers make good use of them to plan the next stages of learning for pupils, with the result that all groups of pupils make good progress. In science the assessment of what pupils have learned at the end of a topic gives teachers good information on what they have understood and what needs to be revisited. In English the assessment of pupils' understanding of letter sounds is not carried out regularly enough nor do assessments focus on what pupils have been taught in literacy lessons. The assessment of pupils' writing needs to be carried out more regularly so that teachers are able to set appropriate targets for

pupils. The use of assessment to plan work for specific groups of pupils in English and science could be improved so that it has the same positive effect on raising standards as it does in mathematics. Co-ordinators could also make comparisons between the standards of pupils in the different classes in each year to ensure that all pupils are sufficiently challenged and make similar progress. The school is beginning to use its baseline assessments to set targets for pupils in English and mathematics and this will contribute to the development of teachers' understanding of the effective use of assessment.

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

50. Parents are very supportive of the school and of the education provided. They say that their children love school, behave well and work hard. They think that the teaching is good and that their children make good progress. They think that the school is well led and managed. Some parents have concerns about the information they receive about how their children are getting on and do not feel that the school works closely with them. Some do not think their children are given a suitable amount of work to do at home and they also think that the school does not provide a good range of activities outside lessons.
51. Inspectors support parents' positive views. Parents' concerns have not been confirmed by the inspection. Very good information is provided about the day-to-day life of the school and about the work that the pupils will do. Annual written reports about progress are satisfactory and there are good opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress with class teachers. Opportunities for informal contacts between parents, carers and class teachers are very good. Homework tasks are appropriate to the age of the pupils and the 'yellow' books provide a good link between home and school. The school provides very well for some activities outside lessons and arranges interesting visits for pupils and for visitors to come in to school. The after-school club promoted by the school offers a range of activities for some pupils, but is not in keeping with the school's aims for the inclusion of all pupils because there is a charge for each session.
52. Parents have very good guidance about how to help their children at home and are able to be actively involved in their learning. Parents of pupils in Year 2 have clear information about homework and about the preparation for national tests. Reading record books are used well by parents to comment on the reading their children do at home, especially in the Reception year.
53. Very good links are established with parents of pupils with special educational needs and they are able to support their children well. Parents of pupils on the reading recovery programme and parents of pupils who are supported by the speech therapist also contribute very well to their children's progress by working with them at home.
54. Although there is a large percentage of pupils at the school who learn in English as an additional language, parents have indicated that they do not want written information from the school in their community languages. Communications in English do not present problems and, on the rare occasions when a problem does arise, interpreters can usually be found from among the parents themselves.
55. Parents are actively involved in the life of the school as volunteer helpers in the classroom. They are well briefed by class teachers and provide valuable support for pupils. They raise significant funds for the school through fund raising events, which benefit pupils by the provision of improved learning resources. In particular, they have contributed very significantly to the superb outdoor play facilities, which inspire and delight the children so much and make a very good contribution to their learning.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The headteacher provides clear direction and positive leadership for the development of the school. Most of the issues identified at the last inspection have been successfully tackled and the school has made satisfactory improvement. There have been improvements to planning for children in Reception so that they now learn through a wider range of activities. The quality of individual education plans has improved, but there is still scope for more planning for the use of these in lessons. Pupils have more opportunities to work together, especially in science, design and technology and information and communication technology lessons. The school has detailed plans for spending the large surplus funds and some have already been spent on the refurbishment of some offices. The school's performance in national tests has risen in line with the national trend and standards are good. The school has set appropriate targets for 2002 based on its assessment of pupils at the end of Reception. The newly appointed deputy headteacher has brought very good expertise and experience to the school and she and the headteacher work very well together. They have identified areas for development with the intention of raising standards even further.
57. There is strong sense of developing teamwork in the school and a good level of commitment to improving standards and provision. The headteacher has effectively delegated responsibilities to subject co-ordinators. She has appropriate expectations of their role and the co-ordinators of English, mathematics and science have the opportunity to observe teaching and learning in their subjects. All co-ordinators monitor standards and relay their findings to the headteacher who uses these as the basis for setting priorities for improvement. In all subjects monitoring and evaluation are satisfactory. Through these procedures, all staff are involved in formulating priorities for development in the school aimed at raising standards and improving the quality of provision. The senior management team includes the Foundation Stage co-ordinator and the core subject co-ordinators, all of whom are improving their roles with guidance from the new deputy headteacher. Together with the headteacher, they form a team that is well informed, hardworking and capable of taking the school forward. The school's development planning is well focused on the appropriate priorities to raise standards and improve provision. Spending is well linked to these priorities.
58. The management of provision for special educational needs is improving under the leadership of the newly appointed deputy headteacher. The areas for development identified in the previous report are now being rigorously addressed. Teaching provision has already been increased and the co-ordinator closely monitors the quality and impact of individual education plans. A policy review is planned which will include recognition of the needs of gifted and talented pupils. Although the effects of the co-ordinator's management strategies are not yet fully evident, the capacity to build on current practice is good.
59. The school is successful in meeting its aims to provide a stimulating and caring environment in which children can learn. There is a good level of commitment for these aims from all who work in the school. As a result, pupils are eager to be in school and learn well when they are there. The headteacher has established systems for recognising and celebrating effort and achievement and the 'Achievement Assembly', where pupils display their work, provides a good example of how the school builds on pupils' enthusiasm to support their learning and raise standards.
60. The governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are well involved in the strategic development of the school and are aware of the need for constant improvement if the school is to maintain its good reputation in the

community. From their links with co-ordinators, reports from the headteacher and visits to the school, the governors have a good understanding of what the school's priorities should be. The governors have very good links with both the parents and the community and, since the last inspection, have made good use of these to gain support for the development of the school. The outstanding playground facilities and the support for learning from local businesses are examples of how the governors' efforts in these areas have improved the provision for the children. While discharging their responsibilities well, the governors are aware of a small number of health and safety issues they need to address. Otherwise, they fully meet legal requirements.

61. The school has an appropriate number of teachers with sufficient experience and expertise to teach the curriculum. There is good and, occasionally, very good subject knowledge amongst teachers, for example, in science, design and technology and religious education. The school has increased the number of learning support assistants since the last inspection and these make a sound contribution to children's learning in the Reception classes. However, there are not enough learning support assistants in Years 1 and 2 to meet the literacy needs of pupils who have English as an additional language, with the result that some pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress in their language skills. The school makes sound provision for the induction of new and trainee teachers. There is currently a graduate trainee working in Year 1 who has benefited from a well-planned induction to the profession.
62. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall. It is adequate for teaching the curriculum, though the rooms in which Year 2 pupils are taught are small and occasionally hamper practical activities in science, art and design and technology. The school has extensive grounds that it is currently developing into learning areas for the children. The playground, which forms the first stage in this development, provides outstanding opportunities for pupils to learn through play. This, together with the school hall, provides good spaces for physical education lessons. While teachers make good use of display to enhance pupils' learning and to make the environment attractive, they do so in very difficult circumstances. The décor, fabric and furniture of all classrooms are urgently in need of refurbishment and replacement. Storage facilities are inadequate, of poor quality and do not support the development of pupils' independence in learning. The school has earmarked funding for these improvements, which are part of the current school development plan. Throughout the school the standard of cleaning is inadequate. It is a matter of some urgency that the school tackles this issue in order to ensure the well-being of pupils and teachers.
63. Resources for music are very good and reflect the ethnic diversity of the school population. There is some shortage of stimulating resources for teaching mathematics and in Reception there is a general shortage of resources for pupils to learn through play. Otherwise, resources for learning are adequate in all subjects and there has been an improvement in the provision of bi-lingual books in both the library and classrooms since the last inspection.
64. Financial planning is sound and is well linked to the school's priorities for raising standards. The large surplus that the school has accumulated is now allocated to improving the environment. The school has a good record of involving parents in developments and of consulting with them about change. Procedures for financial control are good and well-managed by the chair of the finance committee and the bursar. They ensure that governors are well informed about the school's spending patterns. At the last audit, the school was found to have good financial procedures and there were no issues for attention. The governing body is careful to seek best value in its decisions about spending.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to continue to raise standards, the headteacher, staff and governors of Mount Stewart Infants' school, should:

- (1) Further improve by:
  - Developing the use of assessment by building on the good practices used in mathematics
  - Improving the quality of teachers' planning to ensure that it prepares suitable challenges for all pupils.  
*(paragraphs 7, 26, 29, 49, 76, 80, 81, 85, 91, 92, 107)*
  
- (2) Raise achievement in literacy for pupils who learn English as an additional language by:
  - improving the expertise of teachers to assess pupils' needs and plan for the development of their fluency in speaking and understanding in listening
  - increasing the level of adult support for these pupils.  
*(paragraphs 7, 19, 29, 69, 80, 89, 91)*
  
- (3) Improve the progress made by children in Reception by:<sup>3</sup>
  - continuing to improve teachers' planning
  - improving the use of support staff through more effective use of their time
  - improving the amount and use of resources.  
*(paragraphs 20, 67, 69, 70, 71, 72)*
  
- (4) Improve the school environment by:<sup>3</sup>
  - implementing the plans for redecorating and refurbishing classrooms as a matter of urgency
  - ensuring that the requirements of the cleaning contract are met and that the school is a healthy environment for children and teachers to work in.  
*(paragraphs 27, 44, 62)*

In addition, the governors should also consider the following for inclusion in their action plan:

- (5) Develop more opportunities for pupils' independence beyond the classroom by ensuring that there is less direct control by teachers.  
*(paragraphs 14, 47)*
  
- (6) Ensure that all risk assessment procedures are carried out.  
*(paragraph 44)*
  
- (7) Make better use of time currently allocated to teaching in the core subjects.  
*(paragraphs 31, 81, 85)*

<sup>3</sup> These items already appear in the current school development plan.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	6	25	14	2	-	-
Percentage	4	12	51	29	4	-	-

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	-	270
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	34

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	163

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	22

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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



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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	51	38	89

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	42	46	47
	Girls	36	38	38
	Total	78	84	85
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (94)	94 (98)	95 (98)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	41	41	46
	Girls	36	36	35
	Total	77	77	81
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (94)	88 (91)	92 (91)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	15
Black – African heritage	7
Black – other	15
Indian	84
Pakistani	13
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	3
White	42
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.3
Average class size	29.4

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

Total number of education support staff	9.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	223

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.0
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.*

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

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000-01
	£
Total income	755,030
Total expenditure	799,000
Expenditure per pupil	2,959
Balance brought forward from previous year	81,380
Balance carried forward to next year	37,410

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	270
Number of questionnaires returned	124

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	28	2	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	50	44	2	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	41	1	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	40	15	1	6
The teaching is good.	56	39	1	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	39	19	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	35	4	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	60	32	3	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	39	45	8	2	6
The school is well led and managed.	53	41	2	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	39	1	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	41	11	2	12

## **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**

65. Children are admitted to the Reception classes at the beginning of the autumn term following their fourth birthday. Their overall attainment on entry is average, but a significant number of children have better than average speaking and listening skills and knowledge of numbers. There is also a high proportion of children for whom English is an additional language. By the end of their Reception year, most pupils attain the standards expected of them in all recommended areas of learning. Since the last inspection, there have been satisfactory improvements in the organisation and teaching of the Foundation Stage curriculum. This is because the school has followed the recent national guidance well and now plans more relevant experiences for the children.

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

66. Teaching is satisfactory and children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning. They are on course to reach the expected standards by the time they enter Year 1. They quickly settle into the daily classroom routines and become confident and sociable learners. They organise themselves in independent activity, when given the opportunity, and develop good collaborative skills when exploring the potential of the imaginative equipment in the playground. In small groups, they work with increasing concentration and, at times, such as when listening to an interesting story, sustain concentration for a considerable length of time. Children are aware of toileting routines and of the need for personal hygiene. They fold clothes neatly when undressing for physical education and manage, with very little help, to dress and fasten buckles and buttons afterwards. Some children are beginning to develop friendships with peers. They understand that other children do not share the same cultural backgrounds as themselves. Their growing respect for one another was well demonstrated by the way in which they appreciated the display of Indian dancing given by two of their peers. They understand the importance of special festivals, such as Diwali, and show respect during assemblies and moments of reflection. Teachers and classroom assistants provide sound examples of how to support each other and establish good relationships in the classroom. The rare occurrences of unacceptable behaviour are challenged sensitively and expectations of good behaviour made clear. Teachers value children's contribution to activities and offer support and encouragement. Opportunities for children to pursue their learning independently are limited, due to a lack of stimulating resources in the classroom. This is also true of designated areas where children can browse or play undisturbed.

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

67. Children, including those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress in this area of learning, but the latter would benefit from more planned support to reach the expected level of attainment by the end of Reception year. The majority are on course to meet the expected standard by the end of Reception. Most children listen well and follow instructions carefully. They speak with increasing confidence and express ideas clearly, using the language they have available. For example, one child gave a very clear example of 'not sharing' in order to explain what sharing really means. Children work with one another increasingly. In role play, for example, they discuss plans for 'making a meal' or 'building a fire engine'. There are satisfactory opportunities for the development of reading skills. Books are of a good quality and range and are easily accessible to the children. Letter sounds are taught systematically, with displays such as 'letter of the week' helping children to link initial sounds and words. However,

the pace of teaching letter sounds is slow, so children do not make the progress of which they are capable. Children are encouraged to take books home to read and teachers record the progress made by commenting on achievements. All children handle books very carefully. Some can identify the title page, front cover or author and enjoy turning the pages while sharing books with adults. Those children who speak English as an additional language develop pre-reading skills appropriately, but, for some, sight vocabulary is not as good as it might be and recognition of initial sounds is still weak. Some records show that children are not heard reading frequently enough in school. Records show that teachers identify weaknesses, but they do not use this information effectively in their planning to pinpoint what children need to learn next.

68. Children develop early writing skills by tracing over letters and words or by copying directly what the teacher has written. Independent writing is encouraged in the more able children and some write meaningful statements unaided. In one class, children at the 'writing table' made books containing words beginning with the letter S. By the end of the Reception year, most children use their knowledge of letter sounds to write simple words and begin to show more control and consistency in their letter formation. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory, overall. Teachers and classroom assistants encourage children to talk and share ideas well. During one story-time, the teacher questioned children well about the book, by asking, 'What happened?', 'How do you know?', in order to encourage children's thinking. Termly planning for this area of learning, which is currently under review by the school, does not sufficiently take account of the full range of pupils' abilities, nor link pupils' language experiences strongly enough to other areas of learning. Resources, with the exception of the range of books, are uninspiring and do not create a language-rich environment which would accelerate children's progress towards independent reading and writing.

### **Mathematical development**

69. Children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning and most achieve the standard expected of them by the end of Reception year. A few children achieve above the expected level. Children become familiar with numbers beyond 10 and some demonstrate good knowledge of numbers by naming two digit numbers, such as 23. They interpret directional language, such as 'back' and 'forward' and begin to gain the concept of 'more than' when adding 1 to a number. Most are familiar with squares, circles and triangles. Children consolidate number skills by matching numbers and objects, playing number games, such as dominoes, and sequencing number cards. Teaching in this area is satisfactory. Teachers take advantage of opportunities which arise to increase children's awareness of number, for example, by helping them to count the number of children present at registration, or through number displays showing 'pairs' of objects. In one lesson, children's knowledge was challenged well when they had to say whether the number they held was 'one more' than the one which the teacher had written on the white board. In the same lesson, lower attaining children learned to recognise numbers 1 to 5 effectively because the classroom assistant used resources well to help children understand what they did. Teachers' termly planning is based upon the expectations of the National Numeracy Framework for Reception children. Teachers' daily planning is not supported by systematic assessments and, consequently, does not reflect accurately enough either what children know or what they need to learn next. There is a shortage of exciting resources to encourage independent exploration of mathematical ideas in weight, measure and in number.

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

70. Children have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of Reception year. Collections of natural objects stimulate the children's curiosity and magnifying glasses are provided so they can observe closely particular features of leaves, acorns and chestnuts. They are aware of similarities and differences in the

colour of their hair and eyes and paint portraits of themselves to reflect this understanding. Children become aware of the diversity of faiths and cultures by learning about festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year. Technical understanding is developed satisfactorily when children use construction and building equipment. They use the computers confidently and demonstrate their good control of the mouse by moving images of items of clothing around the screen in order to 'dress teddy'. Children explore the features and consistencies of different materials, such as sand and play dough, using tools and implements to cut, shape and mould. Teaching in this area is satisfactory, overall. Teachers make good use of limited resources to provide suitable learning experiences. Teachers and classroom assistants enable children to explore the possibilities of equipment by questioning them about what they do. For example, as a result of some encouraging questions from a classroom assistant, one pupil added extra bits to his construction model to test out his new ideas. Sometimes, opportunities to extend children's knowledge and understanding and their vocabulary are overlooked. After sharing a book about 'making a sandwich', one teacher missed the opportunity to talk during the remaining time about which countries the ingredients might have come from or how they were grown. Termly planning is satisfactory and linked closely to the expected learning outcomes for children in Reception. However, consideration needs to be given to how learning opportunities can be linked more effectively to the other areas of learning.

### **Physical development**

71. Children achieve satisfactorily in this area and, by the end of the Reception year, meet the standards expected for their age. Children run and jump without inhibition and show good awareness of others around them. They control their movements well when moving across apparatus in order to maintain their balance. In one lesson, for example, some children confidently hopped along a bench. Children begin to recognise that being healthy can be linked to exercise. In the classroom, children handle a range of implements for making marks, rolling and cutting with increasing skill, especially when drawing around shapes and cutting them out with scissors. The well-designed playground provides ample opportunities for children to handle large constructions and to climb and balance, but there are no wheeled toys for children to test their stamina and control within a suitably enclosed area.
72. Teaching in this area is satisfactory. Lessons in the hall are planned thoughtfully and teachers encourage children to manage dressing and undressing before and after the lesson. Teachers are properly attentive to safety aspects during lessons. Sometimes good opportunities to link their activities to other areas of learning are missed, for example, by drawing children's attention to their increased heart rate after vigorous exercise. Similarly, giving children more responsibility within lessons for placing and clearing away manageable items of physical education equipment would enhance their personal development.

### **Creative development**

73. The opportunities provided for the children's creative development are satisfactory. Children reach the expected standard by the end of their Reception year. Children use and apply colour confidently in a variety of ways. For example, their portraits demonstrate sensitive use of paint to achieve skin tones, while hair colour contrasts well with their brightly textured string paintings. Children explore the textures of different materials, such as paper and card, as well as pulses, grains and sawdust, when combining them to produce collage. In music lessons, children explore the various sounds made by musical instruments, distinguishing between 'loud' and 'soft' and learn that musical sequences can be controlled when they take on the role of 'conductor'. Opportunities for imaginative role-play are limited because of the lack of suitable



classroom furniture. There are no planned links between role-play and other areas of learning, so children do not explore and consolidate and language skills sufficiently, especially those children for whom English is an additional language. More enterprising children use the available resources to create imaginary environments and engage with friends, usually in 'domestic' role-play. Teaching is satisfactory, overall. Resources for artwork are plentiful and children are able to select from a suitable range. Children's work is displayed prominently in classrooms and corridors so that children see that their work is valued by their teachers. Music resources are used well in the music room, but there is not a selected range displayed in classrooms for children to follow up their musical exploration independently.

74. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator is conscientiously addressing the issues raised by the last report, particularly that of planning, much of which now provides satisfactory guidance for teachers. Foundation Stage staff work hard as a team under her leadership, but their relative inexperience highlights the need for further training and development. Better and more imaginative use of resources is needed to help children explore their own potential more fully.

## ENGLISH

75. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards above the national average for their age. Standards have risen steadily since the time of the last inspection and have remained above the national average during that time. Results in the 2001 national tests showed that far more pupils achieved the higher level in reading and writing than in most schools. The vast majority of pupils achieve well as a result of good teaching and their own enthusiasm for learning. Where achievement is only satisfactory, for pupils who are at an early stage of learning English, this is because there is not enough support, based on an accurate assessment of their needs. There are no significant differences in the attainment of girls and boys.
76. Pupils who are currently in Year 2 are good listeners. They follow teachers' explanations and instructions very closely and most have good recall of what they hear. This is demonstrated well when they begin independent work and are able to make a prompt start because they have a good understanding of what they should do. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English sometimes do not understand fully what is said. When teachers do not realise this is the case, then learning for these pupils slows. Standards in speaking are good, but there is an uneven development of skills. For example, most pupils make good use of talk in class discussion to develop their own and other's ideas. Pupils respond to teachers' questions with full and thoughtful answers, showing that they listen well and reflect on what is said. However, there is no planned provision for pupils to develop structured talk in pairs, in small groups or to develop talk through role-play. Pupils have few opportunities to present ideas in a formal situation, for example, to the whole class and, as a result, some lack confidence when speaking to large groups. The absence of planned provision for speaking and listening has the greatest effect on pupils who are at the early stages of learning English, who would benefit greatly from such activities.
77. Standards in reading are good. Pupils have a very good understanding of what they read and remember details from stories and accounts. Year 1 pupils recalled many details from "A Very Noisy Night", when they heard it after a break of one week. The majority of pupils have a good range of reading skills, which help them to understand new words. For example, children often make a correct guess at the meaning of a new word when reading with an adult, based on either the pictures they see or the events in the story. By Year 2, pupils are keen readers, many read independently for pleasure and information and most can say what they like to read and why. Pupils who have English as an additional language acquire reading skills more slowly and are slower to

master understanding of what they read. There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, they need more adult support with their language development than they currently receive. They also need a firmer grounding in their understanding of letter sounds to help them 'build up' new words. With additional support to help them reach a basic level of fluency, these children would make similar progress to other children in their class.

78. Standards in writing are good. Pupils make rapid progress after leaving the Reception class with average skills. In Year 1, they quickly master the conventions of spacing their writing appropriately and their letter formation develops into a good form by the end of the first term. During Year 1, pupils write sentences that are correctly punctuated and their spelling of common words is good. Higher attainers have a good vocabulary, which they use well when compiling a book about their feelings, using such words as 'scared', 'excited' and 'forlorn'. By Year 2, pupils' writing skills are well developed because they have been taught to write in different styles and have had the opportunity to write in different subjects. For instance, they write accounts of their investigations in science, they explain their designs in design and technology, as well as writing stories based on traditional tales and those of their own invention. Pupils know how to write instructions, making use of time related words such as 'first', 'next' and 'then' to put their instructions in the correct sequence. As a result of these activities, pupils achieve well in their writing and most make good progress. When pupils who have special educational needs or who are learning English as an additional language receive specialist support, they make good progress in their writing. In the Year 2 lesson about writing instructions, these pupils made good progress as a result of well-structured teaching by the specialist teacher, which helped them to overcome their difficulties in understanding. When pupils who are at an early stage of learning English are not supported in their writing, then their progress slows to satisfactory and their achievement is less than that of their peers.
79. Teaching is good overall, with a very good lesson seen in Year 2. The majority of pupils achieve well in the infants in all aspects of their learning. Generally, pupils make better progress in Year 1 than in Year 2 because teachers are more alert to the needs of their pupils through a more thorough use of assessment. This was evident in the work of Year 1, when teachers decided that pupils had learned faster than expected by mid-week and altered their planning for the rest of the week to give pupils more challenging work. Teachers all follow the National Literacy Strategy when planning their lessons. Pupils enjoy the structure of whole-class learning, followed by independent work and a session to share their learning at the end, and work well within this framework. While teachers make good use of this format, they could improve the effectiveness of whole-class teaching by planning more varied activities to involve all pupils, making use of more varied resources and, for some teachers in Year 2, using the time to assess what pupils know and understand. Teachers have good expectations of what pupils can do, with the exception of some pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. In some classes, the work set and the level of support given does not recognise the difficulties pupils face when working in a second language. While the majority of pupils in these classes are seen settling quickly to work and persevering to complete it, pupils who have English as an additional language are sometimes slow to start and lack confidence in what they are doing. There is a need to train teachers in strategies and understanding about how children acquire the language, especially in view of the increase in numbers of children who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Sometimes, when teachers are not clear in their planning, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. An example of this was seen in Year 2 class, where pupils were given a writing activity for which they were not well prepared. As a result, the majority misunderstood the task and made very little progress during the lesson. Overall, the quality of teachers' planning is less good than other aspects of their teaching and is an area requiring improvement to ensure that all pupils are

provided with appropriate work to allow them to progress at the same rate. Most teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to assist their learning in the subject. All teachers provide plenty of opportunity for pupils to use their reading and writing skills in other subjects.

80. There is sound leadership of the subject and the co-ordinator has a clear picture of the strengths and areas for development in the subject. She monitors pupils' standards and the quality of teaching through lesson observation. She is aware of the need to improve planning for both the Reception and infants' classes and to ensure that pupils in the Reception classes are well prepared for the demands of the literacy hour. While the curriculum is satisfactory, there is scope for improving the provision, especially with regard to planned learning in speaking and listening to improve standards further and to assist the large numbers of pupils who speak English as a second language. The co-ordinator has included this development in her current action plan. The use of the long session after morning play represents an inefficient use of time and should be reviewed. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and the National Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented. Overall, progress has been satisfactory since the last inspection.

## **MATHEMATICS**

81. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards in mathematics above those expected nationally. Standards have risen year on year since 1998 and attainment has always remained above the national average. Far more pupils than in most schools reach the higher than expected level in their tests. The 2001 tests showed that standards are continuing to rise, which indicates that pupils of all abilities, including higher attaining pupils, are being set appropriate work in lessons to meet their individual needs. The successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the predominantly good teaching seen in Years 1 and 2 are having a positive effect on the standards achieved by pupils. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of mathematics is satisfactory when they leave the reception classes and this is built on most successfully over the next two years, enabling pupils to make good progress and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make the same good progress as their classmates. Indeed, many pupils with English as an additional language reach a high standard in mathematics by the time they leave the school. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls.
82. At the end of Year 2, pupils understand the language of number, have a good knowledge of place value to at least one hundred and quickly recall addition and subtraction facts to twenty. They know the names and some of the properties, for example, the number of sides and corners, of regular two-dimensional shapes, such as rectangles, triangles, hexagons and octagons. Pupils also have a good knowledge of three-dimensional shapes through their practical work in constructing cuboids, pyramids, cylinders, cones and various prisms. They solve shopping or money problems to at least a pound, with more able pupils confidently working with larger amounts and understanding the use of the decimal point to separate pounds from pence. Pupils tell the time using analogue and digital clocks to the hour and the half hour and higher attaining pupils are able to tell the time to the minute. Many pupils work very confidently with numbers and can add two and three digit numbers to at least a hundred and multiply accurately by 2,3,4,5 and 10. Pupils collect data about such things as their favourite fruit and use information technology to display their data in a variety of ways, including bar and pie charts. They can interpret the results and suggest which way they consider to be most appropriate for displaying their findings.
83. The quality of teaching is always satisfactory and, very often, good. All teachers follow the National Numeracy Strategy in their planning and, by linking it to a useful scheme of

work, provide their pupils with very good coverage of all the required aspects. Teachers plan together in year groups and this enables them to share their knowledge and expertise, which has a positive effect on the rate at which pupils learn. Lesson plans are good and teachers plan the work to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. This was clearly seen in a good Year 2 lesson where the teacher had provided different groups with various problems, carefully based on their prior attainment and designed to move them on to the next stage in their learning. In fact, one very able pupil had been provided with work specifically chosen to challenge and extend his understanding. Lesson objectives are not always shared with pupils at the start of each lesson to help them focus on the learning intentions and know when they had been met. Most lessons start at a brisk pace, with pupils involved in oral and mental work. The teacher assessment of the understanding and knowledge of the pupils during this part of the lesson is limited, as only a few pupils are asked to answer questions. The school has plans to improve this by using individual whiteboards for each pupil to record and show their answers. Teachers will then be able to assess instantly the level of understanding of every pupil and to plan future work closely planned to their needs.

84. Teachers manage their pupils well and create a calm and purposeful working atmosphere in which pupils can concentrate and learn effectively. Pupils respond well to this and behaviour in lessons is good, with pupils eager to learn and enthusiastic about the work provided for them. Good relationships are a strong feature, with pupils being attentive to their teachers and able to work well together when required. Most teachers motivate their pupils well by providing them with interesting and imaginative activities. For example, the pupils in a Year 1 class who were learning about time made their own clock faces with moving hands and used them with obvious enjoyment and pride to show the teacher different times of day. These pupils learned new skills quickly during the course of the lesson. Time is not always used effectively, since some lessons are too long for the age of the pupils and teachers stretch the lesson to fit the available time. Some pupils lose concentration and there can be a lack of urgency in their learning. Numeracy skills are well developed in other subjects. Teachers ensure that pupils make use of their skills to measure accurately in design and technology. Pupils draw graphs to show their findings in science and to summarise class surveys about what foods they like and how they travel to school.
85. Mathematics is well managed and the co-ordinator monitors the provision and standards regularly. Assessment procedures are thorough, with all pupils being regularly assessed at the completion of each unit of work. The results are recorded on assessment sheets and used successfully to plan future work. Targets are set for individual pupils by some teachers to help them focus on specific areas in need of improvement, but this is not consistent throughout the school.
86. The school has made a good improvement in mathematics since the last inspection. Standards have continued to rise, teaching and learning have improved and higher attaining pupils are now being suitably challenged. Pupils are also being given more opportunities to investigate mathematical concepts in groups, pairs and individually.

## **SCIENCE**

87. The results of statutory teacher assessments at the end of the infants in 2001 were in line with the national average at the expected level and above the national average at the higher level. Evidence gathered during inspection indicates that standards reached by the end of Year 2 are above the national average overall, though they are only average in investigative skills.

88. The majority of pupils achieve well. This is due to the good quality teaching, especially in Year 1 and one Year 2 class, which is well harnessed to pupils' enthusiasm for the subject. The pupils' eagerness to learn and their very good attitudes make a significant contribution to their progress. The emphasis on investigational science, where pupils learn from well-organised, direct, first-hand experiences, helps pupils in Year 1 to think for themselves in most lessons. Only some pupils in Year 2 lessons benefit from regular investigative work and, for the rest, their scientific skills do not develop at the same rate as they did in Year 1. Pupils use their skills of scientific enquiry to gain knowledge and understanding about materials and properties and forces. Where teachers support pupils who have special educational needs or English as an additional language, by working alongside them or making sure that they fully understand the tasks, then pupils make good progress. The absence of direct support to help overcome language difficulties sometimes holds back the progress of pupils who are learning English as an additional language.
89. By the end of Year 2, the majority of children have good knowledge about living things and can sort them into categories, such as plants and animals. They have a good understanding of electricity from their investigative work in Year 1 and know that a circuit must be complete in order to light a bulb. They understand that electricity is a source of light and energy. Higher attainers understand how electricity is stored in a battery and how a switch works to break a circuit. Pupils understand the importance of healthy eating and are able to list foods which are healthy and unhealthy. Pupils in Year 2 know that substances change from solid to liquid when they are heated and are able to predict what will happen when chocolate is heated. Pupils measure accurately and record their learning carefully and have a good recall of what they learn.
90. The overall quality of teaching is good. There is excellent teaching in a Year 1 class where the teacher's expert subject knowledge supports very good planning and rigorous questioning. Her high expectations of all pupils' investigations into how a circuit works prompted them to learn at a rapid rate and make very good progress in their understanding. Pupils were delighted to discover so much for themselves and were unaware that the teacher's skilful interventions were constantly pushing their learning forward. In most science lessons, teachers are well organised and have good questioning skills, which probe pupils' understanding and help teachers set further challenges. Teachers use good management in practical lessons, based on positive relationships, to encourage pupils to put forward their own ideas and explore possibilities with confidence. Very good teaching in a Year 2 lesson successfully included all pupils in setting predictions and extended their understanding of new terminology by careful and steady repetition of key words. In this way, pupils with English as an additional language were supported to make the same very good progress as their classmates. On occasion, lesson objectives do not focus clearly on what skills or knowledge are to be gained. When this occurs, as in a Year 2 lesson on healthy eating, then learning is not satisfactory, because the activities are not planned to ensure that pupils recall their prior learning about the topic or make the necessary gains in knowledge to take them forward.
91. The curriculum is based on national guidance and covers all programmes of study. There are thorough systems to assess pupils' learning at the end of each topic. However, all the attainment targets are not fully covered in Year 2, because less time is allocated to learning through investigation by some teachers. As a result, the very good skills of scientific enquiry that pupils develop by the end of Year 1 are not sustained throughout Year 2. The co-ordinator is aware of this and is working alongside teachers in Year 2 to improve their confidence in teaching enquiry skills. The curriculum is enhanced by good use of the school grounds and by visits to the Science Museum for pupils in Year 2. Assessment is linked to the scheme of work and pupils are assessed at the end of each unit, so that teachers are aware of their progress in each topic.

While this is satisfactory overall, a more rigorous assessment of individual pupils' needs would ensure teachers' planned more appropriately for pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

92. The curriculum co-ordinator manages the subject well. She has a clear vision for improvement and is ambitious for pupils to do well. She monitors standards and the quality of teaching by classroom observations and has a good understanding of what needs to be done to continue to improve standards. As a non-specialist, the co-ordinator is keen to improve her own subject knowledge in order to offer better support to her colleagues and this is an appropriate area of professional development for her. The good standards found at the last inspection have been maintained and progress since then has been satisfactory.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

93. Standards are better than those typically seen at the age of seven. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
94. By the end of Year 2, pupils develop good observational and drawing skills. They mix and apply colour using a variety of methods and combine the skills and techniques they learn to develop their work. Pupils use clay and recycled materials to create three-dimensional work. Their knowledge of the work and styles of well-known artists is good. They recognise, for example, the still-life techniques of Cezanne and Chardin, as well as the more flamboyant 'food painting' of Oldenburg.
95. There is a good range of work displayed in classrooms and around the school. Year 1 pupils, for example, develop art skills by using the computer and create some lively and colourful pictures. The Guy Fawkes celebrations are well represented in a mixed-media display using paint, pastel and glitter. Designs in Year 2 make an impressive display. The work is enhanced by the pupils' application of a colour wash to form a background for the block prints. Pastel drawings of sections of fruit are accurate and detailed, showing sensitive use of colour.
96. Artwork throughout the school is closely linked to other subjects. One teacher made good use of a lesson to link work with science and religious education. While some pupils used clay to make thumb pots, later to become Diva lamps, others improved observational skills, by drawing a selection of artefacts, which, collectively, were sources of light. Similar good links were made with history in a Year 2 lesson when pupils first compared a wide range of old and new kitchen utensils and, afterwards, used them as subjects for observational drawing.
97. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are prepared well and teachers use their good subject knowledge to promote the language of art, such as 'line' and 'tone'. Pupils know the meaning of 'portrait' and 'landscape' layouts. Good strategies, such as the use of viewfinders in a drawing lesson, help pupils' focus more clearly on their subject and add to the quality of the work produced. When possible, teachers enlist the support of parents or other adults to work alongside pupils and this has a good effect on the quality of their work. Pupils are well motivated because tasks are enjoyable. The links to other subjects bring meaning and purpose to their learning.
98. The subject co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and provides good advice and support for colleagues. There is a sound policy which clearly addresses the skills to be taught and gives valuable guidance on teaching. The range of resources is good in quality and has a positive impact on standards at the end of Year 2. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

99. The standards reported at the last inspection have been maintained and work in Year 2 is better than expected of that age group. This is because there is a good scheme of work, which identifies clear learning objectives and the management skills of the subject leader ensure that design and technology maintains a significant place in the curriculum.
100. By the end of Year 2, pupils work with a good range of tools and materials to make products. They explore different methods of fixing and evaluate their work to find ways to improve on what they have done.
101. Teaching and learning are good. Planned links with other subjects give purpose to pupils' work, so they are well motivated and eager to succeed. Year 1 pupils, for example, proudly displayed the lighthouses they had made from card and silver paper. This work was linked to the science topic on light. Their models were firmly fixed and well finished off. In a Year 2 lesson, which also had strong science links, pupils tasted and evaluated different types of coleslaw before cutting up vegetables to make their own version. They used a range of utensils to peel, grate and cut up the vegetables. They then evaluated, by tasting, the two types of coleslaw which they had made and recorded their findings. Pupils drew designs for their own coleslaw pots, labelling the different parts. A measure of the success of this lesson was seen the following day when a pupil from the class brought in a tub of coleslaw which she had made at home after the lesson, with a full written description of how it was done. Resources are used well and pupils have a good range from which to choose. The imaginative use of paper, card and fixing techniques is clearly demonstrated in the display of bags made by pupils in Year 2. They worked from their own designs and evaluated the quality of their work afterwards.
102. The subject leader monitors standards and uses her time effectively to ensure pupils are well challenged by giving good support to teachers. This is particularly the case in some Year 2 classes, where teachers are less confident in teaching the subject. There is a good range of resources, but some tools are not used sufficiently to develop skills in the use of harder materials. Good standards and the quality of teaching have been maintained since the last inspection.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

103. It was not possible to observe any geography lessons because timetabling arrangements. Judgements are based on an analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with the subject co-ordinator. These indicate that, by age seven, pupils' attainment is above that expected of pupils of the same age.
104. By the age of seven, pupils are developing a basic geographical knowledge of places through the school's "Where is Fred Bear?" programme. Pupils are able to draw basic maps and plans of various types and show good development of drawing and mapping skills. They can understand and make use of keys on a map. Pupils in Year 1, for example, draw maps of the local area and can describe the route they take when coming to school. Pupils are able to make basic comparisons, such as the different types of housing and of commercial properties in the local town centre. Pupils develop a sound geographical vocabulary and can, for example, explain how tropical rainforests are formed and where they are found. There is a good, world-wide dimension to the pupils' work and they study aspects of the geography of India and Kenya as their overseas studies. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to develop the ability to pose sensible questions about their studies. This is seen, for example, in the work they do in preparation for a visit to a local underground station. The reports they write about this

and other visits, as well as the letters written to the people who show them round, make a useful contribution to pupils' literacy development. Pupils make good use of basic graphs to show information such as the different ways that pupils travel to school. This makes a good contribution to numeracy development. Pupils can make use of information and communication technology to find the answers to questions. However, the use of such technology to refine and edit their work or to produce graphs and tables is limited. The use of geography to develop pupils' individual research and thinking skills is limited. This is seen, for instance, in pupils' project work on Kenya. Higher attaining pupils write at length, but most of the work is copied and opportunities for individual research and writing are missed.

105. Although it was not possible to observe any lessons being taught, there are some aspects of teaching, and the learning it promotes, which are identifiable. Long and medium term planning are good. This ensures a progressive programme of learning for all pupils. This good planning also ensures good links with other subjects. This is seen not only in links with literacy and numeracy, but also in links with history, where joint project work is done. Pupils' work is marked regularly and corrected, which helps their learning. Pupils clearly have very good attitudes to work and try hard with presentation, spelling and punctuation.
106. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. Each teacher is responsible for assessing pupils in the class, but there are no set tests or assessments across classes in the same year. Consequently, there is only limited data available to check for inconsistencies in provision or to set targets. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. In many lessons, there are opportunities to study the world and its wonders and to reflect on the lives of other people. This is seen, for example, in work done by Year 2 pupils on farming and industry in Kenya. A programme of local studies and trips out of school enhances both the social and cultural development of pupils. The subject has good and varied resources which help to raise standards by providing authentic material, such as aerial photographs. The subject co-ordinator has no planned, structured opportunities to monitor and support the teaching of other teachers. This makes it difficult to share best practice and to ensure that high standards are maintained. Nevertheless, the good standards indicated at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

## **HISTORY**

107. Standards are above those expected of pupils at the end of Year 2. The majority of pupils achieve well and have a good knowledge of events in the past. They are developing a sense of chronology and the majority have a growing vocabulary to enable them to order events, which they use accurately. Higher attaining pupils understand why things such as toys and transport have changed over time by making links with their studies in design and technology. The good standards found at the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils who have special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language make similar progress to others in the class.
108. By the end of Year 2, pupils are developing a good understanding of chronology and an awareness of the passage of time. They recognise the similarities and different characteristics of different times. For example, Year 1 pupils examine the purposes and features of old and new toys. They investigate with interest early light sources. Throughout the school there is an emphasis on time lines and this concept is begun in Year 1. Pupils in Year 2 can place domestic utensils in chronological order. They are confident in using appropriate historical terminology such as old, new, and in the past. Photographs and pupils' earlier work show that using a variety of sources, including



videos and stories, pupils gain an understanding of life in the past. They can describe, in simple terms, changes that have taken place over the last hundred years and give reasons for these changes. Year 2 pupils enjoyed their visit to the Science Museum where they investigated household items from the past. Pupils in Year 1 similarly enjoy visits to the Grange Museum to look at objects from the past.

109. The quality of teaching is good overall. In the best teaching, the teachers' knowledge of and enthusiasm for the subject challenges pupils and makes demands on those of higher ability so that they extend their understanding of the past. Teachers challenge pupils to find answers to questions. The writing activities which teachers provide make an effective contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills. Teachers ensure that pupils have access to information technology and pupils are keen to use the computer as a resource. Some teachers bring the subject to life by using a range of resources to interest pupils. In a good lesson in Year 2, all pupils learnt at a good rate because the teacher made good use of a video about life in Victorian times to consolidate what pupils had seen on their visit to the Science Museum. Follow up work had been adapted to suit their needs, so they were able to make good use of their knowledge when working independently.
110. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors the planning and collects samples of pupils' work from which she has created useful portfolios. These form a useful resource for teachers when they are planning topics. Assessment, as at the last inspection, remains underdeveloped. Teachers make satisfactory assessment of the work of pupils in their classes, but this is not compared with the standards achieved by parallel classes so that comparisons about progress can be made. Throughout the school there are good displays of work and objects of historical interest, though in some classrooms these are not easily accessible to pupils because of the poor facilities for display. The work done in history also has a good impact on pupils' cultural development through the study of both their own and other cultures and the visits they make to gain insight into life in the past. There has been satisfactory progress in the subject since the last inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

111. Attainment is above that expected for pupils aged seven. Standards have risen since the last inspection, when they were judged to be broadly satisfactory. The provision has been improved considerably by the setting up of a computer suite that is used by all pupils each week for a lesson dedicated to improving their skills. The work in these lessons is often well linked to work in other subjects. For example, pupils were seen successfully using a program to find out about different food groups as part of their science studies. All aspects of the subject are being taught, including word processing, graphics, data handling, control technology and research skills. Control technology is an aspect that is still developing. To improve the provision for this the school has purchased three robots to teach pupils the skills of programming a device to follow their commands. All classes also have a computer to use at other times. These are used to give pupils additional time to improve their skills in information and communication technology and to enhance and improve their work in other curricular areas. The school now has Internet access and has planned to include the pupils' use of this in the near future. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they move through the school. The many pupils who have English as an additional language also achieve well and attain standard similar to those of their classmates.
112. Pupils in Year 1 successfully use a computer for word processing and have skills above those expected for their age. They log on successfully, access the program they require and have a good knowledge of the functions of various keys and tools.

This was clearly seen in a lesson where the pupils were confidently using the shift key to make capital letters, putting full stops at the end of sentences and using an exclamation mark correctly. They also edit their work using the backspace key, print and then save their work in a folder at the end of the session. During the lesson they also learned how to change the style, size and colour of the font. This they did with great excitement and made many well considered decisions about the suitability of their choices for their writing about the dangers of electricity. They successfully use a graphics program to produce attractive and carefully drawn pictures for their Diwali cards using a range of tools. In Year 2, pupils use the computers very confidently in their work on data handling. They input data they have collected from their class about their favourite fruits and then display and print it in a range of forms, including pictograms, pie and bar charts. This activity led to a useful discussion about which was the most effective way to display the information. When researching a specific topic from an encyclopaedia program, the pupils use a range of skills, including scrolling up and down, with ease. They use the mouse correctly and have a good knowledge of the various icons and functions on the toolbar.

113. The quality of teaching is always good and is often very good. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject and their own skills are well developed. This enables them to teach information and communication technology confidently and demonstrate to their pupils the correct procedures. The overhead screen projector in the computer suite is used most effectively to teach pupils exactly what they have to do and to introduce new skills to the class. This means that time is used very effectively, as all pupils learn simultaneously and do not have to wait for individual help. Teachers manage their pupils very well and have developed very good routines to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the computers. This is important, as the suite is fairly small and it is difficult to seat a whole class at the same time. In one lesson seen, the pupils had been given numbers and knew exactly who their partner was. They shared a computer very sensibly and swapped places regularly so that they both had the opportunity to use the keyboard. Pupils respond very well to the good teaching and are extremely keen to learn more. They are highly motivated and work together without fuss, giving each other good support. Their enjoyment of work is most obvious, as was seen in a Year 1 lesson when the pupils were enthralled when the teacher showed them how to change the font. There was a buzz of excitement as they saw it change style, size and colour and they realised that they could also make it do that to their own text. Teachers plan work carefully to help pupils develop their skills in a systematic way. The use of parent volunteers and support staff is also effective and helps pupils' learning by giving them instant assistance when they are experiencing difficulties.
114. The management of the subject is good and the co-ordinator is very skilled and knowledgeable. She has organised and run training sessions for the staff and has worked very hard to improve the provision since the last inspection. The setting up of a computer suite and the good quality resources available has had a positive effect in raising attainment throughout the school. Resources are still improving, with the recent acquisition of a scanner and a digital camera. Assessment procedures, linked to National Curriculum levels, have yet to be fully developed to help teachers and the co-ordinator monitor standards and the progress of pupils.

## **MUSIC**

115. Only two lessons in Years 1 and 2 were observed during the inspection. The standards attained by pupils in these lessons were similar to those found nationally for pupils of this age. It is evident that all aspects of the music curriculum have been successfully taught. Pupils throughout the school sing tunefully and with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Throughout the year, all Year 2 pupils are taught in groups to play simple tunes on the recorder in an extra-curricular activity organised and run by the

music co-ordinator, during the lunch break. This helps to raise standards of attainment, as it ensures that all pupils can play a tuned instrument by the time they leave the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve standards similar to their classmates.

116. Pupils in Year 1 successfully use hand percussion to accompany a nursery rhyme. They suggest different ways to use their hands, such as clapping, finger clicking, rubbing and tapping to make a rhythmic accompaniment. In small groups, they are also able to compose simple rhythmic patterns which other groups can copy. These patterns are well thought out and pupils are very proud of their efforts. Pupils use un-tuned percussion instruments to accompany songs and compose their own imaginative rhythms. In Year 2, pupils listen to music by composers from around the world and understand that music can be used to create a mood. For example, after listening and dancing to a composition by Rodrigo, they were able to explain that the music made them feel happy, lively and cheerful. This they then compared with a Jewish song they were learning that was thoughtful and calm. They sang this song sensitively and respectfully, with good understanding of the meaning of the words and the sentiments being expressed.
117. The quality of the teaching seen was good. Teachers plan their lessons carefully to build on pupils' prior attainment and move them on to the next stage in their learning. They have good subject knowledge and this enables them to give clear explanations of the work. They use correct terminology, which helps pupils to learn effectively. Teachers manage their pupils very well and have well-established routines to keep pupils concentrating throughout each lesson. For example, pupils know that their instruments must not be touched when other pupils are playing or the teacher is speaking. Good relationships are a strong feature, with pupils behaving well in lessons and very eager to be involved. Pupils work well together in groups and are willing to listen to the ideas and views of others. However, pupils' work is rarely recorded in lessons to help them evaluate their own performance and that of others, or to enable them to suggest ways to improve. Such recordings would also help teachers to assess standards reached by individuals and groups of pupils as they move through the school. The use of information and communication technology to support and enhance music is limited to the use of CDs and tapes, and is an area that has been identified for further development.
118. The provision is greatly enhanced by the large musical instruments in the playground. These are used daily by very many pupils who thoroughly enjoy making their own music and do so with great enthusiasm. The recent visit by a group of African drummers involved pupils from all classes and was a great success. Pupils have a number of well-organised opportunities to perform to an audience each year. School concerts include all pupils in the school and are much enjoyed by parents, visitors and pupils.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

119. Standards are as expected for pupils aged seven. This is a similar judgement to that made at the last inspection. No dance lessons were seen during this inspection, but, from looking at teachers' planning and videos of concerts in which pupils danced, it is clear that this aspect is effectively taught throughout the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. There are after-school football and dance clubs, run by an outside agency, for pupils to attend that give them further opportunities to develop their skills in these areas of learning.

120. Pupils in Year 2 understand the need for correct warm up activities and learn about the effect of exercise on the body. They know that exercise raises the heartbeat and the rate of breathing. Pupils join in warm up activities with enthusiasm, particularly when they are performed to music, and many pupils can match their movements to the beat of the music being played. They have a good awareness of space and the need to use it sensibly to avoid collisions. In gymnastics lessons, Year 1 pupils move and jump successfully in narrow and wide shapes, both on the floor and on low apparatus. They do not, however, have sufficient opportunities to develop their ideas to make a sequence of movements that can be improved through practice. Year 2 pupils throw a large ball to a partner successfully and understand the need for control and accuracy if their partner is to be able to catch the ball. They work in a team sensibly when throwing and catching a rugby ball, showing good technique and awareness of basic rules. All pupils participate fully in lessons and dress correctly.
121. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. Teachers plan their lessons to include a brisk and appropriate warm up, a main activity to teach and develop new skills and a cool down period at the end to calm and relax pupils. Teaching is particularly effective when pupils are well managed, kept active and time is fully used to allow pupils to learn at a good rate. This was clearly seen in a good Year 2 games lesson in which pupils responded immediately to the teacher's instructions, worked in silence when required and concentrated well on developing their throwing and catching skills. All pupils in this lesson made good progress during the lesson and were proud of their achievements. When the objectives of the lesson are not clearly explained by the teacher, pupils are unsure about what is expected of them and they do not always complete the tasks successfully.
122. The school has recently adopted a new scheme of work that is thorough and full of useful ideas for teachers to use in their lessons. The co-ordinator has organised two training sessions for teachers, but has had no opportunity to monitor teaching and identify areas in need of further development. The superb outdoor play area, which includes an enclosed area for ball games, a mini assault course and other facilities, such as basketball hoops and playground markings, is very useful in helping pupils develop their skills. Pupils use all of these facilities most enthusiastically during breaks. The school holds an annual sports day that is popular with the pupils and well attended by parents.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

123. The school has improved on the standards seen in the last inspection. Children achieve well because of the school's thoughtful approach to the curriculum, which reflects the diversity of faith cultures in the school.
124. By the end of Year 2, children have a good knowledge of rituals and practices of the Jewish, Sikh and Islamic faiths, as well as those of Christianity. This knowledge is demonstrated well in the quality of children's work in their topic books, for example, when they write about Easter celebrations, or record what they know about the Hindu ceremony of Puja. Children also learn about the fundamental relationships which are common to all faiths. A good example of this was seen in an assembly during which children learned about the work of Mother Theresa of Calcutta and were able to gain a better understanding of how kindness can inspire and motivate others.
125. The quality of teaching and learning is good and some outstanding teaching was seen during the inspection. This was in a Year 2 lesson, where pupils' learning about Shabbat was excellent because of the teacher's outstanding use of subject knowledge and resources. The teacher created an atmosphere of awe by using genuine religious objects including a Kippah (skull cap) for every male in the classroom. Children

learned the significance of the Shabbat blessing, which the teacher read in Hebrew and shared the bread and grape juice provided, after giving a 'Shabbat Shalom' greeting to one another.

126. The newly appointed co-ordinator manages the subject satisfactorily. A development plan has been formulated, which includes some restructuring of the scheme of work in the light of recent guidance and closer monitoring of outcomes. There is a good range of books about religions and sufficient religious objects to support pupils' learning.