

INSPECTION REPORT

HIGH GREAVE INFANT SCHOOL

Rotherham

LEA area: Rotherham

Unique reference number: 106842

Headteacher: Mrs E A Beevers

Reporting inspector: Mr C Kessell
20695

Dates of inspection: 4th - 7th March 2002

Inspection number: 195114

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	High Greave Road East Herringthorpe Rotherham
Postcode:	S65 3LZ
Telephone number:	01709 850210
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs D Hill
Date of previous inspection:	May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20695	Mr C Kessell	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History	Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well the pupils are taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19697	Mrs J Moorhouse	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18709	Ms N Bee	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology The Foundation Stage Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	
12172	Mrs W Knight	Team inspector	Science Music Physical education Religious education Provision for pupils with special educational needs Equality of opportunity	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

High Greave Infant School is about average in size and has 153 full-time pupils (86 boys and 67 girls) aged between four and seven. It also has a designated nursery that offers 52 part-time places. The school serves the East Herringthorpe area of Rotherham that is recognised as having high levels of social, educational and economic disadvantage. The attainment of the pupils when they start school is well below average with many of the pupils having poor language skills. Nearly all of the pupils are of white ethnic heritage. Only one pupil speaks English as an additional language but is not at an early stage of learning the English language. Thirty-six per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs; these figures are above average. The majority of these pupils are identified as having learning difficulties. One pupil has a statement of special educational need. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, at 60%, is well above the national average. The number of pupils who leave and join the school is high. Since April 2000 the school has been part of a small Education Action Zone as part of the government's Excellence in Cities initiative. In January 2002 the zone was designated an Excellence in Cities Action Zone (EiCAZ).

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school that provides a friendly and caring environment for its pupils. Despite the well below average attainment on entry, the pupils' achievements are very good. Standards are currently below average in English but at expected levels in all other subjects. Teaching is good overall and there are a significant number of very good lessons. The headteacher provides very good leadership and management and there is a strong commitment amongst the staff to continue raising standards and the quality of education. The EiCAZ has contributed good quality support and resources to the school. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' achievements are very good.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and management.
- Teaching for Years 1 and 2 is consistently good and often very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. Standards of behaviour are high.
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents and carers of children in the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the previous inspection in May 1997 has been very good. The positive features identified in 1997 have been maintained. The school has addressed the key issues identified by the previous report very well. The quality of teaching has improved and the school is always seeking ways of involving parents in their child's learning. All subjects of the curriculum are now well organised. Standards have improved in design and technology and physical education. These were below the expected levels at the time of the previous inspection. The teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) has also improved significantly. However, despite the school's hard work, rates of attendance could be higher.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

The results of the National Curriculum tests in 2001 indicated that standards in reading were well below the national average, average in writing and above average in mathematics. When compared to similar schools, standards were above average in reading and well above average in writing. Standards in mathematics were very high and represented the top five per cent. The pupils' achievements were very good. Since the previous inspection, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics has been steadily improving. The school's targets for 2002 are realistic and challenging. Standards are currently below average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. However, given that most pupils start school with attainment that is well below average and with particularly poor language skills, the majority of pupils make very good progress. Pupils reach the expected standards in all other subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about their lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is consistently very good in classrooms and at breaktimes.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils are polite and friendly. They enjoy responsibilities in the classroom. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	The school's attendance rate is well below average when compared to other schools. Not all parents are helpful in trying to improve the situation and some do not fulfil their responsibilities by ensuring that pupils attend regularly and arrive promptly.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and 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.

Teaching is judged to be good overall. Very good teaching was observed in Year 2 and by the music specialist. In these lessons, learning was very effective. There was no unsatisfactory teaching and this is an improvement on the previous inspection. Literacy and numeracy lessons are consistently good and are well planned following the recommendations of the national strategies. ICT is used well by teachers to support all areas of the curriculum. The needs of individual pupils are well met, and pupils with special educational needs learn very effectively. Other lessons and activities are also well organised and the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well promoted in other subjects. Teachers have high expectations in terms of pupils' academic performance and behaviour. Pupils enjoy their class work and apply very good effort. The pupils work well together, sharing ideas and resources. The classroom assistants make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning experiences.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for its pupils. There are very good links with the community, such as local businesses and the Church, and a wide range of extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum for the pupils. Good emphasis is placed on the teaching of basic skills such as reading, writing and numeracy.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The management of special educational needs is very good and there is effective and well organised provision. Parents are fully involved and there are good links with outside agencies that offer support to pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The one pupil who speaks English as an additional language has made good progress and has a secure command of the language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Spiritual and social development are particularly well promoted.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are very effective. The school takes very good care of its pupils.

There is a good partnership between the school and parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher's leadership and management are very good. She has contributed much to the overall effectiveness of the school and its continued development. The head is held in high esteem by parents, pupils and governors. The deputy head and senior staff offer good support and all of the staff work well together as a strong team. Subject co-ordinators have a good understanding of their subjects and these are well managed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their role very well and are successfully involved in shaping the direction of the school. They have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Statutory requirements are fulfilled.

The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its performance very carefully and is always looking to improve and develop. Good use is made of assessment information.
The strategic use of resources	Staff and resources are well deployed. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. Resources for learning are good overall, as is the school's accommodation. The school's financial planning is well linked to the educational priorities identified by the school and value for money is carefully considered when purchasing resources and services.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children make good progress at the school. • Teaching is good. • The school is well led and managed. • The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. • Behaviour is good. • The school helps children become mature and responsible. 	

The views above are taken from the pre-inspection meeting that was attended by 16 parents and the 39 responses to the parents' questionnaire. The inspection team supports the parents' positive views. Very few comments were made with regards to improvement. At the pre-inspection meeting the introduction of school uniform was mentioned as were swimming lessons for pupils. Whether a school does or does not have a uniform is not part of the inspection process and swimming lessons are normally available when pupils are older.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 The children's attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average and many of the pupils have poor language skills. Although most are unlikely to reach the expected levels by the end of reception, the children make good progress as they move through the Foundation Stage. Social skills are well promoted and the children enjoy coming to school and show very positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is very good. Although the children listen carefully, many have difficulties trying to express themselves. They find it difficult to participate in discussions or respond to questions. Weaknesses in communication, language and literacy make learning in other areas of the curriculum more difficult. This often extends beyond the Foundation Stage. The children's mathematical language is often limited and the majority cannot count reliably. They watch plants grow and begin to consider what plants need to survive as part of their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are provided with good opportunities to work with computers to support their learning in other areas. They use scissors, paint brushes and pencils confidently but do not show the control expected for children of this age. The children sing enthusiastically and play percussion instruments in an appropriate manner. They work well with each other as they play and use their imagination in different 'role-play' sessions.

2 The National Curriculum test results for 2001 showed that by the time the pupils were seven, standards were well below average in reading, average in writing and above average in mathematics. When compared to similar schools the picture was extremely positive, with standards being above average in reading and well above average in writing. The results in mathematics were very high and amongst the top five per cent. In addition to this, the pupils' achievements were very good in relation to their attainment on entry to the school. The majority of pupils made very good progress in these areas of learning despite the above average percentage of pupils with special educational needs found in the school and the high numbers of pupils who either leave or join the school. The school also serves a community recognised as having high levels of social, economic and educational disadvantage. Standards having been steadily improving since the time of the previous inspection. They are currently below average in English but average in mathematics and science. The pupils' achievements are very good. When looking at the performance of boys and girls over the three years 1999 to 2001 there are some differences. However, the school's very good monitoring of pupils' progress, indicates that neither boys nor girls have under-performed. The school's targets for 2002 in reading, writing and mathematics are realistic and challenging. They are regularly reviewed.

3 By the time they are seven, pupils listen carefully in lessons and demonstrate good listening skills. Because many pupils have a limited vocabulary, standards of speaking are below average. This impacts on all other areas of learning and pupils often have difficulty in explaining their work even though their understanding is similar to that of other pupils in their age-group. Standards in reading are below average although most pupils can read simple texts and talk about what they have read. Pupils are given a good range of activities to write about but standards of writing are below average. Standards in mathematics are average. The pupils have an appropriate understanding of place value, can identify number patterns and complete simple problems. They know the properties of two-dimensional shapes and measure accurately using centimetres. In science they are aware that different animals need food to live and that plants require light and moisture to grow. They can undertake simple scientific investigations and attempt to explain discoveries that they have made.

4 Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress over time. Many of the pupils on the school's register of special educational needs achieve the expected levels for their age before transferring to the junior school. This is the result of carefully targeted support in the classroom and a range of well planned programmes to ensure these pupils acquire all the essential skills that enable them to benefit from what they are taught.

5 There is only one pupil at the school who speaks English as an additional language. This child is not at an early stage of English acquisition and achievements are similar to the other pupils.

6 Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology (ICT), music, physical education and religious education are similar to those found in most other schools. In design and technology and physical education, this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Standards in music sometimes exceed those found nationally because of the very good teaching provided by a specialist teacher. This has been maintained since the previous inspection. Progress for pupils in most subjects is very good in relation to their prior attainment when they start school.

7 The inspection findings support the views of the parents. When responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire ninety seven per cent of parents agreed that their child was making good progress in the school and at the pre-inspection meeting parents felt that their children learn effectively because they were treated as individuals by the school. Parents were positive about the standards achieved.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8 Most children in the Foundation Stage show positive attitudes to learning, settle in well in the nursery and enjoy coming to school. Behaviour is good in the nursery and in the reception class and the children develop good relationships with the adults who work with them and with each other. The children develop satisfactory personal independence as they get changed for physical development sessions and all children have positive attitudes to tidying up at the end of sessions.

9 Pupils' attitudes to school in Years 1 and 2 are very good and their attitudes to learning are very positive. Pupils are interested in what is being taught and enjoy coming to school. They rise to the challenge when teaching is demanding and enjoy practical tasks. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection, when pupils' attitudes were said to be sound. Inspectors saw good examples of pupils' positive attitudes during lessons in English, geography and ICT. Pupils are capable of working independently and concentrating on tasks. This was seen during a science lesson when pupils were researching information on mini-beasts. Pupils were seen handling apparatus sensibly during a physical education lesson and confidently printing out their work in a Year 2 art lesson. Inspectors saw pupils working collaboratively during lessons in art and English. A notable example of co-operative collaborative working was seen during a drama lesson when Year 2 pupils were re-telling a story using puppets. Ninety-eight per cent of parents responding to the questionnaire agreed their child likes school and the inspection findings confirm their views.

10 At the time of the previous inspection pupils were said to behave sensibly. During the current inspection pupils' behaviour was consistently very good in the classroom, in the playground and in the dining room during lunchtime. Pupils are aware of the standards of behaviour that are expected and consistently meet those standards, including when moving around the school in unsupervised situations. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting

had no concerns about behaviour. The overwhelming majority of parents responding to the questionnaire agree that behaviour in the school is good. There have been no exclusions in the last school year.

11 Pupils respond willingly to the opportunities offered to be involved in the life of the school. The majority of pupils have responsibilities in their own classrooms and for keeping shared areas tidy. Some classes appoint a 'class helper' and all have register monitors who change on a weekly basis. Older pupils have duties and responsibilities around the school. These responsibilities include preparing the hall for assemblies and tidying up afterwards and taking notes around the school for the headteacher. Pupils take these responsibilities seriously and handle them reliably and efficiently. Inspectors found pupils polite and friendly.

12 Relationships in the school have improved since the time of the previous inspection and are currently very good. Pupils show respect for the feelings and values of others. Year 1 pupils listened carefully to others' views on how to help at home on Mothering Sunday. No incidences of unkind behaviour were seen between pupils and pupils understand the consequences of unkindness or bullying. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting agreed that pupils get on well with each other. In the main, pupils form good relationships with teachers and other adults, including visitors. In some classes, the relationship between the pupils and the teacher is of a very high quality and has a positive effect on pupils' personal and academic development. Inspectors saw very good relationships between teacher and pupils enhancing learning during a Year 2 mathematics lesson and when challenging and inspiring pupils in a discussion on past and present in a history lesson.

13 Attendance in the school is well below the national average. There is a higher level of unauthorised absence in the school when compared to other primary schools nationally. However, figures have improved since the time of the previous inspection when attendance levels were said to be poor. There are a number of pupils who are persistent absentees or who are late in arriving. The poor levels of attendance are having a negative effect on these pupils' attainment and progress. Not all parents co-operate as well as they might in helping the school to improve the situation and some do not fulfil their responsibilities by ensuring their children attend regularly and arrive promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14 The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. There was no unsatisfactory teaching compared to fifteen per cent last time, and the proportion of very good teaching has more than doubled. When responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire, all parents agreed that teaching is good in the school and at the pre-inspection meeting, the good teaching was one of the strengths identified by the parents. Inspection evidence would support the parents' positive views. Of the lessons observed, nineteen per cent were very good, fifty-three per cent good and twenty-eight per cent satisfactory. However, although teaching is judged to be good overall, there are some inconsistencies. In Years 1 and 2, thirty per cent of lessons were very good, sixty-three per cent good and only seven per cent satisfactory. Teaching in Year 2 was of a particularly high standard as was the teaching of music by the specialist music teacher. In the nursery and reception classes (Foundation Stage) the percentage of satisfactory teaching was higher at sixty-two per cent, with good teaching at thirty-eight per cent. No very good teaching was observed.

15 Teaching is satisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage and often good in the nursery. In good lessons the adults interact well with groups of children, activities are interesting and opportunities are not missed as the teacher reinforces skills and vocabulary previously taught. This good learning in lessons promotes progress over time. Teachers' planning and

day-to-day assessments are satisfactory. However, this assessment information is not systematically shown in the weekly planning to move individuals or groups of children on to the next step of learning. In some of 'free play' sessions, children are not sufficiently well supported to ensure they are making best progress across all areas of learning.

16 Teaching in Years 1 and 2 has many strengths. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are effectively taught and contribute significantly to the very good progress that most pupils make in English and mathematics. Planning for these lessons is thorough and follows the recommendations of the national strategies. The teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and basic skills are taught very well. Pupils are encouraged to listen carefully and good emphasis is placed on their responses to questions and speaking generally. These lessons have pace and no time is wasted. Classroom assistants are used particularly well to monitor the progress of groups or individual pupils. Good references are made to previous learning so pupils have a good understanding of where they are and at the end of these sessions a very thorough recap is undertaken to ensure that pupils have understood what they have learnt. Work is planned so that all ability groups receive work that is appropriate to their needs. Although literacy and numeracy lessons are organised into ability 'sets' in Year 2, great effort is made to ensure that the range of ability still found in these classes is well catered for. These characteristics were observed as Year 2 pupils wrote a poem as a class and Year 1 pupils learnt pairs of numbers that totalled 10. The skills of literacy and numeracy are also reinforced well in other areas of the curriculum. For example Year 1 pupils write labels as they prepare an experiment for planting seeds and Year 2 pupils develop their understanding of number bonds as they work out the dinner numbers.

17 Another significant improvement since the previous inspection is the use of ICT. The quality of teaching was often unsatisfactory in this respect, but ICT is now used well to support other areas of the curriculum and is very much part of the school's culture. It is very rare to go into any classroom and not see a computer being used to support learning. For example, in a Year 1 literacy session pupils used ICT to support their reading as they accessed a story on the computer and Year 2 pupils developed their research skills using a CD-Rom to find out information about Indian musical instruments. All lessons are well planned and 'activity' lessons where pupils access a number of areas of the curriculum in different groups are a notable feature. In a very good Year 2 'activity' session pupils were involved in art and design, design and technology, geography and musical activities. After a very clear and precise 'briefing session' the pupils were able to work independently and co-operatively as they encountered different areas of the curriculum. Their access to activities was carefully monitored and planning very detailed. All of the pupils had a good understanding of what they were doing and maintained high levels of concentration and effort. This is seen to good effect all through Years 1 and 2. A key issue from the previous inspection related to teaching has been effectively fulfilled.

18 Relationships are very strong and the teachers know the pupils very well. The pupils show considerable respect to the adults they work with. All classrooms are industrious and pupils talk confidently about the work they are currently undertaking or activities they have completed in the past. They have a good understanding of what they are learning. Year 2 pupils showed obvious enjoyment when talking about their class teachers dressing up in saris to support the pupils' learning about India. They were proud that their teachers were prepared to do such a thing but also appreciated that they learnt from the situation. Good examples were observed in Year 1 of mature and sensible discussions about the differences between life in Rotherham and Kenya or the pupils' opinions of an African folktale. Although the pupils have limited language skills, they were prepared to listen politely to each other's views and the classteacher skilfully ensured that pupils of all abilities were encouraged to contribute and offer their ideas. It is very easy for young pupils to begin to develop stereotypes in these situations, for example drawing the conclusion that mothers give birth at

home in Kenya but in hospitals in Britain. The classteacher ensured that the debate was balanced and that the pupils' conclusions were thought through carefully.

19 Good examples were observed during the inspection of teachers undertaking day-to-day assessments to monitor pupils' progress and to adjust future planning. Classroom assistants complete 'focus learning sheets' as part of this process. This is good practice and provides class teachers with invaluable information on the performance of individuals and groups of pupils. During 'progress weeks', when pupils undertake literacy and numeracy activities to assess their progress, teachers spend a lot of time supporting individual pupils and discussing with them how their work needs to develop. However, although the marking of pupils' work is satisfactory overall it is not a strong feature of the teaching in the school and in literacy, for example, could offer more support to the pupils, particularly in the development of writing skills and handwriting. In such a caring and thoughtful school it is also noticeable that the number of positive comments or stickers is less than one would normally expect to find. Some nursery parents commented during the inspection that work did not get marked in the main school. This is not correct, but it is easy to understand how parents could come to this conclusion. The majority of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire supported the view that their child gets the right amount of work to do at home. At the pre-inspection meeting some parents of Year 1 and 2 pupils felt that their children should get more work to do at home. The inspection team would judge the use of homework to be satisfactory. It predominantly involves reading but this is fairly common practice for pupils of this age. Parents are aware of their children's targets in literacy and numeracy and information is provided for parents to help them prepare their children for National Curriculum tests.

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

20 The curriculum provided for pupils is broad, balanced and relevant to the school's particular circumstances. Throughout the school there is an emphasis on the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, numeracy and ICT. All other subjects are used to support these as well as being well developed in their own right. The Foundation Stage (nursery and reception) is planned to cover the required Early Learning Goals in structured sessions with teachers and classroom assistants and through play. In Years 1 and 2, there are many useful programmes to ensure pupils' literacy development is promoted as well as effective use of the National Literacy Strategy to give basic skills; reading and writing are used regularly in geography, history, music and religious education. Additional programmes are used to enable pupils with problems to overcome their difficulties and make as much progress as possible, but if this does not work pupils are added to the register of pupils with special educational needs. Subsequently they receive good individual support through precise and realistic individual education plans. In practice, though, additional reading programmes do sometimes result in some pupils missing all or part of lessons in other subjects for the duration of the programme. There is also a culture of reading throughout the school - all displays are accompanied by relevant books, both non-fiction and narrative, to appeal to the pupils, and there are often instructions for activities to try out. Recorded texts and computer versions are also available so that less confident readers can hear or access animated versions of the text.

21 Although non-core subjects¹ are each taught separately to well planned schemes of work, there are also effective 'activities' sessions where pupils practise their skills, largely through independent tasks which support the planned curriculum. Much of this work is cross-

¹ Art, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education.

curricular, such as the snail pictures in the style of Matisse linked to science work on 'mini-beasts' in Year 2. Cross-curricular links are a feature of most of the work, including assembly. This enables pupils to reinforce and apply knowledge and skills regularly in different situations and assists their learning and progress. Because teachers responsible for each year group plan well together, there is complete continuity between the work of the two classes in each year group. Planned work includes appropriate attention to health and safety education and to personal education through sessions such as 'circle time'². Pupils are well prepared for their transfer to the junior school.

22 Very good community links and a wide range of extra-curricular activities enhance the curriculum and there are effective links with the neighbouring junior school. The school has taken full advantage of all the EiCAZ projects, but also made its own links with businesses, the Church, charities and old people's homes to broaden pupils' experience and horizons. Many visits to places of interest such as parks and museums are arranged, and visitors support work in geography, history, music and science. Once a week, pupils can attend a music, dance, sport, art and craft, ICT or environment club after school.

23 Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very effective. Spiritual and social development are particularly well promoted. Thoughtful assemblies, linked to the religious education curriculum, provide many opportunities to appreciate different beliefs and customs, and also regular opportunities to pray and reflect. Well-chosen displays around the school include prayers, thoughtful statements on which to ponder, information about different faiths beyond those taught as part of the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education and opportunities to appreciate the natural world. Sensitive discussion in lessons encourages pupils to consider and reflect on different views. Pupils learn to respect living things and to wonder about the diversity of the natural world.

24 Throughout each day pupils work together in pairs and groups as well as in a whole class. They learn to co-operate, take turns and share resources fairly. Adults value all pupils and build very positive relationships with them, and also provide good role models, which the pupils copy. Many tasks, particularly in 'activities' lessons promote independence, but also encourage pupils to help each other. There are many opportunities to take responsibility including taking the register to the office, setting up the hall for assembly, being responsible for resources in the classroom and ringing the bell for the start or end of sessions. Pupils learn to treat resources with respect; one Year 1 pupil, for instance, picked up a fallen book and replaced it on the shelf on his way to a music lesson. The pupils are encouraged to use their initiative and are also given chances to support local charities.

25 Pupils learn right from wrong through the school routines and rules and by sensitive handling by adults if they transgress. They are given regular opportunities to discuss attributes such as kindness and honesty through religious education lessons and assembly, listening to stories that help them to consider how they would react in different circumstances. Desirable behaviour and attitudes are regularly rewarded through praise and a system of stickers, points and displays that celebrate them.

26 There are many opportunities for pupils to appreciate culture. They regularly listen to music in assembly, music lessons and in some other lessons where it is used for mood setting. Pupils study the work of artists such as Matisse, Van Gogh and Jackson Pollock in their art lessons. Visits to museums, art galleries and historical buildings are provided to support the curriculum. A range of good quality books enlarges pupils' knowledge of different cultures as well as supporting planned projects such as the current Year 2 one on India.

² Lessons in which pupils discuss feelings and ways of dealing with the situations in which they find themselves.

Pupils are focussing on learning about Indian music, dance and customs as well as the geography of India.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

27 High Greave School takes very good care of its pupils. The procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are very good and all staff are aware of the named personnel and procedures that are involved. Policies are in line with local procedures and good relationships exist with personnel from outside agencies involved in pupil care. The school has two members of staff qualified in first aid and all staff have undertaken first aid training. All necessary procedures are in place for dealing with minor accidents or incidents. Arrangements and procedures for the conduct of educational visits fully comply with local authority guidelines. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy. The headteacher meets with the school caretaker on a weekly basis regarding health and safety issues. Governors are aware of the need to provide a safe and secure environment for pupils and staff.

28 Supervision during lunchtime is well organised through a rota of supervisors and the headteacher is available on a daily basis to discuss problems or concerns. Lunchtime staff are aware of the school's behaviour policy and recommend to class teachers pupils who deserve to be rewarded for sensible and responsible play and good manners. As a result, lunchtimes are happy and orderly occasions and make a positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Parents attending the pre-inspection commented on how well pupils play together during lunchtime and the positive contribution of the activities organised by supervisors. Pupils treat lunchtime supervisors with politeness and courtesy.

29 The school has good procedures for monitoring absence and lateness and has adopted a number of suitable strategies for encouraging those who are persistently absent or late in arriving. However, these initiatives have had limited success. The school learning mentor monitors attendance on a daily basis, contacting parents on the first day of absence and working closely with an Education Welfare Officer who visits the school regularly and has been helping the school tackle the problem. Pupils are appropriately rewarded for good attendance with certificates and merit awards.

30 The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. Pupils and parents are aware of the standards of behaviour expected, as set out in the behaviour policy and of the consequences of misconduct. Observations were made of staff handling incidents of poor classroom behaviour promptly, consistently and in line with the code of conduct displayed in all classrooms. Inspectors saw good behaviour consistently recognised and rewarded with praise, stickers and stars. Staff know their pupils well and monitor and record their personal development in a formal and systematic way as a part of the school's assessment processes.

31 Assessment procedures, judged to be developing well at the time of the previous inspection, have now evolved into a thorough and comprehensive system for assessing and recording pupils' basic English and mathematics skills and effective tracking of individual progress. Pupils are also actively involved through being aware of the targets they next need to reach in reading and writing. Analysis of progress from baseline³ to national tests at the end of Year 2 enables the school to measure what it has done and identify any areas which need further development, and this information is used well to improve subsequent planning.

³ Recording of skills pupils have on admission to reception.

Information is also regularly used to identify pupils who need extra support through the many reading programmes that are offered to enable them to reach their potential. Pupils with special educational needs are quickly identified through these assessment procedures and their precise needs are then the focus of targets set for them. Regular reviews of progress against these targets ensures good progress, but if this is still considered to be insufficient further steps are taken. Where necessary, more formal assessment is conducted by the Learning Support Service teacher or educational psychologist so that needs which are beyond the school's expertise, such as speech therapy, can be met.

32 Because assessment systems are maintained for each class group from reception onwards it is also possible for the class teacher to use information about previously planned work to ensure subsequent work builds on what was learnt previously. Overall rate of progress by individuals is also checked to ensure pupils are doing as well as expected. Science and non-core subjects have appropriate arrangements, mostly quite recently introduced, which are beginning to provide useful information on pupils' attainment against key skills and knowledge so that the comprehensive arrangements include the whole curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

33 There is a good partnership between parents and the school. Parents' views of the school are positive and the school works hard to promote an effective relationship with parents. All parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire agree that the school works closely with them. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting agreed that they are happy to approach the school with worries or concerns and staff are always available to talk to them. Parents receive good quality information as they did at the time of the previous inspection. There are frequent letters for parents that are presented in a readable and informative style. There is a well-presented school brochure that contains all essential information for parents and contains a paragraph encouraging parents to help in school and on outings. There have been improvements since the previous inspection and the school has worked towards encouraging parents to become involved in their child's learning. There are morning half-termly meetings with parents focussing on curriculum topics, visits that pupils may be making and how parents can help their child make the most of these learning opportunities. Meetings for parents of Year 2 pupils relating to end of year tests have been well attended. A thirty-minute reading session is held every Friday at the start of the school day when parents can come into school and share a book with their child. A number of parents have undertaken training linked to the 'Better Reading' initiative and eight parents are paired with pupils reading together for fifteen minutes three times each week. The parents involved with this initiative have contributed to the significant gains made by pupils in their reading ability and to the improvement in pupils' attitudes towards reading. The majority of parents have signed the home school agreement and the agreement has strengthened the co-operation between parents and staff.

34 The school is sensitive to individual circumstances when pupils are identified as having special educational needs. Parents are fully involved as soon as such needs are identified and every effort is made to ensure they are able to attend progress and review meetings and that they receive advice on how they can assist their offspring at home. Where necessary, parents are also advised on other agencies that can help them to support their child, and if they need practical help to make contact with such additional services the school does all it can to provide this.

35 Parents responding to the questionnaire felt well informed about how their child is getting on at school. There are two formal parents meeting each year and attendance at

these meetings has increased significantly since the time of the previous inspection. Parents who are unable to attend are invited to meet with the class teacher at another mutually convenient time. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting agreed that reports are clear, informative and personal. Inspectors agree with their views and scrutinised reports that contained a thorough and systematic record of pupils' progress and good information on personal and social development. Parents are aware of pupils' individual targets through their children's books and they receive a clear explanatory leaflet on understanding targets. Arrangements for the setting of homework and the reading tasks children may be expected to do at home are set out in the homework policy that is part of the school brochure. There is a helpful, appropriately worded leaflet for parents explaining how to help their child with reading at home. Inspectors saw homework being given in line with the policy and class teachers checking the well-kept reading diaries.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

36 The headteacher provides very good leadership and management. This view is well supported by the parents, governors and her colleagues in the EICAZ. She has contributed significantly to the very good progress and developments in the school since the previous inspection. The school is an oasis for its pupils. Against a background of challenging social, economic and educational disadvantage, the school offers a calm, caring environment where the needs of individual pupils are of the utmost importance. However, the challenging circumstances in which the school operates are not offered as an excuse for indifferent pupil performance. Expectations are very high. Much is expected of the pupils in terms of the attitudes and behaviour to learning and their academic performance. This is driven by the headteacher who must take credit, along with the teaching and non-teaching staff, for the very good achievements that the pupils make in the school. Despite standards that are high when compared to schools in a similar situation, the school does not rest on its laurels and is always looking to improve standards and the quality of education provided for the pupils. There is a good commitment to continued improvement amongst the staff. The leadership of the headteacher provides clear educational direction and the commitment of all staff to the pupils in their care is a noticeable feature of the school. Everyone has a clear understanding of what is trying to be achieved and there is a 'buzz' of enthusiasm and excitement around the school.

37 All staff contribute well to the management of the school and the head is well supported by the deputy head and senior management team. The school's aims and values are reflected very well in its work. The aims include; '...a school where every child is valued and happy...providing high standards and quality experiences and...developing communication and participation in spoken and written language'. These are not idle claims but they actually happen in this school. They are very much part of the culture as are the other aims and values. The role of the subject co-ordinator has developed well since the previous inspection. Subject co-ordinators have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects and through annual evaluations and good action planning it is very easy to see how the school is developing. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is good. There has been a particular emphasis on literacy and numeracy, but since the beginning of the current academic year all subject co-ordinators have been able to monitor teaching in their subjects. This has led to them form a clearer picture about the standards in their subjects and the effectiveness of policies and schemes of work. The school also makes good use of the performance data available. Very careful evaluations are made of national test results; for example, careful analysis was made of last year's results in reading so that the school's strategies and support for reading could be developed for the current academic year.

38 The management of special educational needs is very effective. Liaison with the Learning Support Service and relevant agencies is very good and leads to a full range of support for individuals who need it. Systems for recording the progress of pupils are efficient. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and proactive, and good use is made of any non-contact time to ensure pupils' needs are addressed.

39 The school governing body is very supportive and as a group offers a range of experience in terms of education, the local community, other professions and staff that work in the school. Governors are well informed and have a very good understanding of the school's many strengths and areas for development. Statutory requirements are fulfilled. Through the school development plan (SDP) the governors are very involved in shaping the direction of the school. They feel 'ownership' of the SDP. This is a very good document that clearly identifies the school's priorities for development and focuses significantly on continuing to raise standards and improve the quality of education. Performance management objectives are well linked to the priorities in the SDP and staff professional development is prioritised in relation to achieving the school's targets and moving the school forward. The governors play an effective role as a 'critical friend' and are prepared to challenge the school on issues. They question the school's performance and have carefully debated issues such as the setting of pupils and the impact this would have on standards. Comparisons are made with other schools in terms of performance and when there have been fluctuations in standards the governors have looked very carefully at the performance of different year groups of pupils. They have a very clear understanding of the 'value added' that the school provides for its pupils. The most recent audit report of the school did not identify any weaknesses in the school's administration arrangements or the day-to-day control of finances. The school's financial planning supports the educational priorities identified through the SDP well and expenditure is monitored appropriately by the governing body. The school secretary also contributes well to the effective day-to-day management of financial resources. The governors appreciate the need to obtain best value in purchasing resources and services and have for example, renegotiated contracts. They have a good understanding of the principles of best value.

40 The use of the specific funds element of the school's finances and other additional funding, including the school's involvement in the EiCAZ is very well directed. It has had a positive impact on raising standards and the quality of education; for example, providing extra support in the classrooms, improving the resources for ICT and helping the school with its reading partnership initiative.

41 The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. The school provides very good specialist music teaching for its pupils and the classroom support staff provide good quality focused support that contributes well to the quality of education provided for the pupils. The overall adequacy of the school accommodation for the delivery of the National Curriculum and religious education is good. Classrooms offer plenty of room for the effective delivery of the planned curriculum and the carpeted main corridor is used to good effect by the teachers for role-play areas and good quality displays. Many of the displays are interactive and encourage the pupils to develop their learning. For example, pupils are encouraged to find India in map books or on a globe and are invited to listen to a story from India, using a listening centre. The school is able to offer a specific room for the teaching of music and the school hall is of a good size for indoor physical education lessons and assemblies. The caretaker and his cleaning staff keep all of the school exceptionally clean and tidy. The school also has a good non-fiction library that also doubles as an additional teaching area. The outside accommodation offers a reasonably sized playground for the number of pupils in the school and a secure grassed area that can be used by the pupils in the summer. The nursery, which is detached from the main school building, has its own secure outdoor play area for the children.

42 The school has a good range of learning resources. Resources for English are very good, particularly the range of reading resources for pupils. The ratio of computers to pupils is better than average. Resources are well organised and good use is made of the storage space available.

43 With the very good achievements of the pupils, the very good leadership and management of the headteacher, the good teaching, the very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils and the very good care taken of the pupils, the school provides very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

44 The inspection team recognises the school's drive to raise standards and the quality of education. In addition to the very good work already undertaken, and in order to improve the standards achieved and the quality of teaching and learning still further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

Raise standards in English by:

- **Providing clearer guidance to pupils in the development of writing skills and handwriting;** (Paragraphs 19 and 63)
- **Continuing with the good promotion of speaking and listening skills across the curriculum and maintaining the high profile enjoyed by reading.** (Paragraphs 16, 18, 59, 61, 62, 88, 92 and 96)

45 The headteacher, staff and governors might like to consider the following minor issue as part of their action plan:

Attendance. (Paragraphs 13 and 29)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	8	23	12	0	0	0
Percentage	0	19	53	28	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	27	153
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	89

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15	66

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.8

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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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	28	37	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	27	26
	Girls	29	34	34
	Total	53	61	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (71)	94 (79)	92 (79)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	26	26
	Girls	33	34	31
	Total	57	60	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (76)	92 (84)	88 (89)
	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	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	98.9
Any other minority ethnic group	1.1

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)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.9
Average class size	25.5

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	164.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

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	436294
Total expenditure	433231
Expenditure per pupil	2114
Balance brought forward from previous year	4349
Balance carried forward to next year	7412

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	206
Number of questionnaires returned	39
Percentage of questionnaires returned	19

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	26	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	31	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	41	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	38	8	0	5
The teaching is good.	85	15	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	74	23	3	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	18	3	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	79	21	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	59	41	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	64	31	3	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	29	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	62	26	5	0	8

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

46 The children enter the nursery at three years old and at the time of the inspection there were 52 children attending part-time. In the reception classes there were 58 full-time children. The children quickly settle into the nursery and later into the reception classes because an effective induction programme is successfully implemented. Parents are happy with the provision their children receive. Forty per cent of the children in the Foundation Stage have been identified as having special educational needs. This is well above the national average and affects the standards that the children are likely to reach by the beginning of Year 1. There are no children who speak English as an additional language.

47 The standards children reach and the progress they make are similar to those reported in the last inspection. Information, which is collected when children enter the reception classes, indicates that levels of attainment are well below average. Attainment is low for communication, literacy and language because many children have limited language skills. A few are identified as having speech and language difficulties. The children's low level of language affects the standards they reach in all areas because many have great difficulty taking part in discussions or explaining what they have learnt. Most of the current cohort of children are unlikely to reach the expected levels in all areas. However progress is good. This is because all adults continually promote basic skills, in particular speaking and listening, in all activities. Personal and social skills are continually reinforced which results in good relationships and children having positive attitudes to learning. All adults manage the children well. Teaching is satisfactory and often good in the nursery. It is good for all children during music sessions taken by the specialist teacher. Learning is consistently good when support staff are deployed well. The nursery nurse is used consistently and effectively in the nursery to promote learning. In reception, support staff are effective when they develop on-going assessments on individual children, and when the headteacher supports groups of children in reception learning is consistently good. Activities are generally well resourced and enable children to develop their understanding in all areas.

48 The adults who work in the Foundation Stage have worked hard to develop the curriculum so that it follows the guidelines for this age-group. There are plans to develop this further next year. Planning in all classes is sound but does not consistently refer to the individual needs of the children. The co-ordinator for Early Years is aware of the need to develop the day-to-day assessments so that this information is linked to the weekly planning to move individuals or groups of children onto the next step of learning. Records, which indicate what each child can do, are developed on entry to the nursery and clearly show the good progress the children make. Reception records are satisfactory and are in the process of development. Links between the nursery and the reception are good. The three teachers plan together and link together for music sessions with the specialist music teacher. The reception children go into assembly with the older pupils and the nursery children occasionally join them.

49 Learning resources are good to promote all areas of learning inside and outside the classroom. Facilities for outside play are good and in the process of further development. The children have secure outdoor play areas, which are used well to promote all areas of learning. For example children make marks on paper as they collect information on clip boards when they play outside, whilst others develop personal and social skills as they play co-operatively in small groups with construction toys. Children confidently develop skills as they use wheeled vehicles and begin to understand the importance of riding them safely. As

they get older all children in the Foundation Stage have opportunities to use the main hall to for physical activities.

Personal, social and emotional development

50 Teaching is good and this area is effectively promoted in everything the children do. Adults in all classes promote basic social skills well, resulting in most children developing good relationships with each other and with the adults who work with them. The children make good progress because they enjoy coming to school and show very positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is very good throughout, although a few children in all classes have difficulty in sharing equipment. Many cannot sustain concentration during some lessons but this is when teachers expect them to sit on the carpet for too long. During assemblies the reception children were seen to watch and listen well. There are many opportunities to work in pairs and small groups and the children begin to develop the skills necessary to work independently. They generally select activities with confidence although at times a number have difficulty and need adult guidance. When given the opportunity they tidy away well at the end of the sessions. The children begin to develop an idea of different cultures as they learn about different religions. For example in reception they discussed why the Jewish community keep meat and dairy products separately in their kitchens. However, limited language makes it very difficult for most to recall what they have learnt. The children learn about different celebrations at certain times of the year, talk about how their mum cares for them and develop a basic understanding of Mothering Sunday. By the end of the reception year most children are unlikely to reach the expected levels in this area.

Communication, language and literacy

51 The quality of teaching of communication, language and literacy skills is satisfactory; in the nursery it is often good. In most lessons basic communication skills such as the importance of listening carefully are well promoted and children listen and most children concentrate appropriately for their ages. Progress over time is good. The youngest children in the nursery enjoy sharing books with the adults who work with them. In the reception classes children confidently select books themselves and many attempt to tell the story by looking at the pictures. All enthusiastically sit and listen to stories. The love of books and opportunities to read are well promoted in the designated book corners. Above average children in reception recognise familiar words in texts they read. Average and below average children identify the difference between pictures and words and tell the story by talking about the pictures. They recognise a few words such as 'my' and 'I'. Most name the characters in the books they read. In the nursery many children demonstrate weak pencil control as they learn to copy over a model. They put marks on paper but few show any evidence of writing any letters. A few above average children in reception copy underneath a model as they write a letter to Cinderella. Average pupils show that they are beginning to write a few letters as they write about their picture of the Three Little Pigs. By the time the children reach Year 1, most are unlikely to reach the expected levels.

Mathematical development

52 Teaching is satisfactory and occasionally good. A good example of teaching was seen in a reception class in which the headteacher was supporting an activity, which involved children developing basic addition skills. Learning was good because the session was well resourced and the children were expected to explain what they were doing as they added two numbers together. All children have many opportunities to develop mathematical skills in the activities they are offered. In nursery children cook scones and early weighing skills are introduced. They begin to learn to count, but few can count reliably. All adults work hard to promote mathematical vocabulary. In all classes children sing number rhymes that reinforce

basic counting skills. As they complete counting activities they begin to develop an awareness of what numbers look like when written down. Children in both classes develop an awareness of basic shapes. Mathematical development is linked to creative development as children in reception print with squares, triangle, rectangles and circles. Progress over time is good, but most are unlikely to reach the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

53 Teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good in the nursery. There are many opportunities given to the children to develop a better understanding of the world. For example, during outdoor play lessons in the nursery well resourced activities allow children to develop a good awareness of the importance of riding their bicycles safely. They learn that on the roads they must stop when they see a zebra crossing. All adults interact well with children and in particular reinforce personal and social skills. Children in all classes are able to watch plants grow and this makes them become aware of what plants need to survive. They all have opportunities to see how substances change during cooking sessions. A lovely example was seen in the nursery after the children had made scones. Good teaching from a nursery nurse enabled the children to work together buttering the scones. A successful social occasion was developed where she referred to the importance of not licking your fingers whilst trying to get the children to spread the butter thinly! Children in all classes develop a growing awareness of the computers and receive good quality support from all adults who work with them. In the reception classes many are confident and work independently as they use the mouse well to move the cursor around the screen. All children use computer programs to reinforce personal and social skills and literacy, language and mathematical skills. Children learn about their senses and about how important it is to listen and look carefully. They look at the colours they use when painting. Many have little idea of basic colours in the nursery but in the reception classes most name the colours they use accurately and relate them to what they see around them. Many children, in particular in the nursery, need support when they select materials from a limited range to develop skills needed to cut, stick and thread materials together.

Physical development

54 Teaching is satisfactory and occasionally good in the nursery. By the end of the reception classes most children are unlikely to reach the expected levels in this area. There are daily opportunities for the children in the nursery to develop skills using a wide range of outdoor equipment in the safe and secure outdoor play area. Children in the reception classes use the areas outside their classrooms satisfactorily to develop physically. For example children play a number of games which involve developing throwing skills; another records the results as they work together as a team. The children make good progress. Older children regularly use the hall for physical development lessons. A dance lesson was seen in reception where adults showed a satisfactory regard for safety and the need to warm up at the beginning of a lesson although many children had difficulty skipping. All children have many opportunities to develop skills by working with construction toys and soft materials such as Play Doh. Most children handle scissors, paint brushes and pencils confidently and safely but many have difficulty controlling them.

Creative development

55 Progress is good as adults link activities with all areas of learning to promote children's creative development. In the nursery, children produce collages using a range of different materials; however many need lots of support from the teacher when they try to glue and stick the materials together. The children work together to produce class paintings such as 'Sharing in the nursery'. In reception there are good links with literacy and language as they paint their friends and with support talk about their pictures. There are good opportunities to explore what happens when they mix colours. Teaching is satisfactory but is good during music sessions taught by the specialist teacher. All children sing songs with enjoyment in these well-organised sessions. They play percussion instruments confidently and with satisfactory control. The children have daily experiences to express their own ideas and communicate their feelings through well-organised and resourced role-play sessions in all classrooms. Displays show that all adults who work in the nursery and the reception classes value all artwork. By the end of reception most are unlikely to reach the expected levels.

ENGLISH

56 Standards in reading and writing are below average. Most pupils reach high levels in the development of listening skills but standards of speaking are below average. Standards have been steadily improving since the previous inspection although current standards in writing are not as high as the previous year.

57 Pupils enter Year 1 with well below average skills in communication, language and literacy. During their time in school most pupils make very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because they are well supported by the teaching assistants. The National Literacy Strategy has been effectively implemented and teachers plan lessons that closely follow the recommended structure for daily literacy lessons. There are regular opportunities to analyse text for punctuation, grammar, spelling and vocabulary during 'word level' sessions. All teachers plan group work that contains different activities, accurately matched to the needs of individual pupils, which results in good learning within lessons. The last part of each lesson clearly allows pupils to identify what they have learnt and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. This was particularly well done in a Year 2 class after pupils had been involved in writing a poem. After discussing words that rhyme, more able pupils confidently identified that 'bananas' rhymed with 'pyjamas'.

58 Work in subjects other than English is supporting the development of literacy skills very well. There were many examples seen in most subjects. In a religious education lesson pupils in Year 2 wrote about why they loved their mum, history folders showed that pupils were encouraged to develop a 'contents' page so that their work was organised more clearly, and in geography, pupils wrote a 'commentary' after watching a video about India. ICT is used very well in both year groups to aid speaking and listening, reading and writing and to promote word processing skills. Pupils in Year 1 confidently listen and respond to stories on the computer whereas in Year 2 they identify 'opposites' in words and then write sentences onto the screen. By the end of Year 2 pupils impressively use three different kinds of computers, including the laptops to promote literacy skills.

59 Pupils listen well in lessons, which results in most pupils demonstrating good listening skills. Standards of speaking are below what is typical of seven year-olds in other schools. Many pupils lack the basic vocabulary, which is needed to explain what they have learnt. This was clearly seen during an assembly, which was taken by pupils in Year 1 who had been comparing life today with life one hundred years ago. Teachers worked hard by prompting pupils to recall what they had learned in their history lessons and historical objects

were used very well to remind pupils what they had previously been taught. Many pupils lack the basic vocabulary to talk about what they are doing although teachers consistently plan for speaking activities and adults promote the importance of speaking clearly at all times. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop speaking skills in class discussions, which clearly show the good learning during lessons and the very good achievement over time. However, many pupils have difficulty using correct terminology in discussions. For example, many are confused between fiction and non-fiction books although the school has a very good selection of books, which are clearly marked and attractively displayed in numerous places around the school. During the final part of lessons teachers work very hard to enable pupils to develop their speaking skills as they encourage them to talk about what they have learned.

60 Standards in reading are below those expected for seven-year-olds. Most pupils talk about the main parts of the story in the simple texts that they read. Above average pupils confidently talk about storybooks and information books. Although the majority of pupils learn familiar words and begin to use their basic knowledge of initial sounds to help them with unknown words, many have little success. For example an average pupil in Year 2 had great difficulty with the word 'climb'. She had no idea of the blend 'cl' or that the sound 'b' can be a silent letter in some words. During a guided reading session with the teacher, a group of average pupils in Year 2 had difficulty reading words such as 'cute' and 'sighed'. Above average pupils in Year 2 read fluently and with good expression. They begin to read with some regard for punctuation and are happy to talk about the main characters in their books. These pupils show a good understanding of what they read; for example one Year 2 boy confidently said that 'a chameleon changes colour' and found an example in the text to justify his point of view. Below average readers in Year 2 read hesitantly and with little expression. Although they have been taught the sounds that letters represent, many have difficulty transferring this knowledge to words which they read such as 'most'. They rely on the few familiar words that they have learned to recognise by sight.

61 Pupils are regularly tested on their reading and keep reading diaries containing reading targets, which the pupils work to. Using information from these reading diaries, the school has identified that some pupils are not regularly heard to read at home and that these are the pupils who do not do as well as the others. This has resulted in a number of volunteers being trained to come into school to read with these particular pupils. The 'Reading Partnership', which is funded by the EiCAZ, is well established and allows other pupils in Years 1 and 2 to benefit from extra reading sessions. Trained volunteers enthusiastically come into school to hear groups of pupils read for ten-week sessions. Documentation shows that this additional help, which many pupils receive, allows them to make significant progress.

62 The non-fiction library is a stimulating learning environment, which promotes reading very effectively. It is well organised and stocked with a good range of books. The library is used regularly and by the age of seven many pupils have an idea of how to find books they need. Teachers are developing guidelines so that pupils learn library skills systematically as they move through the school. There are a number of other well-organised areas around the school where reading resources, reading books and storybooks are displayed. All reading resources and books are in very good condition and many quiet areas have been created where pupils and adults can sit and read or share books. Reading has a high profile throughout the school and this contributes to the love of books which most pupils display, and the good and often very good progress, which they make.

63 Standards of writing by the age of seven are below average. Past work shows that pupils are given a good range of opportunities to write for different purposes. For example pupils in Year 1 write instructions telling how the Little Red Hen made her bread and write

letters to the Three Bears from Goldilocks. Pupils in Year 2 look at how to write stories and attempt to write their own. Their accounts of their visit to Rotherham Parish Church show how they begin to get the idea of drafting and re-drafting work to produce a best copy. Pupils in both year groups regularly develop handwriting skills but these are not systematically transferred to work which they complete in other literacy lessons and when writing in other subjects. By the age of seven the majority of pupils do not join up their letters other than in their handwriting books. By the end of Year 2 most pupils have an idea of how to punctuate sentences with capital letters and full stops. All pupils are regularly assessed on their writing skills and they have targets for writing, which are clearly displayed in their books. However the work that pupils produce during lessons is not consistently marked effectively to enable pupils to be aware of what they need to do to improve. Teachers do give good quality verbal feedback, but this is not sufficient to raise standards in writing.

64 Teaching is good and this is an improvement since the previous inspection when it was reported as being satisfactory. Teachers manage pupils well and do not allow any to disrupt learning. Relationships are very good and this, with pupils' positive attitudes towards the subject, is reflected in the good learning in lessons. During discussion times teachers have high expectations regarding behaviour and completing the tasks offered and do not allow pupils to shout out. All are expected to put up their hands to speak. The match of work is generally accurate, which enables all abilities to develop skills and knowledge at their own level. Teachers have sufficient subject knowledge to teach literacy well and use the very good quality and quantity of resources effectively to promote all aspects of English. For example, in Year 2 whiteboards were used effectively when pupils worked in pairs and developed spelling skills as they spelt words such as 'dinner' and 'church'. In Year 1, the teachers used the big book *The Monster Pack* even though it was a challenging text for the pupils to read. The pictures and the characters were used well to reinforce understanding before they read the text together. Teaching assistants are used well to support lower ability pupils and pupils with special educational needs, which enable them all to fully take part in the lessons.

65 The subject is well led by an experienced co-ordinator who is very aware of the standards which pupils reach as they move through the school. The school has very good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Teachers use this information to make predictions about the standards pupils are likely to reach, to place them into ability sets and then ability groups within these sets. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop drama skills. Lovely examples were seen during 'activity' afternoons in Year 2 where social skills were promoted well. Small groups of pupils worked harmoniously together demonstrating a high level of independence as they used finger puppets to develop a puppet show. They later used writing skills well to make a sign which welcomed the audience to the show. The subject promotes pupils' moral and cultural development well as they listen to and read the large selection of books available to them. Resources for English are very good and this is an improvement since the previous inspection.

MATHEMATICS

66 The pupils in Year 2 achieve standards typical of their age-group. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when standards in mathematics were judged to be below average. Given the pupils' low starting point, their achievements in mathematics are very good and all pupils make very good progress including those with special educational needs. Much of this is due to the consistently good and very good teaching found in Years 1 and 2. There are no marked differences in the performance of boys and girls.

67 By the age of seven, pupils recognise number patterns and extend simple sequences. Pupils count on and back in 10s from two-digit numbers. They sort two-dimensional shapes and describe them according to their properties. Pupils complete simple number problems such as $2+5+1$ and add small amounts of money together. They divide numbers accurately by 2 and 4 and understand simple place value, for example in terms of pounds and pence. They recognise odd and even numbers, multiply numbers by 10 and have worked with fractions such as halves and quarters. When they discuss their work, pupils use appropriate mathematical language and are able to give reasons for answers either being right or wrong. Through the school pupils are confident when undertaking mental mathematics and pupils of all abilities enthusiastically give answers to problems. On occasions, pupils sometimes find it difficult to explain class activities because of their underdeveloped speaking skills; however, this does not dampen their enthusiasm for the subject.

68 The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. It is now consistently good, and very good teaching was observed in Year 2. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented in the school and effective use has been made of its recommendations. Lessons are always well organised and planned in three parts, a mental mathematics session, the main activities and a plenary session at the end to review what has happened in the lesson. The mental mathematics sessions are consistently dynamic, have pace and time is used exceptionally well. They also cleverly establish the teachers' expectations for the lesson and pupils understand that they are expected to work hard and maintain their concentration. In Year 1 very clear instructions were given to the pupils as they counted in 2s, 5s and 10s and in Year 2, pupils enjoyed the challenge of counting backwards and forwards from numbers given to them by the classteacher. Main activities are always carefully explained and the pupils have a good understanding of their work and what is expected of them. During these sessions, pupils are able to work independently while the class teacher normally focuses their attention on one particular work group. Work is carefully organised for the different abilities that are found in the classes and despite the Year 2 classes being 'set' for mathematics to narrow the ability range, very good attention is paid to the needs of individual pupils. Classroom assistants are used well and provide valuable support to the pupils and the use of 'focus learning sheets' provides class teachers with valuable information on how individual pupils have responded to lessons. The plenary sessions are used well to review the lesson and assess the pupils' understanding. Teachers carefully involve all ability groups in this process. Along with the careful interactions that teachers have with the pupils during lessons, they have a good understanding of pupils' achievements and use this information well when planning and considering the next stage of learning. Work in mathematics is marked satisfactorily but there are very few comments to encourage pupils in their work or to develop their understanding. Activities are presented on worksheets and exercise books and pupils are encouraged to use a 'jotter' to work out mathematical problems or carry out investigations. This is good practice.

69 Satisfactory use is made of ICT to support numeracy. During the inspection Year 1 pupils were undertaking a data-handling exercise completing block graphs on the computer. Although it was about a subject very dear to their hearts, favourite Easter eggs, they were

amazed when they compared the results of their work with the corresponding Year 1 class and found them so different. This led to a good discussion about why this would happen. Numeracy skills are also well promoted in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, as part of their design and technology work Year 2 pupils had to carefully measure the length and width of envelopes that they were making to hold Mothering Sunday cards. In all numeracy lessons, subject specific language is well promoted.

70 The subject is well managed by the subject co-ordinator. Through the monitoring of lessons and planning and a comprehensive annual audit of the subject, she has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development in numeracy. National test results are rigorously analysed and, with very good assessment procedures in place, all teachers have a good understanding of the achievements of the pupils they teach. The school was given extensive support in numeracy by the local education authority during the previous academic year and this has had a positive affect on teaching and learning in the subject. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. Resources for numeracy are good and very well organised.

SCIENCE

71 As at the time of the previous inspection, attainment in science is average overall. Teacher assessment of Year 2 pupils in 2001 was below average compared with schools nationally, but well above average for similar schools. Strengths in pupils' knowledge of living things and materials were identified in these teacher assessments and are confirmed by inspection findings. Pupils are less confident about investigating; however, the school has already identified this aspect as a priority for development and it is the main focus of the co-ordinator's current action plan.

72 Year 2 pupils know that 'minibeasts' live in a range of habitats, move in a variety of ways and eat different food. They research the exact facts about these characteristics using selected non-fiction books and report their findings to the class at the end of the lesson. Year 1 pupils are aware that light, moisture and soil affect the growth of seeds, corms and bulbs and set up an investigation to observe which factors encourage most growth. However, they are not confident about actually producing a set of four pots, three with one factor different and one with all factors present. Neither do they readily record the set of pots by drawing them nor predict in which pot the plant will grow best. Weaknesses in speaking skills still adversely affect pupils' ability to express their ideas and to explain any discoveries, but science is effectively supporting reading and writing skills, for instance in using the contents and index of books to locate the required information on minibeasts. The progress of all pupils is very good. Those who need additional support are always given the necessary guidance to enable them to complete similar work to their peers.

73 Science is consistently well taught. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do and pupils rise to the challenges set, often devoting considerable effort and perseverance in order to do so. Pupils researching facts about minibeasts, for instance, look for the information in several different books and tackle many unknown words in their search for what they need to know. Teachers manage pupils very well so that they can carry out the work set, including being well organised and choosing the resources that will allow the pupils to succeed. Questioning is pertinent and directs pupils' attention towards what they need to know, while praise is judicious so that pupils try to improve the answers they give. Teachers provide pupils with useful prompts and references so that they can remind themselves what they need to know or do and can be independent. For instance, Year 1 pupils used the class chart that had been produced during the introduction to ensure they had set up their plant pots correctly. There is a regular recapitulation of basic knowledge so that pupils regularly consolidate factual learning.

74 Provision for science is enhanced through the weekly extra-curricular environment club, which gives pupils a chance to grow and tend plants. Displays around the school also enrich pupils' experience through thoughtful arrangements of books, pictures, drapes and artefacts that encourage exploration of scientific phenomena and reflection on the joys of nature. Such science displays contribute to pupils' spiritual development.

ART AND DESIGN

75 By the age of seven, pupils attain standards in art similar to most other schools, with a few achieving higher. Progress is good and sometimes very good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils are offered a rich, broad and balanced curriculum. Work on display and lessons seen show the good and sometimes very good progress that pupils make in acquiring art skills. For example learning was very good in Year 2 when pupils developed a good understanding of the work of famous artists such as Henri Matisse, and learnt how this knowledge can improve and influence their own work. Pupils work confidently using key skills such as drawing and sketching, painting, collage, rubbings and printing. ICT is used very well to promote the subject. Children were seen confidently using laptops to develop artwork in the style of Henri Matisse.

76 In Year 1, pupils make good progress as they develop self-portraits using paints. They concentrate particularly on the colour of eyes, hair and skin as they mix colours well. Pupils use crayons carefully to make observational drawings of collections of different bottles. As they print with classroom objects they use tools and paints with confidence. Pupils develop three-dimensional artwork and link their work to their geography topic as they make different kinds of homes from cardboard boxes. They look at the work of Kandinsky and using his style they work together with oil pastels and paints to make a colourful class picture of 'Concentric Circles'. Pupils look very carefully as they draw spring flowers such as polyanthus and hyacinths and produce drawings that they are proud of.

77 Pupils in Year 2 make good progress. A few make very good progress, in particular as they develop their knowledge of famous artists when they look at the work of Vincent Van Gogh and carefully produce their own 'Starry Night' pictures. Their knowledge of three-dimensional artwork is developed further as they fold and cut coloured paper to make paper sculptures. Pupils develop their skills in printing, as they make Indian printing blocks and then use these to make patterns. This activity is linked with the topic on India they are covering in geography. After a visit to the local parish church in Rotherham during a religious education lesson, pupils developed their observational drawing skills and produced clear sketches of objects they saw inside the church. The skills the pupils learn in art lessons are used well in other subjects.

78 The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. However, some very good teaching was observed. Teachers have good subject knowledge and teach art skills systematically through the school. Art is taught alongside other subjects during 'activity' afternoons. These lessons are very well planned, and organised and well resourced. Most lessons are characterised by a buzz of activity from pupils eagerly comparing results and celebrating others' achievement. Teachers interact well and this discussion has a positive effect on pupils' confidence and contributes significantly to the progress they make. Relationships are very good and pupils enjoy their work and are careful to produce their best. Attitudes to learning are very good and pupils work well together.

79 The subject is well led. Teachers have clear guidelines for their planning, an improvement since the previous inspection. Assessment procedures have recently been

developed and give clear guidance on individual pupils. Displays are of high quality and give value to pupils' work and resources to support the subject are good. Art lessons such as the printing with Indian blocks promote pupils' cultural and social development well. Visits such as the planned visit to a local art gallery enhance the subject. The art mentor funded by the EiCAZ supports the school well. She has worked with all classes and with the weekly art club developing pupils' knowledge of artists; for example, Year 1 worked developing 'action paintings' in the style of Jackson Pollock.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

80 Standards in design and technology are average. All the pupils make good progress as they move through the school. There has been a significant improvement in the standards reached and the progress that the pupils make since the previous inspection, when they were recorded as slightly below average.

81 The subject is taught during 'activity' afternoons and links well with many other subjects. This is very successful because teachers plan the sessions carefully and the activities are linked with each other. This means that concepts previously taught are often reinforced. For example pupils in Year 1 made Mothering Sunday cards, which was linked with the work they were doing in religious education about Mothering Sunday.

82 Pupils in Year 1 develop a satisfactory understanding of the need to plan, design and then make and evaluate their models. Designs clearly show how they plan their ideas and list the materials they have used. Some pupils turn their brief plans into labelled diagrams. Evaluations show that they have thought about what they could do to improve their model. Past work shows that they have made homes out of Lego and by using cardboard, which links with the geography topic they have been covering. Pupils begin to develop key words related to the subject such as 'hinges', and 'sliders' but limited language makes it difficult for many to use them unless prompted.

83 Pupils in Year 2 make finger and glove puppets and follow their designs well. Many stitch materials such as felt together confidently and the less able are assisted by the teaching assistants, who give good quality support. Past work shows how the pupils made wheeled vehicles after designing their models. They later filled in evaluation sheets satisfactorily suggesting what they could have done to improve their finished models. Pupils learn new vocabulary such as 'axle' and 'chassis' and begin to understand how wheels turn round on vehicles. However, explaining what they have done is difficult for many pupils because of limited language skills.

84 The quality of teaching is good and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers have good subject knowledge and teach the skills well, which enables pupils to develop a good idea of what is involved as they design, make and evaluate their models. All lessons are planned thoroughly and resourced well which results in pupils working co-operatively together at the tasks they are given. Teachers have developed very good relationships with their pupils, interact well and this has a positive effect on pupils' confidence and contributes significantly to the learning within lessons. Pupils have good attitudes to learning, work hard and are keen to show what they have achieved.

85 The subject is well led. All teachers follow clear guidelines that ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject are taught progressively. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Assessment procedures have been recently developed and clearly show the standards that the pupils reach. The subject promotes pupils' social development well because pupils have many opportunities to work with each other in groups.

Resources are good and support the subject well. Food technology is taught in both year groups. Year 2 pupils were seen making cakes. All pupils had a good idea of the ingredients they had used and what they had done. The good quality support, which they received, enabled them to understand the importance of safety when using an oven and the need for hygiene rules to be obeyed. ICT is beginning to be used to support the subject. For example pupils in Year 1 used a computer program to design the house that they would like to live in.

GEOGRAPHY

86 At the time of the previous inspection, standards in geography were judged to be similar to those found nationally and this position has been maintained. The good progress that pupils made, has also been sustained. The pupils show an obvious enjoyment of the subject and talk enthusiastically about their walks around the local area and their studies of other parts of the world. However, in some instances, limited language restricts their explanations of the subject even though their knowledge and understanding are satisfactory.

87 Pupils in Year 2 have an appropriate understanding of their local environment. This is a result of the opportunities provided for the pupils to investigate the locality close to the school. The pupils identified major local features such as the steelworks, local garage and supermarket. They discussed how challenging it was to produce their own maps of the local area but described how they started by drawing the roads first and then adding significant local features. The pupils talked about seeing a local river and canal and were able to identify which one of these features was man-made. The pupils have also studied India and were able to discuss the differences between Rotherham and this area of Asia. They talked about differences in climate, transport and some elements of culture. For example, they identified the River Ganges as a 'Holy River' and were respectful in their observations and comments. The pupils talked enthusiastically about their teacher wearing saris and offered sensible suggestions as to why Indian dress would be different to that usually found in this country.

88 Very little direct teaching was observed during the inspection but scrutiny of teachers' planning and observations of 'activity' sessions, where elements of geography were being taught, indicate that lessons are well organised, pupils are offered an appropriate curriculum and that the subject is well taught. In a good lesson observed in Year 1, pupils undertook a mature and sensitive discussion about the differences between Britain and Kenya after reading the book *A Country Far Away*. The teacher encouraged all pupils to participate as the pupils looked at the differences in transport, clothes and food. "Who's not said anything yet?" ensured a contribution or view from everyone. In links with literacy, the pupils' speaking and listening skills were very well promoted. As a result, the majority of pupils in the class were able to answer questions about Kenya and make comparisons with their own country. In a Year 1 'activity' session pupils were observed adding text to describe buildings found in the local area and making models of the buildings. Other Year 1 pupils used the 'High Greave Estate Agents' as part of a role-play activity. In Year 2, geography was well linked to other areas of the curriculum. As part of the studies of India, pupils used ICT to research information about Indian musical instruments and as part of their art and design work pupils used Indian printing blocks to print designs. Outside the Year 2 classrooms pupils were encouraged to locate India using a globe or atlas and, when asked, pupils were able show the country's location. The pupils also enjoyed learning Indian dances with an Indian dance teacher.

89 The subject is well managed by the subject co-ordinator. Through monitoring teaching and planning she has a good understanding of how the subject is developing and the standards achieved. Although she is a relatively new co-ordinator she has successfully evaluated the subject and put together an action plan for the school development plan. Resources for the subject are good and well organised. The school non-fiction library also

provides a good range of books to support the subject. Although the subject's assessment procedures are new and it is too early to judge their impact, they should provide useful information to monitor pupils' progress and for future planning.

HISTORY

90 Standards are similar to the previous inspection. By the age of seven, pupils reach average levels and have made good progress. As with geography, some of their explanations or use of language associated with the subject can be restricted because of the pupils' underdeveloped language skills. The quality of teaching, judged to be satisfactory during the previous inspection, is now good and contributes much to the effective learning in the subject.

91 Seven-year-old pupils have an appropriate understanding of the lives of people in the past and are able to compare life in the past with the present day. In a very good Year 2 history lesson, pupils looked carefully at the book *Peepo* by Janet and Allan Ahlberg as they discussed differences between 'then' and 'now'. Good references were made to previous learning about Remembrance Day and the Second World War as the pupils became fascinated by the use of a gas mask pictured in the story. Good discussion ensued with the classteacher asking challenging questions as the pupils looked at different pictures from fifty to sixty years ago. This exciting start to the lesson then led to pupils looking at historical objects and trying to identify their use from the evidence they had in front of them. The pupils were delighted at being history 'detectives' as in groups they looked carefully at objects such as an old lamp, a box camera, poker and Victorian ice-skate. At the start of the lesson good emphasis was placed on using books to research work and then in the second part particular emphasis was placed on the importance of historical artefacts. Talking to the same pupils the following day, they were able to remember the term 'artefact' and describe how they 'investigated' the use of the objects that they had studied. Scrutiny of teachers' planning indicates that future lessons will reinforce the pupils' understanding of chronology and of the past, for example by producing family trees.

92 In Year 1, a traditional African folktale was used to reinforce the pupils' personal and social development as they discussed the implications of the story. In links with their geography work the pupils identified that the story came from Kenya. In a Year 1 'activity' session pupils were observed developing their speaking and listening skills in the 'old house' role-play area. They used and became familiar with these old household objects and talked about the house being one hundred years old. This theme was then developed further as the Year 1 pupils talked about what they had learnt in an assembly for other pupils.

93 The subject co-ordinator for history is also the geography co-ordinator and manages both subjects well. The positive features identified in her management of geography also apply to history. The subject has developed well since the previous inspection and resources are good and well organised.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

94 Standards in ICT for the seven-year-olds are similar to those found in the majority of schools. This is similar to the previous inspection; however, the quality of teaching, which was judged to be unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection, has improved significantly. Many opportunities are provided to involve the pupils in the subject and it is a significant feature in the school. The pupils' achievements are very good. The majority of pupils start school with little understanding and experience of the subject and in Years 1 and 2 they successfully develop the work started in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception). There

has been significant improvement since the previous inspection. The EiCAZ has contributed well to this through improvements in hardware and good professional support.

95 Year 2 pupils talk confidently about ICT and, given their limited language skills, explain accurately how they save and retrieve work and print it off. Developing their word processing skills they use different kinds of font and highlight words to change their colour. In good links with geography and music the pupils find out information about Indian musical instruments from a CD-Rom and, using a program developed by one of the Year 2 teachers, they reinforce their understanding of the Indian sub-continent. The pupils discuss using the computers to support their work in literacy and talk about the work on antonyms that they have recently undertaken. The pupils work well together at the computers and the subject contributes significantly to their social development. A good example is Year 2 pupils using a 'listening centre' to follow a story related to their work in geography.

96 The quality of teaching of ICT is consistently good and contributes significantly to the very good progress made by the pupils. Although only two ICT lessons were observed, the subject is used well to support other areas of the curriculum and is always planned into the 'activity' sessions in the school. For example, in a Year 1 literacy session with a reading focus, pupils used the computer to access the class story. Year 1 pupils used ICT as part of a lesson on data-handling and used a program to draw monsters as part of an art and design session. Teachers' confidence and subject knowledge have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Teaching observed in Year 2 was good. As pupils are introduced to the potential of using a CD-Rom to research information good, clear explanations are provided by the class teachers. Language related to the subject was clearly emphasised and pupils understood that they were going to 'navigate' the CD-Rom as part of their investigation into Indian musical instruments. The pupils have a good understanding of their work. This was seen to good effect in later lessons when pupils were observed working independently at this activity and could clearly explain what they were expected to do.

97 The subject is very well managed by the subject co-ordinator and along with the EiCAZ contribution, she must take some credit for the successful development of the subject in the school. She has a good subject knowledge and through her teaching role in reception is leading the development of the use of interactive whiteboards for the EiCAZ. ICT has been a specific development for the EiCAZ and they have contributed much to the development of hardware and software for the school along with training for teaching and non-teaching staff and curriculum development. The quality of professional development has been good and many of the staff are now in a position to use ICT far more effectively to support learning rather than always relying on commercial resources. The ratio of computers to pupils is good and the pupils access a range of hardware that provides them with good experience and increases their confidence. The development of the subject is also enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities provided for the pupils after school and during lunchtimes and by an ICT mentor provided by the EiCAZ who has worked with the youngest children.

MUSIC

98 Standards of attainment have been maintained since the previous inspection. Standards are average overall, but some aspects of music are above average for the age-group. Year 2 pupils are confident about providing rhythmic accompaniment to Indian music on percussion instruments and can respond to the standard symbols for crotchets, quavers and minims as well as to verbal cues. Some higher attaining pupils can begin to see similarities and differences between the Indian and English rhythms they performed in the lesson, and to show awareness of structure. All pupils are aware of whether pitch is rising, falling or staying the same when they hear a series of notes on the glockenspiel. They know how to play percussion instruments and chime bars correctly to make a good sound. Pupils

can name the Indian instruments being used on the recording, having accessed information about the sitar using ICT during their 'activities' lesson. When asked to choose a suitable simulated sound from the electronic keyboard to represent the harmonium on the Indian recording they select a suitable one. In Year 1 pupils can identify differences between bygone and modern instruments such as the materials from which they are made and whether they need electricity in order to make sounds. They can respond to pictures and symbols both in playing a percussion instrument or clapping crotchet and quaver rhythms, and know the charts for these have to be read from left to right and top to bottom like text. Pupils can copy rhythms made by the teacher using hands, knees, shoulders and other parts of their bodies. They respond effectively to signals to change the volume at which they are playing. Pupils are able to sing tunefully in lessons and assembly. Very good progress is made by all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

99 The rapid progress is the result of the very good teaching provided by the specialist teacher. Her musical knowledge and skills are very effectively used to make music lessons fun and action-packed. As a result pupils enjoy their work and acquire and practise skills with enthusiasm. A range of methods captures pupils' interest throughout each lesson. These include puppets whose names are chosen to introduce and practise crotchet and quaver rhythms such as Oscar and Henrietta, and even Sheila for silence (i.e. a rest). There are also games such as 'Jack and the Beanstalk' where the pitch is recognised by climbing, descending or hiding on the spot. All methods result in pupils remembering essential skills and knowledge in a meaningful context. Class teachers and learning support assistants are effectively deployed. For instance, in a Year 1 lesson, the music teacher played the keyboard and the class teacher the piano to draw out the differences between modern and older instruments. This resulted in pupils quickly identifying differences because they could make direct comparisons. The music teacher sets a good example by demonstrating just what she wants pupils to do and they are keen to imitate her. The teacher is vigilant about any incorrect use of instruments and is quick to guide any pupil who is having difficulty. Learning support assistants effectively support individual pupils who struggle to follow, so that they can play with the rest of the class. Because lessons are so enjoyable, pupils follow the rules about putting instruments down when not in use and no time is ever wasted regaining their attention. Any activity is just the right length to develop or practise a skill before moving on to the next. As a result, each lesson covers most of the elements of pitch, dynamics, notation, listening and performance that are needed by pupils. The regular practice builds up confident learners who are able to apply skills.

100 Pupils also enjoy musical activities during assembly and lessons timetabled as 'activities'. They can experiment with instruments by doing a focussed task outside their classrooms. Some teachers also effectively use music to set the mood for lessons, and there is music playing as pupils arrive for assembly. An extra-curricular music club also enhances provision. Pupils who attend this session regularly perform in assembly. With many opportunities to learn about music in addition to music lessons, the subject has a high profile that contributes to the achievement of pupils. Although pupils are introduced to the music of different cultures through their work in music lessons, the breadth of resources for celebrating a range of styles and types is somewhat limited.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

101 Pupils' attainment in physical education is now at typical of the age-group, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Nevertheless, some pupils are not very fit and struggle to sustain energetic activity in lessons. In gymnastics Year 2 pupils can link a high balance, a means of travelling and a low balance satisfactorily. Higher attaining pupils are able to show well-controlled balances using different parts of their bodies and repeat these confidently on the apparatus; they travel in a variety of ways including turning and changing

direction. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are less confident about sustaining their balances and less adventurous about how they choose to travel, but they still meet the requirements of the task and all pupils make very good progress over the long term. At best, pupils remember to make stretched shapes with pointed toes and extended fingers. In dance, pupils are able to perform simple routines linking movements to create an Indian dance. They use arm movements and simple step patterns satisfactorily within these routines. They are also aware of the Indian dance style, which they have seen demonstrated by a visiting Indian dance teacher and can suggest suitable movements in building the routine. When asked to do so, pupils can make pertinent comments about why certain pupils have been successful in fulfilling the teacher's expectations, although because their speaking skills are limited they only offer single words or phrases.

102 The improved standards are the result of more confident teaching. Teaching is consistently sound and sometimes better. All lessons start with appropriate warming up activities and end with cooling down ones. Teachers know what they want pupils to learn and manage them well so that they can use the available time productively and pupils work safely. Teachers are now prepared to demonstrate movements to pupils and lead where they need a person to copy in order to remember the routine. Pupils know what they are aiming for and concentrate hard to achieve it. At best, the teacher ensures that pupils have to make sustained physical effort, and provides regular feedback so that they are aware of how they can improve the quality of their work. In response to the criticism in the last inspection report all teachers now involve pupils in making choices about their movements. At best, opportunities are used to appraise performance and develop speaking skills.

103 Because of the school's wise decision, in the light of many pupils' level of fitness, to provide three lessons each week, some hall sessions are too short to enable skill development and sufficient exercise. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to review arrangements for changing to maximise the available time. Newly introduced assessment procedures are also beginning to sharpen the focus of the work done in lessons. The extra-curricular sport and dance clubs enhance provision.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

104 Standards of attainment have been maintained since the previous inspection and are average. The previous inspection report identified the integration of the scheme of work with assembly as a strength, and this good practice has been continued. This ensures there is useful reinforcement of basic knowledge and a strong spiritual focus which all pupils can share each day. During the inspection, the theme was Lent and the pupils experienced the Greek Orthodox custom of kukaris⁴ and the origin of simnel cake in assemblies and looked at the celebration of Mothering Sunday in lessons. Year 2 pupils were introduced to the idea of the annual day when servants went home to visit their families and were able to show empathy with the servants' mothers. Pupils in both year groups considered why they appreciated their own mothers. Year 2 pupils then recorded their appreciation by making a Mothers' Day card, whilst Year 1 pupils discussed ways of helping their mothers at home. Religious education lessons are used effectively to promote literacy skills, particularly speaking through class discussion. The reinforcement of themes in assembly and reiteration of subject matter in different ways each year ensure all pupils make good progress.

105 Religious education is well taught. Effective class management provides the calm and reflective climate for considering different ideas and beliefs and leads to better understanding of how these affect people's lives. Practical demonstrations and participation in celebrations such as placing the feathers in the kukaris help pupils to remember the facts

⁴ Where a feather is displayed for each Sunday in Lent and removed as each Sunday passes.

to which they have been introduced. In a Year 1 class, for instance, pupils recall the simnel cake from the previous day's assembly when discussing Mothering Sunday in their lesson. Teachers give descriptive introductions which use pupils' experience to set the scene for new information so that they can imagine themselves in similar circumstances, and question effectively to enable pupils to explore the ideas which have been presented. If there is a written task to complete, teachers support lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs so that they can be successful in completing the work.

106 Throughout the school there are interesting displays of artefacts, pictures, books and pupils' work to stimulate interest in religious education. For example, the story of Joseph and his coat of many colours is represented through an annotated series of children's paintings, there are artefacts related to Lent and work on a visit to Rotherham parish church, while a display of Hanukkah illustrates the importance of Judaism. This high profile helps pupils to appreciate the importance of different religious beliefs in the wider community.