

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SKIPTON INGS PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL**

Skipton

LEA area: North Yorkshire

Unique reference number: 121416

Headteacher: Mrs H Sturges

Reporting inspector: Mrs M Gough  
22361

Dates of inspection: 11th – 13th June 2002

Inspection number: 195749

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 and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Broughton Road Skipton North Yorkshire
Postcode:	BD23 1TE
Telephone number:	01756 793159
Fax number:	01756 793159
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P English
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22361	Mrs M Gough	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Music Special educational needs	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught What could the school do to improve further
9224	Mr M Vineall	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils How well does the school care for its pupils How well does the school work in partnership with parents
10638	Mr M Newell	Team inspector	English Religious education History Physical education	How well is the school led and managed
18059	Mrs R Harrison	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography Foundation Stage Equal opportunities English as an additional language	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated in the town of Skipton in North Yorkshire. The school caters for pupils between the ages of three and eleven, and there are currently one hundred and nine pupils on roll, including seventeen part-time nursery children. The school is unique within the county, in that almost all of the pupils are Pakistani. More than 90% of pupils have English as an additional language, although only about one third of pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The nature of the school has changed significantly since the time of the last inspection, when the proportion of white pupils was similar to the proportion of pupils from other ethnic groups. Pupils come from the local area which is very mixed in terms of its socio economic circumstances. Nineteen pupils are in receipt of free school meals, and this represents 21% of the school population. However, this is not the true rate of eligibility as many children go home for lunch, and do not take up their free school meal entitlement. Forty one pupils are currently on the school's special educational needs register and this represents 41% of the school population and is well above the national average. The school makes a very clear distinction between pupils whose learning is adversely affected because English is not their main language, and those who have learning difficulties. Five pupils have statements of special educational needs, and this figure is above average. The pupils' attainment when they start school is very low across all areas of learning.

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

This is an effective school that provides a good quality of education for all pupils. Although standards are below the national average in English, mathematics and science when the pupils leave school at the age of eleven, this represents good progress from a very low starting point. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, and is particularly effective in the Nursery and Reception classes. Although satisfactory, the quality of learning does not do justice to the efforts of the teachers. Pupils lack independence, are often passive in their learning, and require a great deal of adult support. The leadership of the headteacher is good, and she is extremely effective at balancing a high teaching commitment with her managerial responsibilities. The school gives good value for money.

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

- Teaching is good throughout the school, and is very good in the Foundation Stage.
- Pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good enabling the pupils to make similar progress to their classmates.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good. Relationships amongst pupils, and between pupils and staff are very good.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development.
- The school provides very good levels of pastoral care and ensures the health, safety and welfare of all pupils.
- The procedures for monitoring attendance are very good.
- The school has established good procedures for monitoring and tracking pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- The school has developed very good links with the parents, and parents have positive views of the school.
- The headteacher provides good leadership for the school, and financial management is good.

### What could be improved

- The quality of pupils' learning, especially in design and technology.
- The quality, breadth and quantity of pupils' written work in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- The quality, range and quantity of learning resources.

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

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

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. Although standards have dropped in several subjects over the last few years, this reflects the significant difference in the nature of the school, and masks the improvements that have occurred in terms of the quality of teaching, curriculum and leadership. At the time of the last inspection, one fifth of teaching was unsatisfactory. During the current inspection there were no incidents of unsatisfactory teaching, and teaching in a high proportion of lessons was good and very good. There have been notable improvements in the provision for information and communication technology which are having a very positive impact on the pupils' learning. The school has worked hard to develop assessment systems across all subjects in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and has been most successful in English, mathematics and science where assessment information is used well to raise standards. The school's links with parents and the local community have developed well, and the school is tireless in its efforts to respond to the needs of the parents, and to work closely with the community. Since the last inspection, the school has been successful in raising rates of attendance, and in reducing unauthorised absence, and the drive to continue to raise attendance levels is an ongoing priority. There is a real sense of shared commitment to continuing to improve the quality of education, and to meeting the needs of the pupils, but teachers lack the necessary resources to compensate for the pupils' limited experiences of 'life', and to significantly enhance their breadth of learning.

### STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	E	E	D	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E very low E*
Mathematics	E	E	E	E	
Science	E*	D	E*	E*	

The table shows that, on the basis of the 2001 end of Key Stage 2 tests, pupils' attainment was below the national average in English, well below the national average in mathematics, and very low in science, where the pupils' performance placed the school in the bottom 5% of schools nationally. Standards in English, mathematics and science have dropped overall since 1998. This decline reflects the change in the pupil population over the last few years, with significantly more pupils having special educational needs and English as an additional language. In addition, the groups of pupils entered for the tests are often very small, and this means that the performance of an individual pupil can often have a significant impact in terms



of the overall results. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' attainment is average in English, well below average in mathematics, and very low in science, placing the school in the bottom 5% of the comparative sample. The inspection findings indicate that standards are below average in English, mathematics and science.

The end of Key Stage 1 2001 test results show that pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics is below the national average, and that their attainment in writing is well below average. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' attainment is average in reading and mathematics but well below average in writing. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment is well below average in English and science, and below average in mathematics.

The inspection findings indicate that in information and communication technology, art and design, music, and physical education, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. In geography, their attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, but below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. In history and design and technology, pupils' attainment is below national expectations at the end of both key stages. In religious education, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages.

Pupils' attainment when they start school in the Nursery is very low across all areas of learning. In addition, many children are at the very early stages of learning English as an additional language. The Foundation Stage children make very good progress, but most do not achieve the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical, creative, personal, social and emotional development by the time they transfer to Year 1.

Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils of all abilities often make good progress as they move through the school, and are often much more effective at sharing their knowledge verbally than they are at writing and recording their ideas. This is a significant weakness in their learning, which adversely affects their performance under test conditions.

## **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have positive attitudes to school and are responsive and willing to do as they have been asked.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The pupils' behaviour is a strength of the school. Pupils are polite and friendly, and are often helpful and kind to one another.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils work well together, and relationships amongst the pupils are very good and contribute much to the happy atmosphere of the school. However, the pupils lack the necessary independence and confidence to take responsibility for aspects of their learning, and most are over-reliant on adult support. Although interested and keen, pupils do not take a sufficiently active role in their learning.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Despite the very best efforts of the school attendance is below the national average. This is mainly attributable to families taking extended holidays, sometimes for periods in excess of six months.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and very good in the Nursery and Reception classes. Although satisfactory, the quality of learning does not do justice to the teaching and could be better. Despite the very best efforts of teachers, pupils do not always take a sufficiently active role in their learning, and require a great deal of adult support. Although pupils of all ages are enthusiastic, very well behaved, and very willing, many have difficulty in making choices and decisions about their work, and lack the necessary levels of independence. Their rate of productivity in terms of the written work they produce is very low. The weaknesses in pupils' learning disadvantage them when they are working under test conditions, and mean that they are ill prepared for their transfer to secondary education.

The teaching of English, mathematics and science is good in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and has some very good features. Teachers make very good use of a range of resources to enliven their teaching and to bring the learning alive for the pupils. They cater well for the different age and ability ranges within their classes. However, because of the pupils' very limited experiences of 'life', a disproportionate amount of time is spent in retracing and revising pupils' prior learning before new learning can take place. Skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are effectively promoted across the curriculum, and there are some particularly good examples of pupils using these skills to support their work in Key Stage 2. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss and evaluate their work in pairs and small groups.

The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is very good and gives them a very secure start to their education. Very good emphasis is placed on the children developing personal and social skills, and on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Teachers are very effective in providing 'first-hand' learning experiences for the children, and are highly effective in ensuring that the children learn the necessary routines of school life. As in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the children's learning does not fully reflect the quality of teaching, as the children are very reliant on adult support, and lack independence.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is good, and there are many very good opportunities for the children to learn through 'first-hand' experience. The curriculum for Key Stage 2 pupils is broad and well balanced, and is enhanced by a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. Although some opportunities are provided for the enrichment of pupils' learning through visits and the input of visiting speakers, even more needs to be done to extend the 'life' experiences of many of the pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs, but despite the school's best efforts, some parents are reluctant to support the school in drawing up targets in individual education plans, and do not want their children to receive additional support. Pupils with statements receive good levels of support and make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Almost all pupils in the school are Pakistani, and about one third of pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The school caters well for all pupils, and provides good opportunities for pupils to develop the spoken aspect of English. The school works closely with parents of all pupils with English as an additional language, and provides very good levels of support for them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development and pupils of all ages are very responsive to new experiences. The provision for the pupils' social, moral and cultural development is satisfactory, but could be enhanced even further by extending the pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures other than their own, and by providing more opportunities for the pupils to develop independent learning skills.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares very well for all pupils, and provides an extremely secure, safe and happy learning environment. Good assessment procedures are in place for English, mathematics and science, and teachers have a good overview of how well pupils learn, and the progress they are making. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school makes every effort to develop links with the parents, and parents are pleased with the education the school provides. However, many parents do little to support the school in its work, or to support their children's learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. Despite having a heavy teaching commitment the headteacher provides good and strong leadership for the school. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and by the curriculum co-ordinators, all of whom have a good overview of their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The Governing Body effectively fulfils its duties and individual governors are very supportive of the school and its aims. Some governors provide good links between the school and the local community.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and staff make very good analyses of test information to measure the school's performance. To reflect the principles of best value the school sets appropriately challenging targets, has good self-evaluation procedures, and regularly solicits the view of parents and the local community. The headteacher and Governing Body have a good understanding of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes effective use of its available resources and staff are particularly well deployed. Funds are spent wisely and in line with the priorities specified in the School Development Plan. The school gives good value for money.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	The school is very attractive and provides a stimulating learning environment for the pupils. There are enough teaching staff for the number of pupils on roll, but the school would benefit from even more support staff. Learning resources are inadequate in terms of providing the necessary additional learning experiences that many of these pupils need.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents agree that their children like coming to school.</li> <li>Parents are pleased with the quality of teaching and believe that their children are making good progress.</li> <li>Parents are pleased with the standard of behaviour in the school and agree that bullying and racial harassment are not problems.</li> <li>Parents agree that they receive good levels of information from the school about general matters and about their children's progress.</li> <li>Parents know that they are very welcome in the school, and they appreciate the informal opportunities at the start and end of the school day for talking to teachers.</li> <li>Parents agree that the school is well led and managed.</li> <li>Parents are pleased with the positive values and attitudes the school promotes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some parents would like more extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>Some parents would like more homework.</li> </ul>

There are justifiably high levels of parental satisfaction, and the inspection findings fully confirm the parents' positive views of the school, but do not support some of the negative views. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, but offers few after school activities, so that there is no conflict for pupils who go straight from school to the mosque. The school provides regular homework tasks in English and mathematics, but could make even more use of homework to extend and enrich the pupils' learning. However, despite the requests of some parents for homework, the majority of parents do not encourage their children to complete and return homework tasks.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Pupils' attainment when they start school in the Nursery is very low across all areas of learning. In addition, many children are at the very early stages of learning English as an additional language. The Foundation Stage children make very good progress, but most do not achieve the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical, creative, personal, social and emotional development by the time they transfer to Year 1. Although the children make good progress in acquiring English as an additional language, they need even more bilingual support in these early years to help them to develop a broad vocabulary, through regular and intensive daily practice.
2. The 2001 end of Key Stage 1 test results show that pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics is below the national average, and that their attainment in writing is well below average. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' attainment is average in reading and mathematics but well below average in writing. The teacher assessments indicate that the pupils' attainment in science is well below average. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment is well below average in English and science, and below average in mathematics.
3. Key Stage 1 pupils of all abilities make good progress in English from a very low starting point, but the inspection findings indicate that their attainment at the end of the key stage is well below average overall. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' spoken language is often well below the expected level. Many pupils lack the necessary vocabulary to express their ideas clearly, especially in subjects such as science and mathematics. Pupils listen attentively to others, but do not always take account of what has been said, when they give their own answers in group discussions for example. Pupils' reading is below expectations. Although pupils have a satisfactory recognition of words, and know how to break unknown words up into manageable parts, they often have difficulty in understanding what they have read, especially when stories are about things that are not within their experience. Pupils' writing is well below the expected level, and few pupils produce enough written work. Pupils are very slow at putting their thoughts on paper, and this is an aspect of their learning in English that needs urgent attention as it affects their work across the curriculum. Teachers provide satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills across the curriculum.
4. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in mathematics is below national expectations. Pupils of all abilities make good progress from a very low starting point, however. Most pupils have a secure grasp of place value when dealing with tens and hundreds, but do not cope well with large numbers. Pupils are sometimes hampered in their number work by their lack of immediate recall of number facts, and this slows down their written work. Pupils' understanding and knowledge of shape and measure are below national expectations. Although most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the different metric units for measuring length, weight and capacity, few are sufficiently confident or accurate when making estimates. The weakest area of pupils' learning is their ability to use and apply their existing mathematical knowledge to new situations. Teachers provide satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills across the curriculum.

5. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' overall attainment in science is well below the expected level. Although pupils make good progress, their learning is hampered by their lack of breadth of experience. Pupils' lack of vocabulary makes it difficult for them to express ideas scientifically. Their knowledge and understanding of living things, and materials and their properties are well below the expected level. Although below the expected level, their knowledge of physical processes, is a stronger aspect of their learning.
6. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology, art and design, geography, music, and physical education is in line with national expectations. Pupils enjoy information and communication technology lessons, and make good progress in acquiring the necessary keyboard skills, although most require a great deal of adult support and lack independence in opening programs, and in printing and saving their work. In art and design, pupils observe carefully when making observational drawings, and use paint well to create colourful pictures. They have experience of working in three dimensions, and successfully create pictures using a range of media including card, paper and paint. The main shortcoming in the pupils' work is their lack of creativity, with the result that many of the outcomes are very similar and lacking in individuality. In geography, most pupils have satisfactory mapping skills, and are learning to make a distinction between manmade and natural features in their environment. However, pupils' knowledge of other places is a weaker area of their learning. In music pupils sing with enthusiasm and maintain a steady beat when clapping rhythmic patterns. They compose simple instrumental accompaniments which they use to accompany their singing, but have too few opportunities to develop their creativity by composing their own pieces of music. In physical education the pupils show satisfactory levels of co-ordination and control in their movements, and most achieve the expected levels in their work. In religious education, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Many pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the Christian and Islamic faiths, and an awareness of prayer as a form of worship. However because of spoken and written language difficulties, pupils sometimes have difficulty in expressing their ideas and in discussing the beliefs of others.
7. In history, and design and technology, pupils' attainment is below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. In history, pupils make satisfactory progress, but have difficulty in dealing with the concept of the recent and long ago past. Many of the pupils come to school with little knowledge and experience of British history, and there are few opportunities other than those the school provides, to fill the gaps in their knowledge and give them first hand experience of handling and seeing historical artefacts. In design and technology, pupils' progress is unsatisfactory and they could achieve higher standards in their work. The subject has not been a recent priority, and pupils have not had enough making or designing experience. Pupils lack creativity in their work, and many of the finished models are very similar.
8. On the basis of the 2001 end of Key Stage 2 tests, pupils' attainment is below the national average in English, well below the national average in mathematics, and very low in science, where the pupils' performance places the school in the bottom 5% of schools nationally. Standards in English, mathematics and science have dropped overall since 1998. This decline reflects the change in the pupil population over the last few years, with significantly more pupils having special educational needs and English as an additional language. In addition, the groups of pupils entered for the tests are often very small, and this means that the performance of an individual pupil can often have a significant impact in terms of the overall results. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' attainment is average in English, well below average in mathematics,

and very low in science, placing the school in the bottom 5% of the comparative sample. The inspection findings indicate that standards are below average in English, mathematics and science.

9. Most Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in English, although their attainment at the end of the key stage is below national expectations. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are in line with national expectations, although as in Key Stage 1, pupils do not always listen sufficiently carefully to the contributions of their classmates in class discussions, and then proceed to give the same answer to a question. In reading, although pupils decode new words well, they still have difficulty in understanding the context of some of the stories they read, and in predicting the outcomes. Only a few pupils have the higher order skills of skimming and scanning. Pupils' writing is the weaker aspect of their learning and is well below the expected level for most pupils. Pupils are slow to record their thoughts, and rarely write extended pieces. The school has recognised the urgent need to improve pupils' recording skills. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for the pupils to use and practise their literacy skills across the curriculum.
10. In mathematics, Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress, although their attainment at the end of the key stage is below national expectations. The main shortcoming in pupils' learning is their ability to carry out independent investigations, and their ability to use and apply their mathematics knowledge within different contexts. Pupils' knowledge of number is below expectations overall. Although pupils make accurate paper and pencil calculations, their immediate recall of number bonds and multiplication facts is unsatisfactory, and they rely too much on counting aids when working out the answers to mental mathematics questions. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of aspects of shape, space and measure are below expectations overall, and many pupils have difficulty in making generalisations about their work, and in making sensible and accurate estimates. There are some good opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills across the curriculum throughout Key Stage 2.
11. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in science is below national expectations. Pupils of all abilities make good progress, but their learning is hampered by their lack of experience outside school. The strength of pupils' learning is their knowledge of materials and their properties, and forces, and in these aspects, pupils' attainment is satisfactory. Pupils' knowledge of living things is a weaker aspect of their learning, as is their understanding of electricity and the earth and beyond. The pupils have some experience of carrying out investigations and experiments, but few are capable of setting up and pursuing their own lines of enquiry. Many pupils have difficulty in accessing the necessary scientific vocabulary, and this affects the quality of both their written and verbal explanations. The main area of weakness in science, is the pupils' inability to transfer their existing knowledge to new situations.
12. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in information and communication technology, art and design and music is in line with national expectations. No Key Stage 2 lessons were seen in physical education during the inspection, and therefore no judgments can be made about attainment. In religious education, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. In information and communication technology, pupils have satisfactory keyboard skills, and use a range of programs that enhance their word-processing skills, and which help them to understand the potential of computers for combining text and graphics. Pupils currently do not have enough opportunities to use electronic mail facilities, and their understanding of how computers are used in the wider world is limited. In art and design, pupils experience a broad range of activities, techniques and media, but they



are slow in their work, and sometimes their work lacks creativity. A weaker aspect of pupils' learning is their knowledge of the work of well-known artists. In music, pupils sing a range of songs rhythmically, but do not always make enough effort to sing in tune. Although they compose simple class pieces to accompany their singing, their ability to create their own compositions is very limited, and few pupils understand the purpose of notation as a method of recording their work.

13. In geography, history and design and technology, pupils' attainment is below national expectations. In geography and history, pupils make satisfactory progress, but do not have enough experience on which to draw. Pupils have difficulty in acquiring the necessary language, and in placing their learning in the context of their everyday lives. Educational visits have a very positive impact on the pupils' learning, and help them to understand some of the concepts involved, especially in history, which many of the pupils have difficulty in relating to their own experience, and that of their families, but the shortage of resources such as videos and artefacts hampers pupils' learning. In design and technology, standards are below national expectations and could be higher. Pupils do not make enough progress as they move through the key stage, and do not have enough opportunities to work with resistant materials such as plastic and wood. Pupils do not have the necessary skills for designing and evaluating their work, and rely too much on adults for ideas.
14. As they move through the school, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils of all abilities make at least satisfactory progress, and often good progress, in most subjects. However, they are often much more effective at sharing their knowledge verbally than they are at writing and recording their ideas. This is a significant weakness in their learning, particularly for Key Stage 2 pupils. The school is effective in providing for pupils who have special educational needs, and support staff play a vital role in helping these pupils to achieve their best. The school sets appropriate targets for Key Stage 2 pupils in English and mathematics. There is no significant difference between the progress and attainment of boys and girls. It is not possible to comment meaningfully on trends over time in terms of standards because of the significant changes in terms of the nature of the school population that have occurred over the last few years.

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

15. The behaviour, attitudes and values of pupils are strengths, as they were at the time of the last inspection, and have a positive impact on the pupils' progress and attainment. The school is a very happy and friendly community, and all visitors are made to feel extremely welcome by the pupils. The pupils' behaviour is very good, and helps to create a positive learning environment. Pupils are polite and kind in their dealings with one another, and show great respect for property and the belongings of others. Year 6 pupils are proud that their behaviour is praised when they take part in educational visits to places of local interest, and understand that they are ambassadors for the school. There is no oppressive behaviour of any kind, and there are extremely high levels of racial harmony. Pupils and their parents agree that bullying is not tolerated, and that occasional incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the way in which their behaviour impacts on the well-being and happiness of others. The pupils' behaviour around the school and at playtimes is consistently very good, especially in the dining hall at lunchtimes, where pupils co-operate very well. The one temporary exclusion in the last year was properly handled, and was used as a final resort by the school when all other strategies had been unsuccessful. Relationships amongst pupils, and between pupils and adults are very good, and there are high levels of mutual respect and trust. Staff know the pupils and their families very well, and understand and address their individual needs.

16. Pupils have positive attitudes to school. Pupils of all ages and abilities are proud of their school, enjoy their work and are eager to take part in all activities. However, although many pupils work hard, some do not take a sufficiently active role in lessons, despite the very enthusiastic efforts of their teachers. For example, it is rare for pupils to make an unsolicited contribution to class discussions, although pupils of all ages willingly answer direct questions. This is linked to pupils' lack of confidence and self-esteem, which teachers and other adults continually promote, through the frequent use of praise and encouragement. Pupils show an interest in lessons, and respond with pleasure and enjoyment to the many different stimuli the teachers employ. For example, during the inspection, the Year 1/Year 2 teacher demonstrated the danger of germs spreading by passing a pencil round that had been covered in 'glitter'. Very rapidly children had the glitter on their faces, in their hair, and on their clothes, and were thoroughly delighted by the whole learning experience. There are times when pupils do not put enough effort into their learning. This is most evident when pupils are asked to make a written record of their work. They often do not produce enough work in the allotted time, and there is no sense of urgency.
17. The pupils' ability and willingness to take responsibility for aspects of their learning are unsatisfactory elements of their personal development. Throughout the school, pupils lack independent learning skills, and are over-reliant on adult support when making choices and decisions about their work. This disadvantages all pupils, but especially older Key Stage 2 pupils who are ill prepared for their transfer to secondary education. Although teachers provide some good opportunities for the pupils to work in groups and in pairs on shared tasks, there is still a long way to go before the pupils have the necessary skills to enable them to take responsibility for their learning in this way. Pupils have mixed attitudes to homework. Whilst some of the older Key Stage 2 pupils complete homework tasks regularly, others have difficulty in taking responsibility for, and in organising this aspect of their learning. The school has set up some useful initiatives to promote pupils' personal development. For example, the responsibility for various 'jobs' round the school is dealt with through an imaginative 'Job Centre' system. Jobs are advertised, applied for by interested pupils, and pupils are then selected by interview.
18. The attendance rate is unsatisfactory, because it is below the national average. Rates of attendance are adversely affected by the number of extended holidays, some of which are significantly longer than the permitted ten days. Attendance has improved overall since the last inspection, and parents are now much more conscientious about explaining absence.

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

19. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and very good in the Nursery and Reception classes. During the inspection, thirty lessons were observed. Teaching was very good in 37% of lessons seen, good in 50% of lessons, and satisfactory in 13%. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teaching has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection when one fifth of the teaching was unsatisfactory, and when there were few examples of very good teaching.
20. Approximately 90% of pupils have English as an additional language, and the increase in the proportion of pupils whose main language is not English has posed considerable challenge for the school. Bilingual teaching support is appropriately targeted in the Foundation Stage and the early part of Key Stage 1, and is effective in ensuring that, by

the time they transfer to Key Stage 2, very few pupils have difficulty in coping with the spoken form of English. However, although the pupils' language presents few barriers to their learning, pupils of all ages are disadvantaged by their limited experience of 'life', and teachers constantly have to contextualise and explain new learning. For example, in a Key Stage 2 science lesson, the planned activities about flowering plants were delayed when the teacher realised that few of the pupils recognised the plants, and fewer still understood the notion of a 'Garden Centre'. Teachers are aware of the need to not only address the academic learning of pupils, but also to extend the pupils' broader experiences of life in general. However, the school does not have enough resources to fully support teachers in their efforts, and teachers rely extensively on resources they bring in themselves, or those that they borrow from local sources such as museums.

21. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is very good and gives them a very secure start to their education. Very good emphasis is placed on the children developing personal, social and emotional skills, and on the early skills of literacy and numeracy. All of the adults with whom the children come into contact are very effective in developing the spoken aspects of the English language, and this has a very positive impact on the children's progress and attainment. Judicious bilingual intervention prevents the children from becoming frustrated when they are trying to express their ideas, and a good balance is achieved between immersion in the English language, and occasional support in the children's home language. Teachers provide a very good range of activities that the children take charge of themselves, and which encourage independent learning. However, although the children are encouraged to make choices and decisions about their work, most children are still very dependent on adults by the time they transfer to Year 1. Relationships between adults and children in the Foundation Stage are very good, and promote a secure learning environment. Teachers have very high expectations of behaviour, and ensure that the children have a clear understanding of what is expected of them when explaining activities. Basic routines are firmly established and the children benefit from the consistency with which adults address occasional incidents of misbehaviour. Activities for the Nursery and Reception children are well matched to their individual needs, and teachers make good use of ongoing assessments when planning the next stage of the children's learning.
22. The teaching of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology is good in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and has some very good features. Basic skills are well taught, and there are many very good opportunities to promote the pupils' speaking and listening skills. In information and communication technology, the school makes very good use of the expertise of a part-time teacher who works with half class groups, supporting their work across the curriculum. These small groups enable the teacher to give good levels of individual support, which enable the pupils to make good progress at their own level. Teachers cater well for the different age and ability ranges within their classes. However, because of the pupils' very limited experiences of 'life', a disproportionate amount of time is spent in retracing and revising pupils' prior learning before new learning can take place. Skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are effectively promoted across the curriculum, and there are some good examples of pupils using these skills to support their work in Key Stage 2.
23. The teaching in all other subjects in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, and has many good features. In music, pupils benefit from the additional input of a part-time specialist teacher, although this provision will stop at the end of the current academic year. In design and technology, there have been weaknesses in teaching in the past, which have only recently been addressed, and although currently satisfactory, the

teaching of design and technology is not as strong as in some other subjects. In subjects such as art and design, design and technology and music, although there are good features, not enough emphasis is placed on the pupils developing their own ideas, and as a result pupils are not as creative as they might be, and outcomes are often very similar because they have been closely guided at each step of the way by the teacher. In history and geography, the teaching and learning are enhanced when pupils have the opportunities to take part in visits which bring their learning to life, and which, in the case of history make a clear distinction for the pupils between fact and fiction. Teachers make very good use of a range of resources to enliven their teaching and to bring the learning alive for the pupils, but they do not have access to a sufficiently wide range of resources, such as video and audio material, photographs, artefacts and books, which would help to contextualise the learning for the pupils.

24. Wherever possible, teachers try to link the learning to the pupils' own experiences, whilst at the same time not losing sight of the need to continually extend the pupils' breadth of experience. Lessons are presented enthusiastically, and there are often good opportunities at the start of sessions for pupils to talk about the main focus of the lesson, so they know what is expected of them. Teachers and classroom assistants provide very good levels of individual support for the pupils, but recognise the need to gradually reduce pupils' dependency on them. Very good use is made of question and answer sessions to promote the pupils' spoken vocabulary and to develop their listening skills. Teachers make good use of ongoing assessment to ensure that the pupils' previous learning is built on and extended.
25. Teachers cope extremely well with the demands of mixed age classes, but this is exceptionally challenging for the Year 1/Year 2 teacher where the range of ability and maturity of the children is vast. Pupils with special educational needs receive good levels of additional help from their teachers, and from classroom assistants, and this support is given in an unobtrusive and sensitive way. Pupils with statements of special educational needs are very well supported, and receive the necessary levels of support as outlined in their statements.
26. A strength of teaching is the way in which teachers manage and organise their classes so that pupils have good opportunities to discuss and evaluate their work in pairs and small groups. A particularly good example of this was seen in a Year 5/Year 6 science lesson where groups of pupils spent a fruitful quarter of an hour making notes about what they knew about germs. Where the best teaching occurs, teachers often provide separate tasks for the two different year groups in the class, and make very good use of the classroom assistant to supervise one activity whilst they supervise the other. Whilst this organisation still creates two mixed ability groups, it nevertheless caters for the sometime significant differences in the maturity levels of the two age groups of pupils. Teachers often provide good opportunities at the end of lessons for pupils to consider whether they have achieved the learning targets, and to evaluate their own work and that of others.
27. Despite the frequently good quality of teaching, pupils' learning is only satisfactory, and could be better. Pupils throughout the school are always very well behaved and often show a keen interest in the activities. They are willing to do what they have been asked, but rarely show enough initiative, and come up with their own ideas. Some pupils in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 have low levels of self-esteem, which the teachers work hard to overcome, and many pupils lack confidence and require a great deal of adult support. Despite the very best efforts of teachers, pupils do not always take a sufficiently active role in their learning. Few pupils offer comments or share their views, unless specifically asked to by the teacher. Pupils often have difficulty in transferring

their existing knowledge and understanding to new situations. Many pupils of all ages have difficulty in making choices and decisions about their work, and lack the necessary levels of independence. The rate of productivity of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils in terms of the written work they produce is very low, and does not do full justice to their knowledge and understanding.

28. Teachers set homework regularly in reading and mathematics, and some science tasks are periodically set in Key Stage 2. However, even more could be done to extend the pupils' learning through homework tasks in other subjects. Currently pupils do not always complete the set tasks, and teachers and parents need to work more closely together to encourage pupils to take responsibility for this aspect of their learning, especially in the upper part of Key Stage 2. Writing tasks especially would help pupils to make better and faster progress in this aspect of their work, and practise in such skills as drawing, research, and investigative mathematics would also be beneficial.
29. The quality of marking is variable from class to class and from subject to subject. There are some excellent examples of marking, such as in science in the Year 3/Year 4 class, and in English in the Year 5/Year 6 class, and teachers are also very effective in giving ongoing verbal feedback to pupils in class. Occasionally teachers try to promote dialogue with the pupils through their written comments, but pupils rarely respond.

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

30. The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements. The school makes very good use of the national guidelines for children in the Nursery and Reception classes, and work is very closely linked to the 'Stepping Stones' which provide the route to the Early Learning Goals. Activities for the Foundation Stage children are closely matched to their needs, and appropriately focus on the development of language and number skills, and personal, social and emotional development. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils is satisfactory overall. It is appropriately based on the National Curriculum programmes of study, and the school makes effective use of national schemes of work to ensure good levels of progression in the pupils' learning. The National Numeracy Strategy and National Literacy Strategy have been effectively implemented in all classes, and teachers also provide additional daily reading opportunities where pupils receive the additional individual support they need. The school follows the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills are satisfactorily promoted across the curriculum.
31. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, most of which take place at lunchtime. Although the school would like to extend the range of activities, and run some at the end of the school day, it is keen not to put too much pressure on the pupils, many of whom go straight from school to the mosque. The current range of activities includes, football, recorders, guitars, computer club and a sports club. Some parents do not think that the school provides enough activities, but the inspection findings do not support this view. The school does the best it can with the small number of staff, and the limited opportunities available.
32. The school's provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory overall. The school has recently thoroughly reviewed its policy for delivering this aspect of its work, and is about to introduce a formal whole-school scheme of work, which is

currently being trialled in Year 1/Year 2. Each class has a 'circle-time' session, where a range of issues is discussed and considered. In addition to promoting personal development, these sessions are also valuable in promoting the pupils' speaking and listening skills. The statutory aspects of sex education are covered through the science curriculum, and there is additional information about adolescence for the girls, but no similar provision for the boys. Drugs Education is delivered across the school, and during the inspection, Year 5/Year 6 pupils took part in a day's event about drugs and making personal decisions, that was run by an outside Arts Group.

33. Links with the community are unsatisfactory, as despite the schools' efforts a large part of the immediate community does not get involved in the school's life and work. The school has, in the past few years, made very great strides to remedy this through various initiatives designed to establish a real working partnership between the school and the local community, and has achieved some success. For example, a retired couple spend one afternoon per week in the school listening to pupils practising their reading. The part-time Community co-ordinator works tirelessly with the headteacher and staff to reach out to the local community, mainly through providing education for parents. However, the lack of resources makes it difficult to develop the links quickly enough. The headteacher and several key staff have given much of their time to locate and bid for special funds which have enabled the provision of English and information and communication technology classes, which in turn, have led onto toddler groups, sewing classes and keep-fit classes. These initiatives are having an excellent impact in terms of building up a positive spirit within the community, and in extending the education of parents. The courses are proving to be popular and social links are slowly but surely being established. However, currently the school is putting the greater effort into the partnership.
34. The school has worked hard to establish closer links with the Mosque, by inviting a representative to sit on the Governing Body, consulting about the best time to hold extra-curricular activities, and getting a representative to lead assemblies. The pupils' experience of the world beyond the school is enhanced by occasional visits to local museums, castles and galleries, and several visitors and groups are regularly invited into the school. These opportunities are invaluable in extending and enhancing the pupils' learning, but are not sufficiently frequent to fully meet the needs of the pupils. Links with local primary schools are satisfactory, and links with the main receiving high school are good. The school regularly welcomes students on placement from the local higher and further education colleges.
35. Overall, provision for pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Within this, provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The pupils are extremely responsive and take great delight in their learning. During the inspection, there were many moments of awe and wonder, as the pupils spontaneously and unselfconsciously responded to new experiences. For example, the Reception children were spellbound by a 'blowing bubbles' activity, and Year 3/Year 4 pupils were equally entranced when white carnations changed colour after absorbing food dyes. Older pupils show high levels of empathy for the plight of those less fortunate than themselves, and this was seen during the inspection as pupils listened intently to a visiting speaker describing the disease of leprosy. Across the curriculum, and in assemblies and 'Circle Time', many opportunities are provided for pupils to explore the lives of others and to gain insight into the views and beliefs of others. Stories are carefully selected to broaden the pupils' sometimes narrow perspective of life, and to provide them with opportunities for reflection.
36. Satisfactory work is done to ensure the pupils' moral development. From an early age

pupils are encouraged to make a clear distinction between right and wrong, and there are 'class rules' that the pupils know and respect. Staff have high expectations of the pupils in terms of their behaviour, which become increasingly demanding as the pupils move through the school. Currently there are only limited opportunities for the children to make decisions themselves, and to take control of situations, and there are too few opportunities for the older pupils to enter into moral debates about global issues.

37. The provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory. Good opportunities are created for pupils to work co-operatively in pairs and small groups in class, and pupils work well together. Where a 'leader' is required, this is achieved with the minimum of fuss, and older pupils are able to discuss matters of dissent, and reach a consensus. Co-operation and mutual respect are a very important part of the school ethos, and teachers have very high expectations of the pupils. Team games are encouraged, and there are limited opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sports with other schools. These opportunities are very valuable in promoting the pupils' social development. The school does not provide residential visits, mainly because most parents are not supportive of such initiatives.
38. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Good use is made of the pupils' own culture as a stimulus for learning in subjects such as geography and religious education. Visits to local places of interest enhance the pupils' learning of the area, and of British traditions. Within the curriculum, aspects of a range of cultures are considered, such as Aboriginal art, African music, the work of the artist Richard Long, and the Victorian Age. However, there is still more work to be done in extending the pupils' range of learning experiences.
39. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement overall in the development of the curriculum. The school has responded well to the changing needs of the pupils, and is aware of the constant need to review its provision in the light of the pupils' lack of 'life' experiences.

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

40. This is a caring school that ensures good welfare and protection for all pupils. As at the time of the last inspection, the school cares very well for pupils of all ages and abilities, and their welfare, safety and well-being are the shared concern of governors and staff.
41. Good child protection procedures are in place, and are well known and understood by staff. Escalation procedures appropriately follow the recommendations of the LEA. Good relationships exist with a range of outside agencies whose input has a positive impact on the pupils' education and well-being. Health and safety issues are well tackled by the Governing Body as they arise, and appropriate risk assessments have been carried out. First-aid provision is good, and incidents of accident and illness are treated in a sensitive and sympathetic way. Fire drills are held regularly, and records are kept. A good example of the effectiveness of fire drill procedures was seen during the inspection, when a Nursery child accidentally set off the fire alarm. The pupils and staff responded very well, treating the incident with due seriousness, and the building was swiftly evacuated.
42. The monitoring of attendance is very good. This aspect of the school's work is handled very efficiently by the deputy headteacher. She carries out very thorough analyses of registers and ensures patterns of absence or lateness are carefully tracked, and that action is taken where necessary. Parents are made aware of the need to inform the

school of absences and most support the school in following these procedures. The school has been very effective over the last few years in reducing unauthorised absence, and in making parents aware of the impact on their children's education when they take extended holidays.

43. The school has good procedures for managing and monitoring the pupils' behaviour. The strategies used to reward and sanction pupils are relatively 'low key', as in the main, pupils' behaviour is very good, and pupils of all ages are very respectful of their teachers and other adults. The school is very effective in the way in which it has created an ethos of mutual respect and tolerance. This serves to promote very good levels of racial harmony, and incidents of oppressive behaviour are extremely rare, but very effectively dealt with when they occur.
44. Procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are good, but are largely informal. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children are constantly encouraged to develop personal skills, and teachers and other adults make regular and frequent records of the children's progress in this area of their learning. Staff carefully observe targeted individual children, and gently guide them towards appropriate behaviour. This good practice results in children becoming more confident in their actions and aware of their impact on others. Elsewhere in the school extra curricular activities, opportunities to take part in class assemblies, and opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and small groups, contribute to raising pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. Pupils have some class based responsibilities and older pupils look after younger pupils at lunchtimes and during breaks. Older Key Stage 2 pupils are encouraged to make independent use of the library and computers to research information, in order to develop their independence. The school recognises the need to develop pupils' independent learning skills further, if standards are to be raised. As in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 teachers know the pupils very well, and this is evident by the comments on the end of year progress reports where teachers and the headteacher produce very accurate and revealing 'pen portraits' of the pupils.
45. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are good overall, but are currently more rigorous in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and information and communication technology. Teachers know the pupils well, and record any significant issues regularly, following up concerns with parents when necessary.
46. The results of baseline assessments, carried out soon after the children join the Reception class, are used very effectively to enable staff to focus on the needs of individual children and to help them make generally very good progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Throughout the day, teachers and other adults take note of significant features in the children's learning, and use this information well to inform the next stage of their planning.
47. The statutory national tests are properly administered at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Optional tests are given to pupils in Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5. The careful analysis of the results of optional tests, leads to the forming of 'booster' classes in English and mathematics. The school has made good progress since the last inspection in the way in which it uses assessment information to ensure that pupils' learning is systematically built upon. Teachers keep ongoing records of pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science, and records are passed on to the next teacher when pupils change classes at the end of an academic year. In order to help teachers to level pupils' work accurately against the National Curriculum level descriptors, exemplar pieces of pupils' work are assessed and levelled and used



as guidelines. Teachers are confident about levelling pupils' work, and generally accurate. Information about the progress and attainment of specific groups of pupils especially in the core subjects is good, and enables teachers to establish whether the year by year predicted targets are achievable and realistic. Assessment in information and communication technology is also good, and clearly informs subject planning, ensuring pupils build effectively on their prior learning.

48. Procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' progress and attainment in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, are satisfactory, but some are very new and are not yet having the maximum impact on raising standards. Daily ongoing assessment informs teachers of how well the pupils are progressing, but in some classes and subjects, these assessments are not used enough when planning the next stage of pupils' learning. Short-term plans are produced on a weekly basis and whilst they include learning objectives for the class and for the ability groups within the class, they do not always include assessment opportunities to be used during lessons, apart from general questioning planned for the end of lesson plenary session.
49. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, although the school does not always receive full support from parents in this aspect of its work. Early procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs enable pupils to be supported well throughout the school. Very effective use is made of support staff to work with individual pupils or with specific groups, and this strategy helps pupils in their learning. The progress of pupils with special educational needs in literacy and numeracy is monitored and evaluated well by the teachers, the special needs co-ordinator and by other adults involved in their care. Individual education plans are in place for all pupils, and the school is well on the way to implementing the new Code of Practice. Pupils work to their individual education plans, and parents are encouraged to work with their children at home, to support the good progress they make. Progress is carefully monitored, and targets reviewed regularly, thus ensuring the support provided addresses the needs appropriately. Every opportunity is given for pupils with special needs to be fully involved in the life of the school. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties have satisfactory behaviour plans that are used consistently by teachers. The support for pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language is good, although more bilingual support in the Foundation Stage would benefit pupils' learning even more. All teachers treat the pupils very much as individuals and do their best to respond to their varied and specific needs.

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

50. The school's partnership with parents is very good and there are very good lines of communication between the home and school. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to put a great deal of effort into increasing the effectiveness of its links with parents. To a large extent it has been very successful, and many more parents are now involved with the school on a daily basis. The partnership with parents has been substantially improved through the 'Community Education' initiatives, which have reached out into the heart of the local community. One result of the efforts has been the recruitment of six parents to the 'Helping in the Classroom' training, and several of these parents are now giving regular voluntary help. Many more parents now help with school activities, such as educational visits. The school is aware that there is still more to be done to fully involve parents in their children's education, but an excellent start has been made, resulting in high levels of parental confidence.

51. The vast majority of parents have very positive views of the school and are pleased with the standard of education the school provides. Parents recognise and applaud the work the school has done in developing links with their community, and agree that the school is very welcoming and friendly. Parents believe that the standard of teaching is good and are pleased with the progress their children make. A few parents would like more information about the curriculum, but in the main, agree that information is good. A large number of parents come into school on a daily basis to drop their children off and to pick them up at lunchtime or the end of the day. There are frequent informal discussions between teachers and parents at these times that do much to allay any concerns, and to build up very positive relationships between the school and home. A few parents would like more homework and more extra-curricular activities, but appreciate that because of commitments outside school, the school is reluctant to put additional pressure on the pupils. Parents praise many aspects of school life, especially the approachability of staff, their expectations of work from their children, behaviour in school and relationships with parents.
52. The quality of information provided for parents is good, and they receive regular newsletters informing them of forthcoming events. The school has considered issuing written information in languages other than English, but has decided after consultation with key members of the community, to produce information in English, but to ensure that a multi-lingual assistant is always made available for key discussions between parents and staff, such as Parents' Meetings. Reports of pupils' progress are individual, fully diagnostic and include clear targets, including those for personal development. Parents are encouraged to attend Parents' Meetings and assemblies.
53. Despite the efforts of the school, the overall contribution of the parents to their children's learning is unsatisfactory. Only a few parents help their children with homework, despite their requests for the pupils to have regular homework tasks. In part, this is because some of the parents have low levels of spoken and written language, as English is not their mother tongue. In response to a request from parents, the school set up a meeting to instruct parents on how to help their children with homework, but the attendance levels were very low. Some of the parents of pupils with special educational needs do not regularly attend review meetings, and their input into the targets on the individual education plans is minimal. This makes it difficult to respond fully to the new Code of Practice which emphasises increased involvement with parents.
54. Overall, although parents could do even more to support their children's learning at home, there are very strong links between home and school which ensure very good relationships, and high levels of mutual respect. The school has firm plans for the continued strengthening of its partnership with parents, but is hampered by a lack of resources, and by the high teaching commitment of the headteacher which leaves her only a small amount of time for her other responsibilities.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The leadership and management provided by the headteacher are good. She has played an important and pivotal role in the development of the school since the last inspection and has a clear vision for its continued improvement. The headteacher has a very secure grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The intake of the school has changed considerably over the last three years with a much increased number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. The school has managed this change well, but now needs to seek further external support to ensure that this ongoing development can be successfully maintained.
56. The headteacher has been very successful in creating a strong team spirit where all staff are committed to raising standards and to providing a good quality of education where the needs of individual pupils are met. The headteacher has put a great deal of time and effort into developing stronger parental and community links so that parents and the wider community can play a more active and effective role in supporting and enhancing the children's education. Whilst many parents are appreciative of the school's efforts, not all parents play a sufficiently active role in supporting their child's education and at times this impacts adversely on the progress that some children make. The headteacher has a heavy teaching commitment, but through her endeavours and effort, manages to combine her teaching and management responsibilities well. Her own very good teaching sets a positive example for staff.
57. Regular staff meetings are held where issues pertinent to improving standards are fully discussed. Staff are provided with every opportunity to contribute to the decision making process. This means that all staff feel that they are fully consulted before decisions become embedded in practice. The good quality of leadership that the headteacher provides ensures that new initiatives are well paced and are evaluated for the impact that they have on improving the quality of education for all pupils. The headteacher is supported in her work by a committed and able deputy headteacher who provides a very good role model for effective teaching and learning. The deputy headteacher is equally effective in the manner in which she contributes to the leadership of the school and is keen to work alongside the headteacher in developing even stronger links with parents and the wider community.
58. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and LEA advisors have carried out formal lesson observations, mainly in literacy and numeracy lessons. The outcomes of these observations are formally recorded and feedback is given to classteachers. Any identified areas for improvement then form the focus of the next observation. Whilst there is evidence that some key co-ordinators have also monitored the quality of teaching and learning through the scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work, the school has rightly identified the need for co-ordinators to play a more rigorous role in monitoring teaching and learning in order to have the maximum impact on helping to raise standards. The headteacher recognises the valuable and valued contribution that support staff make to the learning of pupils and regularly monitors their work and provides supportive and developmental feedback which further enhances the role that support staff play within school.
59. The school sets appropriately challenging targets in literacy and numeracy. The headteacher analyses test and assessment data and uses the information to identify areas for improvement and to set targets for different year groups. The information is shared with staff and governors. The headteacher has rightly identified the need to refine this process still further to more closely set targets for individual pupils and to develop rigorous procedures for tracking pupils' progress as they move through the

school. There is also a need for some curriculum co-ordinators to become more actively involved in this process to enable them to have an even clearer grasp of standards in the subjects for which they are responsible.

60. The School Development Plan is a good quality document. All members of staff and the Governing Body are fully consulted before priorities are established. This helps to ensure that all staff and governors share the responsibility for achieving the stated targets. The document contains an accurate assessment of the issues that the school needs to address to further improve standards and the quality of education that the school provides. All issues have appropriate time scales, costings and criteria against which the progress toward stated targets can be measured.
61. The Governing Body fulfils its role and responsibilities in a satisfactory manner. Governors are supportive of the work of the school and most governors visit the school on a regular basis and after visits governors provide a report to the full Governing Body. Relationships between governors and staff are very good. The headteacher provides good quality information for the governors, which gives them a well informed insight into the work of the school, but they do not take enough responsibility for finding out about the school for themselves. There are currently vacancies on the Governing Body. These vacancies are for Local Education Authority appointees. The fact that there is not a full Governing Body reduces the impact that the Governing Body has in monitoring the work of the school. The school has identified the need for governors to be linked with subject co-ordinators to enable governors to have a more informed insight into teaching and learning in different subjects of the curriculum. Many governors have started to attend training courses on a more regular basis. This is good practice as it is providing governors with valuable information relating to both local and national initiatives that impact on the work of the school.
62. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. Although standards have dropped in several subjects over the last few years, this reflects the significant difference in the nature of the school, and masks the improvements that have occurred in terms of the quality of teaching, curriculum and leadership. At the time of the last inspection, one fifth of teaching was unsatisfactory. During the current inspection there were no incidents of unsatisfactory teaching, and teaching in a high proportion of lessons was good and very good. There have been notable improvements in the provision for information and communication technology which are having a very positive impact on the pupils' learning. The school has worked hard to develop assessment systems across all subjects in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and has been most successful in English, mathematics and science where assessment information is used well to raise standards. The school's links with parents and the local community have developed well, and the school is tireless in its efforts to respond to the needs of the parents, and to work closely with the community. Since the last inspection, the school has been successful in raising rates of attendance, and in reducing unauthorised absence, and the drive to continue to raise attendance levels is an ongoing priority. Under the astute leadership of the headteacher and the commitment of all staff to providing a good quality of education for all pupils, the school is well placed to continue to develop and improve.
63. The school has responded in an appropriate manner to the national initiatives for performance management. Teaching and non-teaching staff attend in-service training courses on a regular basis and these courses are well matched to the needs of the school and to the individual. Attendance at such courses has led to improvements in teachers' knowledge and understanding in areas such as information and communication technology which in turn has impacted positively on the quality of

teaching and learning. The school has satisfactory procedures in place for supporting newly qualified teachers or teachers new to the school. Support staff play a very important and valued role in school and are consistently targeted to where the need is greatest. This impacts positively on pupils' learning.

64. The quality of financial planning is good. The budget is closely linked to school development planning and reflects well the educational needs of the pupils. The money that the school receives from additional grants, and for special educational needs is used in an appropriate manner to impact on helping to raise standards. The finance committee meets on a regular basis and is provided with good levels of information from the headteacher and the Local Education authority finance officer, to help it make informed decisions relating to school budget planning. The finance committee and the Governing Body are involved in setting and monitoring spending patterns over the course of the financial year. The day-to-day finances of the school as well as the monitoring of spending are carried out by the headteacher and the school secretary and reviewed regularly by the school's finance officer. The secretary carries out her financial and administrative duties in a most effective and pleasant manner. She plays an important role in helping the school to run smoothly and efficiently and this frees up the teachers to work more effectively with the pupils. All the recommendations of the latest auditor's report have been implemented.
65. The predicted carry forward from the budget is high at nearly 13%. However the school has earmarked much of this surplus for improving resources and for building adaptations. The school consistently ensures that it applies the principles of best value in an appropriate manner when purchasing goods and services, whether this is educational resources, building improvements or services that it buys into from the Local Education Authority. Good procedures are in place for longer term financial planning and the headteacher has become increasingly effective in assessing the impact of major spending decisions, such as increasing the number of support staff or purchasing more computers, on standards and the quality of education that the school provides. Taking all factors into account the school is providing good value for money.
66. This school has a good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. The school employs a good number of support staff, although even more bilingual support for the youngest pupils in the school would benefit their learning further.
67. Accommodation is good, and there are enough sizeable, bright and airy classrooms for the number of pupils on roll. Classrooms open onto a spacious hall that comfortably accommodates the whole school. Storage facilities are good and offices, whilst small, are adequate. Toilet and cloakroom facilities are also adequate, but not ideally placed. Outside a large playground is available with suitable space for Early Years and some limited grassed areas. A very attractive mezzanine floor above the end of the hall has been created to provide space for withdrawal groups and an ideal location for the computer suite.
68. Although in general terms the learning resources are satisfactory overall, the quality, range and quantity of resources are not adequate for the specific needs of the pupils in this school. In order to address the lack of 'life' experiences of many of the pupils, there is a need for more interactive resources, such as video and audio materials, more educational visits, more books, and more artefacts.

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

To raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and Governing Body should:-

- 1) improve the quality of pupils' learning, especially in design and technology by:-**
  - ensuring that pupils of all ages and abilities develop the necessary skills to enable them to work independently;
  - developing and implementing strategies to ensure that pupils take a more active role in their learning;
  - providing more open-ended and extended problem solving activities which enable pupils to pursue their own lines of enquiry;
  - encouraging pupils to take more responsibility for their learning and become less reliant on adult support when making decisions and choices;
  - providing opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work and to make suggestions for improvement.

*(paragraphs 10, 17, 44, 70, 75, 99, 103, 115, 119, 126, 127, 136, 137, 152, 158)*
- 2) improve the quality, breadth and quantity of pupils' written work in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 by:-**
  - providing the pupils with more written tasks that have to be completed within a given timeframe;
  - helping the pupils to structure their writing through the use of devices such as 'writing frames';
  - ensuring that pupils have access to a good range of resources such as word banks, dictionaries and thesauruses to help them in their writing;
  - reducing the time in some lessons that is currently given to speaking and listening activities so that there are more writing opportunities;
  - using homework more effectively to help pupils to practise their writing skills and to become faster in their work.

*(paragraphs 3, 16, 27, 28, 95, 100, 101, 103, 126, 127, 138, 143, 149, 153)*
- 3) improve the quality, range and quantity of learning resources.**

*(paragraphs 68, 107, 134, 144, 150, 155, 161)*

**In addition, the school may consider the following minor issues for development:-**

- the school should continue to encourage pupils to use classroom computers to support their learning across the curriculum;  
*(paragraphs 151, 155, 161)*
- the school should continue in its efforts to help pupils to develop immediate recall of number facts to speed up their written work in mathematics;  
*(paragraphs 4, 10, 111, 112)*
- the school should develop more consistent marking procedures and share the very good practice that already exists;  
*(paragraphs 29, 126, 170)*
- the school should make more use of homework to support, extend and enrich the pupils' learning.  
*(paragraphs 28, 104, 126, 128, 138, 143, 149, 160, 170)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	11	15	4	0	0	0
Percentage	0	37	50	13	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 one three percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	17	92
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	19

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	41

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	94

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### Attendance

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
%	%

School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.2

School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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



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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	10	5	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	6	9
	Girls	5	4	5
	Total	13	10	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (93)	67 (79)	93 (86)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	6	7
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	11	10	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (79)	67 (93)	73 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	9	5	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	4	6
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	10	6	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (56)	43 (56)	57 (89)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	5	7
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	8	7	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (78)	54 (78)	69 (78)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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	61
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	3
White	12
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

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

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	23

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	127.25

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	28.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	284977
Total expenditure	275179
Expenditure per pupil	2479
Balance brought forward from previous year	32978
Balance carried forward to next year	42776

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

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	101
Number of questionnaires returned	45

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	47	49	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	30	56	12	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	38	2	4	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	44	24	4	0
The teaching is good.	36	51	9	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	51	9	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	45	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	45	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	47	41	12	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	28	58	12	2	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	29	56	9	2	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	45	22	9	2

## **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**

69. Children usually start Nursery, on a half-day basis, in the term following their third birthday. This means that they have up to four terms in the Nursery class before they transfer to the Reception Class. When they start school, the vast majority of children speak English as an additional language, but only a small number of children speak no English at all. The school has established very good links with the parents of the Nursery and Reception children, which are very beneficial to the children. Meetings are organised before the children start in the Nursery class to welcome parents and children, and to provide useful information about the routines of the school. Home visits take place wherever possible and the school ensures that someone who is able to speak the home language attends these meetings so that all parents and children are included.
70. The children's attainment when they join the Nursery class is often very low. Pupils' experiences are extremely limited when they start school, especially in terms of their knowledge and understanding of the world, and in terms of their speaking and listening skills, and their personal, social and emotional development. Despite making very good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, the children's attainment when they start Year 1, is below the expected level in all areas of learning. In communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, the attainment of the majority of children at the end of the Reception year is very low. For many children, their attainment is hampered by their lack of experiences other than those provided by the school, and their inability to confidently apply their existing knowledge and understanding to new situations. A number of children are reluctant to express their ideas in front of adults, and many lack independent learning skills.
71. The quality of teaching is very good overall. This is due to the quality of relationships between adults and children, and the commitment and expertise of all of the staff who work in the Nursery and Reception classes. The teamwork is effectively co-ordinated and adults who come into regular contact with the children know them very well. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of very young children, and use the national guidance very effectively to plan a wide range of exciting and stimulating activities and learning experiences. Bilingual support staff work very effectively with the children, enabling those who are less confident in speaking English to take a full and active part in all activities. These children move confidently between English and their mother tongue to communicate as effectively as they are able. However, the amount of bilingual support is limited, and the children's progress could be further accelerated by additional support. Adults encourage children who are more fluent in English to support their less confident classmates, and this is a very helpful strategy. Nursery and Reception class staff monitor the children very effectively and are quick to identify children who may have difficulties with their learning, and who may need additional special educational needs support.

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

72. Children of all abilities, make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. The very good teaching, and very strong relationships between adults and children, ensure that all children achieve very well, and a small number of children attain the Early Learning Goals for this area of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage.
73. All of the adults in the Nursery and Reception classes know the children very well, and use this knowledge to provide very good opportunities for the children to gain in confidence. Teachers use praise and encouragement very effectively to raise the children's self-esteem, but nevertheless, many children lack the confidence to express their ideas to adults. Teachers and classroom assistants work tirelessly to promote independent learning skills, and encourage the children to choose activities and resources, and to share toys and other equipment sensibly and amicably.
74. Most children play very well with and alongside one another in the classroom role-play areas, where they enjoy organising tea-parties and dressing up to entertain guests. However, many of the children do not have experience of such activities outside school, and their limited range of vocabulary severely limits their social conversations. For example, during the inspection, two or three children said, 'I make the party', using the model of their first language to express the idea of 'having a party'. On this occasion, very sensitive intervention from the supporting adult, enabled these children to sustain their play for a considerable time, laying out plates and cakes and offering these politely to others.
75. By the end of the Reception class, most children still do not demonstrate the expected levels of independence in their learning. Many children still have difficulty in independently dressing and undressing for physical education activities, and are very slow when changing. The children rely heavily on adult support when carrying out more formal activities, and most show little sense of urgency as they go about their daily tasks. Most children show good levels of respect for their teachers and for other children. They generally follow the routines of the school well, although many go home for lunch, and this prevents them from becoming accustomed to the wider community of the school.

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

76. The teaching of communication, language and literacy is very good in both the Nursery and Reception classes, and the children make very good progress in this aspect of their learning. Nevertheless, because of their very low starting point, few children attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year.
77. Strong emphasis is given to the development of communication, language and literacy throughout the Foundation Stage. Good opportunities are provided for children to develop their speaking and listening skills, and adults take every opportunity to question and talk to the children so that they can extend and develop their vocabulary and use of language. The role-play areas provide very well for this, as the children act out real life situations. Adults are very effective at supporting the children when they are engaged in imaginative play activities, and do much to promote vocabulary, and to extend the children's experiences. Most children make very good progress in developing speaking and listening skills, although few volunteer comments or observations unless prompted by their teachers.
78. The teaching of the early skills of reading is very good. Teachers and support staff make sure that the activities in which the children take part are challenging and very

well matched to their individual learning needs. All children know how to handle books and a good number are beginning to confidently read the early books in the reading scheme. Their fascination and delight in books, and stories in particular, is exciting to observe. They listen with wonder, often trying to work out from the text and the pictures, the full meaning being conveyed. However, out of context, many children struggle to explain specific words. Many Reception children are hesitant when sounding out new words, but use pictures well for clues. Although some parents give good support to their children at home, some have difficulty in doing this because of their own limited English language skills, and as a result some children do not have enough regular and additional reading practice.

79. Although satisfactory, the teaching of early writing skills is a relatively weaker aspect of teaching in the Foundation Stage. The children do not have a sufficiently broad range of writing experiences, and there is not always enough adult intervention to enable individual children to make the best progress possible. Because many children find it difficult to sustain concentration and persevere when tasks are difficult, they soon lose patience and interest in writing activities, and for most children, writing is not popular as a 'free-choice' activity. A significant number of children are beginning to form letters correctly by the end of the Foundation Stage, and to write their names and copy words fairly accurately.

### **Mathematical development**

80. The teaching of children's mathematical development is very good, enabling the children in the Nursery and Reception classes to make very good progress from a very low starting point. However, by the end of the Foundation Stage, few children attain the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning.
81. In the Nursery class few children come to school knowing counting rhymes, and most are not confident with numbers. Although they count up to five fairly accurately, few count beyond, and their understanding of the purpose of number is very weak. As they move through the Reception class, the children gain a better understanding of number, and most children reliably count objects up to ten. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, number rhymes and songs are used very effectively to help the children to learn the names and order of numbers. During the inspection, the Reception children were particularly enthused by the postman rhyme, and waited eagerly for their number to be chosen. By the end of the Foundation Stage, few pupils match on a one to one basis, and most have little real understanding of numbers beyond twenty. Although a small number of higher attaining children are beginning to carry out simple adding and taking away sums, for many children these concepts are not well established. The main factors that adversely affect the children's attainment is their inability to retain learning from one day to the next, and the difficulty they have in transferring existing learning to a new context.
82. A good number of activities encourage the children to learn effectively about shape and pattern, and by the end of the Reception year, most children recognise and name simple two dimensional shapes such as circles, squares and triangles. There are good opportunities for the children to reinforce their understanding of full and empty as they play in the sand and water, and for them to make comparisons of size. For many children, this learning is hampered by their lack of mathematical vocabulary, which teachers and classroom assistants constantly reinforce and extend through ongoing discussion with the children.

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

- 83. The children start Nursery with a very low level of knowledge and understanding of the world. They make very good progress as they move through the Foundation Stage, but, despite very good teaching, and very well matched and suitable activities, the majority do not attain the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the Reception year.
- 84. The curriculum for this area of learning is particularly well organised so that the children learn from first-hand experience about the world in which they live. For example, both in the Nursery and Reception classes, children explore the natural world by investigating the behaviour of living things. They observe 'mini-beasts' with animated wonder, excited by the opportunity to observe at close quarters, the slimy trails left by snails, or the emergence of butterflies from cocoons. In a lesson seen during the inspection, Reception children explored a garden habitat. This activity provided a wide range of new learning experiences for the majority of children, as they handled pebbles and damp compost. The children were very interested and keen to share their ideas, but most lacked the necessary vocabulary to do so. For example, one child could not distinguish between 'soft' and 'smooth' when describing a pebble.
- 85. The children's understanding of the past is weak. Although a few children know their own position within their immediate family, many have difficulty in describing relationships such as brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts and uncles, because some of these relationships do not exist within the children's own culture. Most children do not have the vocabulary to describe the world in which they live, and very few know their addresses, or describe landmarks they pass on their way to school.
- 86. The Nursery and Reception children have regular opportunities to use computers to support their learning but need a great deal of adult support. They are beginning to gain control of the mouse and are starting to find their way around the keyboards, with the highest attaining children knowing where the important command keys are located.
- 87. Foundation Stage children have good opportunities to use construction equipment to make models, and most work well together on shared tasks. However, their work often lacks imagination, and they rely too much on adult intervention for their ideas.

## **Physical development**

- 88. Children start the nursery with well below average physical development skills. The children make very good progress, but most do not attain the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning by the end of the Reception year. Teaching is very good and ensures that the children have access to a good range of activities that promote all aspects of their physical development.
- 89. Although the Nursery and Reception classes do not have access to their own designated outside play area, teachers and classroom assistants quickly and efficiently create a secure area when the weather allows, where children can use wheeled toys and large play equipment in a creative way. These opportunities are very effective in helping the children to learn how to balance and climb, and to develop skills of co-ordination and agility. Soft play shapes are particularly effective in enabling the children to build their own obstacle courses, which they make their way through, carefully going under and over the pathways they have created. Children in both the Nursery and Reception classes have regular access to the climbing equipment in the hall, although these activities are more successful for the Reception children, who are more reliable



at taking turns and observing the necessary safety precautions. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children have a reasonable awareness of space, and move with purpose and a good sense of direction. However, many children lack control when they are trying to hold balances, and when jumping from a low platform to the ground.

90. Teachers in the Nursery and Reception classes ensure that the children have frequent and regular access to malleable materials which effectively develop their skills of manipulation. Very well planned and carefully supervised practical tasks provide good opportunities for the children to regularly use scissors, staplers, glue, tape and string, as they cut and join a range of materials to make models. Often these activities are linked to an ongoing topic. For example, children in the Nursery are currently exploring musical instruments, and during the inspection, one child persevered for a lengthy period, joining together two or three cartons to make a 'guitar', which she played for the rest of the class. By the end of the Foundation Stage, although some children have a satisfactory range of 'fine-motor' skills, many lack the physical maturity to consistently control items such as pencils and brushes.

### **Creative development**

91. The teaching of children's creative development is very good, enabling the children to make very good progress, often from a very low starting point. However, despite very good teaching, most children do not achieve the expected level in this aspect of their work by the end of the Foundation Stage.
92. Many very good opportunities are provided for the Nursery and Reception children to mix paint so that they can make patterns and pictures of their own. During the inspection, linked to their ongoing work about mini-beasts, the Reception children carefully drew spiral shapes using paints, pencils and computer programs. By the end of the Reception year, a few children independently mix paints to achieve a desired shade, such as when they matched paints to the colours of a range of sea-shells, but most need a great deal of adult support to achieve this. Art and craft activities that involve the children in rolling and folding paper are effective in developing their manipulative skills, and promote their personal development as they concentrate and persevere on the set tasks. Many children lack imagination and creativity in their art work because they have little experience on which to draw, and the teachers and classroom assistants work hard to ensure that the experiences they provide are stimulating, exciting and often tactile.
93. Very good opportunities are provided for the children to explore the sounds that instruments make, and children in the Nursery and Reception classes eagerly take their turn in playing classroom and 'home-made' instruments. The majority of Nursery children have difficulty in learning songs and 'jingles', and many children start school without knowing any nursery-rhymes. The youngest children in the Foundation Stage have difficulty in clapping a steady beat, but by the end of the Reception year, a small number of children keep a steady pulse and copy simple rhythmic patterns.

## ENGLISH

94. By the end of Year 2, the results of the 2001 Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests show pupils' attainment to be below the national average in reading and well below the national average in writing. When pupils' performance is compared to similar schools attainment is at an average level in reading and well below average in writing. The end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 2001 show pupils' attainment to be below the national average, and average when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show that attainment at the end of Year 2 is well below average overall. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is below average in all aspects of the subject, apart from speaking and listening where standards are at an average level. Many pupils start school with very poor language and communication skills and the good quality of teaching that pupils receive throughout the school ensures that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, made good progress. Any differences between inspection findings and test results can be explained by the differences in natural ability of the different groups of pupils.
95. Although the pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning, there are a significant minority of pupils who lack a real sense of urgency when completing their written work. The school has rightly identified the need to ensure that pupils take a greater responsibility for their own learning and that teaching consistently ensures that a greater amount of time is allocated for pupils to record their work. The school is already addressing the issue. Standards appear to have declined since the time of the last inspection. This is due to the fact that the school now has a far higher percentage of pupils whose first language is not English and the attainment levels of children when they start school are at a lower level than they were at the time of the last inspection. There is a trend of improvement as the school has worked very hard to address the changing needs of the pupils that now attend the school.
96. Standards of speaking and listening are well below average by the end of Year 2. Although pupils listen carefully to their teachers in class and in assembly, they do not always process the information effectively. Strong features of the teaching are the clear instructions and demonstrations given to pupils which help pupils to understand what they have to do. However there is a minority of pupils who do not always listen well enough to the contributions of their classmates. Many pupils lack the vocabulary to express their ideas coherently. In the final session of the literacy lessons, pupils are asked to share their work with the rest of the class in turn. This encourages those pupils who are reluctant to speak to make a contribution. Despite the best efforts of teachers a significant percentage of pupils remain reluctant to contribute to discussions and many lack an appropriate vocabulary to express their views and ideas.
97. As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils of all abilities make good progress in speaking and listening, and by the end of Year 6 standards in speaking and listening are at an average level. However, not all pupils follow the gist of what is being said or fully understand and process instructions. Despite the best efforts and prompting of teachers, a minority of pupils are reluctant to take part in discussions and are content to let others reply. The more confident pupils take part with ease although they do not use an extensive vocabulary. The school has rightly identified the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to take part in drama activities and structured discussions and debates in order to help improve pupils' speaking and listening skills further.
98. By the end of Year 2 standards in reading are well below average. The pupils are directly taught a range of basic reading skills that enable them to tackle unfamiliar

words and phrases when they come across them. Pupils make good progress through a well planned programme to develop phonic skills. Most pupils are learning to sound words out and use picture clues to help them make sense of the written word. Only a small percentage of pupils are on track to achieve beyond the level expected of seven year olds which depresses the overall picture of attainment. The main weakness is that while the pupils are being taught and developing the basic mechanics of reading, they lack a real sense of expression in their reading, have a limited knowledge of authors and do not appear to have a real love of literature or reading. Many opportunities are provided in school for pupils to read to adults and it is here that teachers and support staff stress the importance of reading with expression to make the text spring to life. Not all pupils receive enough support in their reading at home which impacts adversely on the development of their reading skills.

99. Pupils at Key Stage 2 make good progress in their reading skills. Pupils continue to develop the basic skills of reading in an appropriate manner because these skills have been directly taught. Most pupils use their knowledge of the alphabet to use dictionaries. Most pupils read accurately and fluently and have mastered the mechanics of reading. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to read out loud in literacy lessons and to share their work. The good choice of text in many literacy lessons captures the interest of pupils and teachers are keen to introduce pupils to as wide a range of material as possible including poetry and plays as well as fiction and non-fiction books. Again too few pupils read with a high level of expression, or use their acquired skills independently to locate information when needed in other subjects or use skills such as skimming or scanning or to read and understand beyond the literal level.
100. By the end of Year 2 writing standards are well below average. Pupils are provided with satisfactory opportunities to write for different audiences and purposes such as giving written instructions, framing and answering questions, as well as writing stories or re-telling stories such as " Jack and the Beanstalk" in their own words. Pupils are starting to use capital letters and full stops appropriately but letter formation and spelling is erratic, particularly in story writing activities. The small group of higher attaining pupils are beginning to extend their use of language in a more effective manner. The area of weakness that depresses standards is that the amount of work that is written and the vocabulary that is used is limited and as a result stories fizzle out or the content, vocabulary or style of the writing does not capture the attention of the reader.
101. By the end of Key Stage 2 there has been good improvement in pupils' writing skills but attainment remains below average. Teaching throughout Key Stage 2 concentrates on the direct teaching of specific writing skills. Pupils are provided with story frames or provided with the criteria necessary to write a persuasive argument or a chronological text. Pupils are provided with a good range of writing tasks such as factual reports, instructional writing, interviewing a passenger on the Titanic, writing in the style of a African folk tale and extended pieces of writing. Teaching however is often filling gaps in pupils' writing skills as opposed to consistently extending pupils' writing skills. Whilst there is good improvement in pupils' technical ability in writing this is not always matched by the development of an extended writing style and vocabulary that captures and holds the attention of the reader. Some pupils simply lack the writing stamina to write extended pieces of writing. Spelling skills for a number of pupils remain erratic, particularly in creative writing. There are some good examples in Key Stage 2 of computers being used to support and enhance pupils' writing. The older pupils in school have completed some good tasks using computers which include interviews with the rich and famous, alien poems, agony aunt letters and a play entitled " Sue Perspella." There are good examples of pupils' writing skills being promoted and

enhanced in other areas of the curriculum, but this good practice is not as consistent across the school as it could be.

102. Teaching and learning are generally good because of the fact that reading and writing skills are taught in a direct and progressive manner which is impacting on how well pupils learn and attain. Behaviour within lessons is often of a very good standard, particularly at Key Stage 2 with pupils showing good levels of respect for adults and for the contributions made by their classmates. When pupils are asked about their work they respond with high levels of enthusiasm and talk animatedly about the work that they have covered. The very low starting point of many pupils when they begin school means that the school has to spend a lot of time establishing basic literacy skills which it does well. All teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and plan their lessons well. Learning objectives are shared with the pupils so that they know what to expect and to help judge their success. Explanations are clear so that pupils can get on with the task straight away and there is a good level of support to help individuals where needed.
103. Teachers work hard to involve pupils in discussion through good questioning skills. There is an enthusiastic response from most pupils. However some pupils are more passive and teachers have to work very hard to motivate pupils. This lack of response from some pupils reduces the effectiveness of teaching and learning. In the best lessons there is a good pace and challenging questions, which keep pupils alert and interested. Teachers are very aware of the need to develop pupils' speaking skills. However in some instances too much time is devoted to this aspect of pupils' development in both literacy and other lessons of the curriculum. This results in too little time being given to the development of pupils' writing and recording skills. In other instances the level of expectation of the amount of work that pupils are expected to complete is too low. On occasions opportunities are missed for pupils to carry out independent study and research. Such opportunities would enhance the pupils' ability to work independently and to encourage them to take a greater responsibility for their own learning.
104. Where teaching is very good in Key Stage 2, the teachers set high expectations, constantly use good technical vocabulary and choose texts well that motivate and enthuse the pupils. In a very good lesson for pupils in Year 5/Year 6, the excellent choice of text showed clearly the difference between metaphors and similes with the result that when pupils wrote their own compositions it showed that they clearly understood the difference. Increasingly good use is being made of setting targets in literacy. Within classes there are individual, small group and class targets for literacy. The pupils are aware of their own targets and are constantly reminded of them. This impacts positively on their learning and also reminds pupils that they as well as the teachers have a crucial role to play in the whole process of target setting. There is some excellent marking of pupils' work, particularly in Key Stage 2, which clearly indicates what pupils need to do to improve or states why a particular piece of work is of a good standard. This impacts most positively on pupils' learning and is a practice that needs to be disseminated across the school. The setting of homework is variable and there are opportunities being missed for homework to be used as a vehicle for enhancing pupils' learning.
105. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are at an early stage of learning English, benefit from good quality teaching and support. Support staff play a significant role in the good progress that pupils make. They are sensitive to the needs of individuals whilst at the same time providing challenging activities. The support that

pupils receive from teaching and support staff enables them to take a full and inclusive role in all aspects of the curriculum.

106. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of the areas of strengths and weakness within the subject. The co-ordinator has carried out a small number of lesson observations and these have been supplemented by observations from the headteacher and Local Education Authority advisors and consultants. The information from these observations is used effectively to identify areas for improvement in teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has accurately identified the need for a more rigorous approach to the scrutiny of pupils' work to help improve standards further. The school recognises that there is a need to improve pupils' speaking and recording skills and procedures and strategies are already in hand for this to happen, which if rigorously followed and implemented should see an improvement in standards.
107. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment, target setting and for tracking pupils' progress as they move through school. Again the school and the co-ordinator do not show any signs of complacency and are keen to refine the procedures still further so that they can have the biggest possible impact on helping to improve teaching, learning and standards. The co-ordinator is developing the whole concept of "family literacy" well. She is seeking ways for families to become more involved in the education of their children. This is an important development and when fully embedded in school practice should prove to be a most important and influential strategy in improving pupils' learning and achievement. Resources are satisfactory overall although there is a need to develop the range of non-fiction books at Key Stage 2, and to increase the range of video and audio materials to raise standards further.

## **MATHEMATICS**

108. The 2001 end of Key Stage 2 test results show that standards in mathematics are well below the national average, and well below average in comparison with similar schools. The 2001 results were adversely affected by the high percentage of pupils in the group who had special educational needs. The 2001 end of Key Stage 1 tests indicate that pupils' attainment is below the national average, and average in comparison with similar schools.
109. At the time of the last inspection, standards were in line with national expectations. The current inspection findings indicate that standards in mathematics are below national expectations at the end of both key stages. However, this does not in any way indicate or suggest that the quality of education is less effective. Over the last few years the nature of the school has changed significantly and almost all of the school population now has English as an additional language. In addition, the percentage of pupils with special educational needs has increased. These factors have impacted significantly on standards. Pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress.
110. The weaker element of pupils' learning in both key stages is their ability to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding to new situations. Although pupils are often effective in the way in which they solve simple number and pattern investigations, they have difficulty in solving word problems because of weaknesses in their vocabulary. These weaknesses are being tackled very effectively in Key Stage 1, where the acquisition of new vocabulary is more manageable, but in Key Stage 2, most pupils have difficulty in grasping the many new mathematical terms, and in untangling complex word problems, especially when they are working under test conditions. There

are good opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to use mathematical skills such as drawing graphs and charts, and for them to take measurements, such as in science where pupils read scales in 'Newtons'. A particular weakness in Key Stage 2, is the pupils' lack of independence and confidence, and this prevents them from successfully organising and carrying out extended and open-ended investigations.

111. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in the number aspect of mathematics is below national expectations overall, although a small number of pupils attain the expected and higher levels in this aspect of their work. Most pupils have a secure grasp of place value when dealing with tens and hundreds, but do not cope well with large numbers, and have very little understanding or appreciation of the notion of infinity. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the vocabulary associated with ordering numbers, and place numbers 'in between', 'before' and 'after' other numbers. They understand the idea of 'greater/lesser' than, but do not consistently recognise and know the symbols for these terms. Pupils enjoy finding patterns in number, and in a lesson seen during the inspection, pupils of all ability levels became totally engrossed in an investigative activity that required them to complete sequences of number by finding the pattern first. Pupils are sometimes hampered in their number work by their lack of immediate recall of number facts. For example, although they can use their fingers to add numbers up to twenty, few can come up with an immediate answer, and this slows them down in their written work.
112. Pupils make good progress in their number work as they move through Key Stage 2, but although more pupils attain the expected and higher levels than in Key Stage 1, their overall attainment is still below expectations because of the higher than average percentage of pupils who struggle with their work and do not achieve the expected standard. Pupils become noticeably more skilled in handling larger numbers, and successfully use and apply some of the techniques they learn in Key Stage 1, such as partitioning. For example, when asked to double two hundred and thirty six, pupils separate the hundreds, tens and units, and double two hundred, then thirty, then six, before adding the component parts together. As in Key Stage 1, a significant weakness in the pupils' learning is their poor recall of number bonds and multiplication facts. Very few pupils have immediate recall of times tables, and this leads to mistakes when they are making written and mental calculations. Pupils' understanding of place value continues to be secure, and by the end of Key Stage 2, a small number of higher attaining pupils confidently handle very large numbers with ease and confidence. Pupils do not always take enough care with their written work, and few pupils use their existing knowledge of mathematics to check the reasonableness of their answers. At a very basic level, for example, pupils multiplying two odd numbers together do not check that their answer is also an odd number. Most pupils know how to round numbers up to the nearest ten or hundred, but do not consistently use this information when making mental calculations such as 'forty nine times three'. Higher attaining pupils understand the relationship between percentages, decimals and fractions, and confidently convert from one to the other.
113. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' understanding and knowledge of shape and measure are below national expectations. Most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the different metric units for measuring length, weight and capacity, but few are sufficiently confident or accurate when making estimates. The teachers provide some good opportunities for the pupils to develop their powers of estimation, such as in a recent activity where pupils were asked to find classroom objects that were approximately ten centimetres in length. Pupils' understanding of money is satisfactory, but at a lower level than expected in relation to their age. Most pupils have a basic knowledge of fractions of shapes, but are less secure when calculating fractions of numbers. Pupils

are gaining an appreciation of the properties of two and three dimensional shapes, although some are struggling with the names of more complex shapes such as 'pyramids' and 'spheres'. Few pupils as yet are making connections between the number of edges and corners of two dimensional shapes. Pupils' understanding of angle as a measure of turn has been significantly enhanced by their work using the programmable floor robot. By programming this robot, pupils have gained an understanding of the notion of a right angle turn.

114. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in the aspect of shape, space and measure is below national expectations overall, although a small number of pupils attain the expected or higher levels in their work. By the end of the key stage pupils have a satisfactory understanding of metric measures, and also know some of the most commonly used imperial measures such as 'feet', 'inches' and 'pints'. They name and recognise a wide range of two and three dimensional shapes but do not make enough generalisations about the number of edges, faces and corners when working out the properties of three dimensional shapes. Information and communication technology has been used effectively to support the pupils' learning in Year 5/Year 6 when they rotated shapes as part of their work linked to rotational symmetry. This activity significantly enhanced their learning of both mathematics and information and communication technology and was a great source of interest and pleasure to them. Most pupils know how to calculate the area and perimeter of regular two dimensional shapes, but all but the higher attainers have difficulty in applying this learning when working with irregular shapes. Pupils have good opportunities to measure and draw angles, and know that angles on a straight line add up to one hundred and eighty degrees. Pupils have recently completed an activity about probability, and this learning is secure for all ability groups. Pupils confidently predict what is the most likely outcome when given a particular set of circumstances, and understand through their practical work the odds of particular events occurring, such as a coin landing on a given side.
115. The teaching of mathematics is good in both key stages. Teachers work hard to prepare exciting and stimulating lessons that will capture the pupils' attention, and advance their learning. Tasks are well matched to the levels of ability in the class, although this is more difficult in the Year 1/Year 2 class where there is a tremendous spread of ability and maturity. However, although satisfactory, the learning does not fully reflect the quality of teaching. Pupils require a great deal of adult support, and lack the confidence to tackle new learning by themselves. Their rate of written output is very low, especially in Key Stage 1, and many of the pupils lack the skills and discipline to concentrate exclusively on recording tasks for a given amount of time. This disadvantages them when they are working under test conditions within a specified timescale. The National Numeracy Strategy is well embedded, and teachers make good use of the mental mathematics session at the start of lessons to help the pupils to become more agile in their mental calculations. New learning is very carefully introduced, and explanations are very clear so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them. Nevertheless, there are times in most classes where the planned activity is postponed because the teacher realises that pupils have forgotten their previous learning, or that they do not have the necessary experience within which to contextualise the new learning. In Key Stage 1 pupils have good opportunities to investigate number and pattern, and this is helping them to work towards generalisations, such as, 'all numbers multiplied by ten end in zero'. In Key Stage 2, the pupils do not have enough opportunities to carry out extended investigations, because of their lack of independent learning skills, and this prevents them from using and applying their mathematical knowledge in different situations. The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory, but does not always tell pupils how to improve their work further. Effective use is made of homework in Key Stage 2, although not all pupils

conscientiously complete homework tasks. Teachers provide some good opportunities for pupils to use computers in the suite, for the completion of charts and graphs, for example, but do not always make enough use of class-based computers in lessons.

116. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has a good grasp of standards throughout the school. She carefully analyses end of key stage test information to highlight strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning, which are subsequently addressed. Some monitoring of teaching and learning has taken place through classroom observations, and more opportunities are planned for the future. The use of assessment to monitor pupils' progress is good, and information is effectively passed from class to class. Whilst in general, the mixed age classes present no problems to teachers, who are skilled in matching work to pupils' needs, the range of ability and maturity in the Year 1/Year 2 class is very great, and pupils would benefit from being taught in single age groups for some of the time. Support staff are very well used to provide additional help for pupils with special educational needs, or those who are at an early stage of learning English, and they are unobtrusive and sensitive in their approach. Resources for mathematics are satisfactory overall.

## **SCIENCE**

117. The 2001 end of Key Stage 2 test results show that standards in science are very low in relation to the national average, and very low in comparison with similar schools. These results place the school in the bottom 5% of schools nationally, and in the bottom 5% of schools in the comparative sample. The 2001 results were adversely affected by the high percentage of pupils in the group who had special educational needs. The 2001 end of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments indicate that pupils' attainment is well below the national average. The pupils' performance in science at the end of both key stages is typically lower than their performance in English and mathematics. This is because many of the pupils have very little breadth of experience on which to draw, and many struggle with the scientific vocabulary.
118. At the time of the last inspection, standards were in line with national expectations. The current inspection findings indicate that standards in science are well below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. However, this does not in any way indicate or suggest that the quality of education is less effective. Over the last few years the nature of the school has changed significantly and almost all of the school population now has English as an additional language. In addition, the percentage of pupils with special educational needs has increased. These factors have impacted significantly on standards. Pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress.
119. Pupils' attainment in the investigative and experimental aspect of science is well below the expected level at the end of both key stages, and is the notably weaker area of learning for Key Stage 2 pupils. In Key Stage 1, pupils have regular opportunities to carry out investigative work, but because of their very low starting point, their attainment is well below expectations in this aspect of their work. Pupils have difficulty in expressing their ideas because their vocabulary is very limited at this stage, and they have difficulty in working independently of the teacher. Although very good emphasis is placed on this aspect of the science curriculum in Key Stage 2, pupils lack the necessary confidence and independence to set up investigations for themselves and to identify and pursue their own lines of enquiry. In both key stages pupils' learning is adversely affected by their inability to devise their own methods of recording their observations. Pupils rely heavily on their teachers, who provide a very good range of



strategies to support pupils when they are making written records. Charts are used very well in the lower part of Key Stage 2, and pupils progress to writing their own accounts of investigations by the end of the key stage. However, their reports are often very thin.

120. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have only a limited knowledge of living things, and their attainment in this aspect of the science curriculum is well below the expected level. Pupils know that living things need water, but have difficulty in recalling their other needs. Many pupils have difficulty in making the connection between different groups of living things. For example, they recognise that humans are living things, but when they start learning about plants, do not grasp the idea that these also are living things. Most pupils name the main parts of the human body, and know that good diet and regular exercise are important for healthy growth.
121. As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in extending their knowledge and understanding of living things, but their attainment in this aspect of the science curriculum is below national expectations at the end of the key stage. Pupils cover a good amount of work, but as in Key Stage 1, many pupils have difficulty in transferring their knowledge. For example, during the inspection the teacher asked Year 5/Year 6 pupils what germs needed to grow, and some of the pupils gave the answer as 'soil', as this was a recently learned fact about living things. These difficulties arise partly because of language problems, and partly because pupils have very little experience on which to draw. Most pupils explain the food chain, but do not readily use the associated vocabulary of 'consumer', 'predator' and 'prey'. Pupils have a very basic knowledge of the human skeleton, and the main bones, but are less secure in their understanding of the main systems of the human body, such as the digestive and respiratory systems.
122. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils do not have sufficient knowledge of materials and their properties and their attainment is well below national expectations. Although pupils are learning the vocabulary of opaque and transparent, few pupils use it with consistent accuracy to describe objects around them. Discussion with pupils indicates that they understand that certain materials are more suited for some purposes than others, but pupils lack the necessary vocabulary to explain their ideas clearly. Very few pupils understand that materials can be changed by heating them or cooling them, and only a very small number of higher attainers know that some changes, such as burning, are permanent.
123. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of materials and their properties, and this is a relative strength of their learning. However, although many pupils speak confidently about this aspect of the science curriculum, their written work is weak and does not reflect their full understanding or capability. By the end of the key stage, most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the way in which materials can act as both insulators and conductors. This learning has been significantly enhanced by investigative work that focused on ways of preventing sound from travelling, and ice from melting. Recent work about solids, liquids and gases has given pupils the opportunity to learn about the different states of matter, but although pupils have a secure grasp of the difference between solids and liquids they have difficulty in explaining the notion of a gas. Work in Year 3 /Year 4 about magnetism has encouraged pupils to consider the properties of metals, and most understand that not all metals are magnetic. Teachers throughout the key stage work hard to build up the pupils' vocabulary, but some Year 6 pupils still have difficulty in clearly expressing their ideas, especially when describing processes such as dissolving, evaporation or condensation where the specialist vocabulary is crucial.

124. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' knowledge of physical processes is below the expected level, although in relation to their other science work, this is a stronger feature of their learning. Most pupils understand that light comes from different sources, and higher attaining pupils make a distinction between natural and manmade light sources. Pupils understand that electricity is a source of power, and name several items in their homes that are powered by electricity. Many pupils understand that a complete circuit is needed to power a bulb, and that the battery provides the source of power in classroom experiments. Pupils know that sound travels to the ear, but are not yet able to explain about vibrations in relation to sound.
125. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' knowledge and understanding of physical processes is below national expectations overall, but the pupils' knowledge of forces is good. Because the notion of forces is revisited regularly throughout the key stage, and because this is a stronger feature of pupils' learning when they transfer at the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils make much better progress in this aspect of the science curriculum than in other areas. By the end of the key stage, pupils explain clearly that forces are pushes and pulls, and understand that force is responsible for objects changing direction, speed and shape. Pupils have an appropriately broad vocabulary that enables them to explain their ideas clearly, and they explain the impact of forces such as gravity and air-resistance, drawing on their practical experience to illustrate their arguments. Pupils have carried out several investigations to find out the impact of gravity and air-resistance on falling paper, and this work has led them to a greater understanding of the need for repeating measurements to ensure the reliability of a test. Pupils' understanding of electricity is below the expected level at the end of Key Stage 2, and few pupils can go beyond explaining a simple circuit. Pupils use symbols appropriately in their circuit diagrams, and most understand that a switch can make a break in a circuit. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the earth and beyond is very weak, and few pupils confidently explain the relationship between the sun and the earth.
126. The teaching of science is good in both key stages, and ensures that pupils of all abilities make good progress. However, although the quality of learning is satisfactory, it does not reflect the efforts that teachers put into their teaching. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure, and they ensure that coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study is thorough, enabling the highest attainers in both key stages to attain the higher levels in the end of key stage assessments. Activities are presented in an exciting manner, and good use is made of resources to bring the learning to life for the pupils. Teachers provide a good range of investigative opportunities, but even more needs to be done, in both key stages, to make the pupils more independent in their learning. Pupils are keen to take part in science lessons, but often take a passive role in their learning. They are heavily dependent on adult support when recording their work, and when making choices and decisions. Many pupils of all ages lack the confidence to make suggestions as to how they think an investigation might be tackled. Teachers in Key Stage 2 are very effective in the way in which they promote aspects of literacy and numeracy in science lessons. For example, there are opportunities for Key Stage 2 pupils to carry out research, and for them to record their results as line graphs. Nevertheless, the quality, quantity and breadth of writing that pupils produce in their science work is not enough, and is an aspect that teachers need to address if standards are to be improved. The quality of marking is satisfactory overall, but inconsistent. There are significant strengths in the quality of marking in the Year 3/Year 4 class where the teacher enters into dialogue with the pupils about the quality of their work. Some use is made of homework to support pupils' learning in the upper part of Key Stage 2, but even more could be done. Pupils are beginning to use information and

communication technology to support their learning in science, and this is an ongoing area of development in the school.

127. The leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has a very good overview of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning through her careful and thorough analysis of the end of key stage assessment results. She is aware that pupils need to become more independent in their learning, and that they need to be more productive in terms of their written output, and has some ideas about how these improvements can be brought about. The school makes good use of the national scheme of work to guide teachers' planning, and has taken good account of the organisation of the pupils in mixed age classes when devising a two year rolling programme of topics. Teachers make good use of ongoing assessments to monitor the pupils' progress and attainment, and to make necessary adjustments to the curriculum. The school's resources are not satisfactory in range, quantity or quality for the current school population. Many of the pupils have very limited experience on which to draw, and need a great deal of visual support to help them to understand new learning. The school has insufficient books and video materials to contextualise new learning, and to bring it to life for the pupils. Not enough use is made of educational visits to places of scientific interest. This is because many parents have difficulty in meeting the associated costs because there are often several children in the same family. The subject is very effective in promoting aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and there are many moments of awe when the pupils respond to the 'magic of the moment', such as in Year 5/Year 6 when the teacher mixed bicarbonate of soda with vinegar and caused a spectacular reaction, or when the Year 3/Year 4 teacher dyed carnations with different food colourings absorbed through the stems of the flowers. Classroom assistants play a crucial role in science lessons, and their additional support contributes significantly to the good progress pupils make.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

128. Pupils' attainment in art and design is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Standards are similar to what they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school, and acquire the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers value pupils' artwork highly, and throughout the school there are colourful and exciting displays of the pupils' work. In the Year 3/Year 4 class especially, displays are very effectively enhanced by interactive labelling, which tells the observer what skills, techniques or media have been used, and what the stimulus to the activity was. Although the school gives a good amount of time to art and design in both key stages, because pupils' rate of work is often very slow, tasks sometimes take longer than anticipated to finish. This means that over the course of the year pupils' range of experiences is sometimes limited. More effective use of homework for preparatory tasks, or for pupils to practise newly acquired skills, would enhance the pupils' learning, and would enable more effective use to be made of the time available in school.
129. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' drawing skills are of a satisfactory standard, and pupils show a growing awareness of shape and perspective, although they do not yet have the necessary skills to show light and shade in their work. Year 1 pupils have recently completed some very attractive drawings of sea-shells and small rocks, following a thorough observational and tactile examination of these objects. The pupils noted the spiral patterns around some of the shells, and reproduced them accurately in their own drawings. As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in drawing, and use shading to give their work depth and texture. However,

because there are sometimes quite long gaps in between drawing topics, pupils do not have the regular practice that would enable them to achieve better standards in this aspect of their artwork.

130. Standards in painting are at the expected level at the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a secure grasp of how to mix a variety of colours to achieve different shades and tones. They have experience of mixing colours to match given shades, such as when Year 1 pupils tried to capture the exact colours of the sea-shells they were studying, and they often use primary colours to good effect to create bold and attractive pictures. Pupils have had experience of combining paint with other media, such as when they make wax resistant patterns and pictures, and when they use collage materials such as paper and fabric to add texture to their paintings. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress as they move through Key Stage 2, and have some particularly good opportunities in Year 3/Year 4 to be more imaginative in their use of paints. For example, Year 3/Year 4 pupils have recently studied the work of Richard Long. Following his example, they have used a natural feature in the environment as their starting point, and have used natural materials to paint a 'path around a pond'. The pupils chose to use mud as their 'paint' and applied it with leaves and stones. The results have been stunningly displayed by the classteacher, and the display has been further enhanced by the pupils' computer generated descriptions of their work.
131. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have satisfactory experience of working in three dimensions, although some of the work could be more original and imaginative. Pupils use clay and dough regularly to create small models, and this work is of a satisfactory standard. They create a range of textured pieces using paper, card and textiles, and know how to roll, curl, fold and scrunch paper to create different effects. In Key Stage 2, there are fewer opportunities for the pupils to work with clay, but Year 5 /Year 6 pupils have recently moulded masks of characters from 'Alice in Wonderland', using preformed moulds. Pupils have put a lot of effort into decorating the masks with different media, and the highest attainers effectively evaluate their work, describing the features with which they are most and least pleased. Pupils have the opportunity to work with fabric, and have recently designed and made textile sculptures based on containers. A most attractive feature in the school hall is the textile collage 'Pandora's Box', which pupils worked on last year with representatives of the Skipton Mothers' Union. This imaginative collage work also linked closely to the pupils' literacy work about Greek myths, which provided a good source of inspiration.
132. Pupils' knowledge of the work of well-known artists is a relatively weaker aspect of their learning, largely because the pupils' recall is very poor, and they have little in the way of recorded work to refresh their memories. Key Stage 1 pupils understand that there are well-known artists who have produced work that is of world renown, but for the vast majority of pupils, their knowledge is very shaky. In Key Stage 2, pupils have more experience of looking at the work of well-known artists and craftspeople, and wherever possible, teachers use these opportunities to extend the pupils' cultural understanding. For example, in Year 3/Year 4 pupils have studied Aboriginal art, and have learned that the different characters and symbols convey quite distinct meanings. By the end of Key Stage 2, the higher attaining pupils have a satisfactory recall of the work of Matisse, Picasso and Hockney, artists whose work they have studied in school, and have produced landscapes in the style of Hockney. This work has been effectively enhanced by a visit to the local Saltaire Mill which houses a Hockney exhibition. Year 5/Year 6 pupils have also visited a local museum to study Islamic artefacts, and have reproduced some of the main features in 'mini-sketchbooks'. However, for most Key

Stage 2 pupils, their knowledge and understanding of the impact of the work of well-known artists are below the expected level.

133. The teaching of art and design is satisfactory overall, and it is good in the Year 3/Year 4 class where the teacher has a particular personal interest and affinity for the subject. Art and design is taught regularly in all classes, and during the course of the year, pupils experience most aspects of the subject. Pupils of all ages enjoy art lessons, and their learning is significantly enhanced and enriched when they have the opportunity to visit art galleries and museums, or when teachers make use of resources as a stimulus for learning. For example, during the inspection Year 3/Year 4 pupils watched a video at the start of an art lesson, and this was very effective in holding their attention, and in developing their subject specific vocabulary. There are times when pupils do not show enough individuality in their work, and in part this is sometimes due to the teachers not providing enough opportunities for choice. For example, the size, shape and colour of paper, the media and subject matter are often tightly prescribed by the teacher, and this means that often the outcomes are very similar. In addition, many pupils have difficulty in coming up with original ideas, and require a great deal of adult support. Throughout the school teachers plan their lessons carefully, and go to a great deal of trouble to ensure that resources are readily available and accessible. They present activities in an interesting and lively manner that captures the pupils' interest. Some good use is made of computers to support pupils' learning in Key Stage 2, but even more could be done to raise the pupils' awareness of the capacity of computers for design.
134. The subject is satisfactorily led by the co-ordinator but she is leaving school at the end of the current academic year, and no replacement has yet been identified. The co-ordinator has a good overview of what is being taught in each class, although no formal classroom monitoring activities have taken place. The arrangements for assessing and recording the pupils' progress and attainment are satisfactory, although there are no formal mechanisms for identifying pupils who have a particular talent in the subject. Although the school has enough basic resources, there are weaknesses in terms of resources for specialist areas such as printing, and batik, and this limits the range of learning opportunities that can be offered to the pupils. The school recognises the positive impact of visiting speakers and educational visits on pupils' learning in art and design, and this is an aspect of the curriculum that the co-ordinator would like to develop if more resources were available. The school currently does not offer extra-curricular activities in the subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

135. Pupils' attainment is below national expectations at the end of both key stages. No judgements were made about pupils' attainment at the time of the last inspection. Although pupils start from a very low baseline, their progress is nevertheless unsatisfactory as they move through the school. This is partly because the pupils find it difficult to retain and recall information, and also because the subject is currently not a priority for development, and not enough time and resources have been given to design and technology in recent years. The curriculum is satisfactory, and covers the National Curriculum programmes of study, but most pupils take longer than expected to complete projects and their breadth of experience is therefore limited.
136. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils know how to make simple models, using a satisfactory range of materials and joining techniques. However, their work lacks imagination, and the outcomes are often very similar. For example, pupils have made

working models of 'Incy Wincy Spider', but because they followed the teacher's design, all of the winding mechanisms are the same, and there is little variation in the materials used. Pupils have experience of devising their own preliminary designs, but because they lack independent learning skills and confidence in their creative ability, many rely too much on their teachers' ideas and are not sufficiently proactive in generating their own. Evaluations of finished products are generally conducted as class discussions, and pupils do not have enough experience of recording their own ideas about the models they have made. However, in discussion they explain some of the problems involved when sticking pieces of shiny paper together with sticky tape, and in making sure that the moving parts were free to move. The pupils' lack of specialist vocabulary, and their lack of experience, independence and confidence hamper their learning, and slow them down in their work.

137. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is below the expected level. Their ability to design and evaluate is particularly weak. Year 5/Year 6 pupils gained some experience of food technology when they designed and made sandwich fillings. This activity gave them an appreciation of the need for hygienic conditions when handling food, and also enhanced their knowledge of Western food. In this particular activity, good links were made with mathematics as the pupils gathered data about the preferences of the children who tasted the sandwiches. Pupils do not make enough progress in their use of different materials, and because of a lack of resources, do not have opportunities to work with resistant materials such as plastic and wood, or to use the associated tools, such as hammers, drills and nails. Pupils' ability to plan their own work is considerably restricted by their lack of confidence, their lack of independent learning skills, and their lack of experience. Because they have only a limited range of subject specific vocabulary, they have difficulty in expressing their ideas clearly. Pupils are not sufficiently analytical when suggesting how they might improve their designs. Pupils' recording skills are very weak, and the lack of written information makes it difficult for them to refresh their memories and to recap on their previous learning.
138. The quality of teaching is now satisfactory overall, although there have been weaknesses in the recent past linked to the lack of time given to the subject. However, the quality of pupils' learning is unsatisfactory. Pupils are not always sufficiently committed to their learning, and older pupils do not have a positive attitude to design and technology activities, and regard the subject more as a leisure activity than as an important part of their education. This view adversely impacts on the quality of their learning. Teachers are now appropriately focusing on developing pupils' skills of designing, and are trying to encourage the pupils to be more independent in their learning. Coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study is satisfactory, but often a disproportionate amount of time is spent in contextualising the activities for the pupils. Good links are made between design and technology and other subjects, and these are effective. For example, in work linked to mathematics pupils made nets of cuboids and designed their own boxes, and in Key Stage 1, pupils made stick puppets which they used to enhance the telling of a story in literacy. Very good use is made of classroom assistants who work closely with pupils in lessons, giving them very good support and guidance. Pupils throughout the school are very well behaved in lessons, and work well with one another on joint tasks. Currently not enough use is made of homework to extend the pupils' learning, and teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to record aspects of their work in written form.
139. The co-ordinator is conscientious and supportive of her colleagues and provides satisfactory leadership and management for the subject. She monitors standards through informal but regular discussions with staff, but she has not yet had any formal opportunities to monitor teaching and learning through classroom observations.

Information and communication technology is being used successfully for pupils to design and apply graphics where appropriate in their work. Because many of the opportunities the school offers are new experiences for the pupils, the limited resources are inadequate in meeting the pupils' needs, and in giving them the breadth of experience they require if standards are to be raised.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

140. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, and below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards are lower than they were at the time of the last inspection. However, this does not represent a decline in the quality of education the school provides, but reflects the considerable and significant change in the school population since that time. The vast majority of pupils now have English as an additional language, and a higher than average proportion of pupils have special educational needs. These factors impact adversely on pupils' progress and attainment in geography. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall, but in Key Stage 2, their lack of experience is more detrimental to their learning, and despite the teachers' best efforts, they do not attain the expected standards in their work.
141. In Year 1 and Year 2 pupils focus on the journeys and travels of people in their families and this helps them to understand the wider world, and gain a satisfactory knowledge of places near to them and far away. By the end of the key stage, most pupils accurately locate England on the map, but do not know the location of other major countries. As they move through the key stage, pupils gain an appreciation of the purpose for maps for showing the relative location of different places. During a Year 1/Year 2 lesson seen during the inspection, the pupils' knowledge of maps was enhanced when they observed and studied the road layout outside the school. Although pupils are introduced to an appropriate range of geographical vocabulary, some pupils have difficulty in recalling this learning. Most pupils make a distinction between manmade and natural geographical features in their local environment.
142. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have developed a basic understanding of the differences between different localities. They have studied the town of Ladakh, and are able to give some facts about the climate, the people and the lifestyles. Pupils in the Year 5/Year 6 class have worked independently on projects about contrasting areas and some have chosen the Lake District. However, the pupils' lack of ability to interpret information leads them to making inaccurate statements, such as when pupils confused the number of visitors to the Lake District with the number of inhabitants. Visits are organised by the school to enhance pupils' learning, and these are extremely effective in raising pupils' awareness of the locality and in developing geographical skills. Pupils have looked at buildings and features of the local landscape, and through follow up work at school, pupils have gained an appreciation of the impact of physical features on town planning and tourist attractions, for example. Pupils' geographical enquiry skills are unsatisfactory, and pupils are too ready to accept what is presented to them by their teachers, and are not sufficiently proactive in questioning their teachers, or in finding things out for themselves. Higher attaining and more confident Key Stage 2 pupils show a mature interest in the environment and explain well why pollution is a serious matter.
143. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, and the teaching has good features. Teachers plan and use resources effectively. They keep lessons moving at a steady pace so pupils remain interested. However, pupils' personal motivation is limited at the end of Key Stage 2, and many pupils prefer to be given information rather than to

work things out for themselves. Teachers introduce technical vocabulary well, but few pupils in either key stage retain this learning over a long period of time. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in geography, although written work is minimal and laboured. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively by their teachers and classroom assistants, and they benefit from working in mixed ability groups alongside their friends. Most pupils show good levels of interest in geography lessons, especially when the activities are practical and pupils are collecting information. Older pupils use graphs well to record their findings, such as when they carried out a local traffic survey. However, pupils of all ages have difficulty in recording their work in written form, and the small amount of work they have recorded in their books does not do full justice to their knowledge and understanding as demonstrated in discussion. Homework is rarely set in geography, and this means that there are missed opportunities for pupils to extend their learning further, and to keep their written work up to date.

144. The subject is managed well by the co-ordinator, although opportunities for her to monitor teaching, learning and standards through classroom observations are limited. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge of the subject, and provides good support for colleagues. Effective work has been put into updating the policy and scheme of work to cover the mixed-age classes, and a two year rolling programme ensures that topics are not revisited too frequently. Teachers make good use of resources to enliven the pupils' learning, but there are not enough resources in school, and currently teachers bring many of their own artefacts and resources into school to support their lessons. There are not enough opportunities for the use of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning, although this is an ongoing area of whole-school development. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' social, moral and cultural development, as they explore the lifestyles of people in other countries, and consider moral issues such as pollution. Teachers make good ongoing assessments of the pupils' achievements, and keep satisfactory records. Teachers know the pupils well, and on an individual basis, set targets for the pupils to aim for.

## **HISTORY**

145. Pupils' attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 is below the nationally expected level. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and this helps to ensure that pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. No judgements were made about attainment in history at the time of the last inspection.
146. By the end of Year 2 pupils do not have a secure understanding of chronology. Many pupils start school with a poorly developed knowledge and understanding of the wider world. The teaching ensures that pupils are introduced to famous people in history and they compare how things such as houses, toys and lifestyles have changed over the years. Despite this too few pupils are able to put historical events in chronological order or to talk about and describe how things have changed over time. The pupils have a limited understanding of the different sources of evidence that can be used to tell them about the past. Pupils talk securely about periods in history that they have recently studied but have more difficulty in recalling what they have previously studied.
147. The satisfactory and at times very good quality of teaching and learning continues throughout Key Stage 2 but attainment remains below the expected level by the time that pupils leave school. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the Victorians. They



recall the differences in lifestyle between the rich and poor and talk knowledgeably about the hardships faced by children in this period of history. The older pupils are currently studying life in Britain in the 1960s and talk about this period of history with confidence. They talk animatedly about personalities of the 1960s such as the Beatles and John Lennon in particular. They have more difficulty in explaining happenings such as "The Peace Movement." Again the pupils are adept at recalling recently studied periods of history but have far more difficulty in recalling historical facts about for example the Ancient Greeks, the Romans or the Vikings. The pupils' sense of chronology remains a weaker element. When for example younger pupils at this key stage were asked to state how old they thought the school logbook was the guesses ranged from sixty years old to five thousand years old. Only a small number of pupils have a good understanding of the fact that different people may interpret historical events and happenings differently. Weaknesses in pupils' writing and research skills also impact adversely on their levels of attainment and often their oral knowledge is stronger than their recorded work.

148. Teaching and learning in the subject are satisfactory with examples of very good teaching at Key Stage 2. The planning for the subject is good and teaching constantly seeks to ensure that there is an emphasis on the development of historical skills as well as historical knowledge. What is to be learnt in a lesson is always shared with the pupils and the learning objectives are often revisited at the end of the lesson to see if they have been achieved. The best teaching ensures that this information is then used effectively to guide and support future curriculum planning. Pupils are well behaved in lessons and listen attentively both to the teacher and to the contributions of their classmates. The pupils enjoy learning about events in history and many contribute appropriately to question and answer sessions. There are however some pupils that are more reluctant to contribute despite the very sensitive and patient cajoling from teachers. In very good lessons observed at Key Stage 2 on Britain in the 1960s and life in school in Skipton over the last eighty years teachers made very effective use of learning resources to help bring the lesson to life. In these lessons the teachers' own subject knowledge and enthusiasm motivate the pupils and add much to their learning.
149. There are times when teaching does not have a high enough expectation as to the amount of recorded work pupils are expected to complete and this means that pupils do not have a point of reference from which to recall previously covered work. In some lessons too much time is spent on the talking and discussing element of the lesson and too little time left to record. This is not helped by the fact that some pupils lack a sense of urgency when writing and do not complete pieces of work either in a lesson or over time. The school has already started to address this issue by setting higher expectations as to the amount of work pupils are to complete, to encourage pupils to take a greater responsibility for their own learning and to put a greater emphasis on personal study and research. Teaching is also effective when pupils are provided with opportunities to use computers for research and recording purposes. This good practice is not as consistent as it could be. The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory and is at its best when what is needed for pupils to improve is clearly stated. The setting of homework is inconsistent, as is parental support in ensuring that tasks that are set are completed and returned. This adversely impacts on pupils' learning.
150. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of what areas need to be tackled to improve standards in the subject. This includes the need to increase the number and range of visits and visitors to enable the pupils to gain a wider view of the world from an historical perspective and to use the subject as a vehicle for improving pupils' writing and research skills. The co-ordinator monitors planning and provides regular informal guidance and support for colleagues.

Opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in a more rigorous manner have been limited, although plans are in hand for this to happen when the subject is an identified area for improvement on the school development plan. Procedures to assess and track pupils' progress have just been introduced and whilst these procedures are appropriate the recency of the initiative means that there has not been sufficient time to have a major impact on helping to raise standards. Resources for the subject are unsatisfactory due to a shortage of high quality books and artefacts to support and enhance pupils' learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

151. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Since the last inspection, when standards were identified as below expectations, and information and communication technology was highlighted as a key area for improvement, the school has made good improvements and has kept up with the rapid pace of national development in the subject. The subject has been a priority area, and the school has made a significant investment in developing and improving resources. All staff have received appropriate training, and this has given them good levels of confidence. The school has set up a very good computer suite, and has appointed a very effective subject co-ordinator. Although computer skills are taught well in the computer suite, the regular use of computers in lessons remains an area for improvement. Pupils make good progress overall as they move through the school, although the progress of Key Stage 2 pupils in the aspect of controlling and modelling is only satisfactory, as this is a relatively new area of work for these pupils, and the school needs further resources to support the pupils' work in this area.
152. By the end of Year 2, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, use word processing programs well to write sentences and to produce longer pieces of work. They know how to draw pictures on the computer to support their work in art and design and have created colourful designs as background to illustrate their stories and poems. Most pupils control the mouse and use the keyboard well. They know how to change the size of font, and independently locate their names in folders. Most pupils still rely on support from an adult when saving or printing their work. Pupils have experience of using a programmable toy, which successfully reinforces their understanding of angle, as they program it to turn and move in different directions. However, many pupils have not understood that the robotic toy is an inanimate object that has been given a set of instructions, and many Key Stage 1 pupils believe that it is a 'living thing'. Year 1 pupils use tape recorders proficiently to record or play back stories and other information. These opportunities help them to practise their speaking and listening skills, and to understand how to modify and improve their work.
153. By the time pupils reach Year 6, most pupils use word-processing programs well to draft and edit short pieces of writing. They successfully enhance text by scanning in digitally generated photographs, or importing images from other programs. For example, in a Year 4 lesson seen during the inspection, pupils successfully retrieved images from 'clip-art' and enlarged or reduced them so that they would fit the text boxes in the newsletters they had composed. Pupils of all abilities are very familiar with changing the style and size of fonts, and most confidently retrieve previously saved work, and make amendments and changes. Pupils do not however make enough use of 'spell-checks' when producing written work. Pupils make satisfactory use of the Internet to find information, and regularly work independently, often in lunch breaks, to explore materials for specific projects. However, they are not yet familiar with

exchanging information with others through the use of electronic mail, although a few have access to this facility at home. Key Stage 2 pupils have begun to use information and communication technology for control, prediction, exploring patterns, simulations and modelling. In mathematics, for example, Year 5/Year 6 pupils have 'flipped' and 'rotated' shapes as part of their work about rotational symmetry. Pupils use computers well to support them in data handling exercises, and produce a variety of different types of graphs and charts. However, pupils have very little experience of using sensing equipment to measure temperature, for example, or of using computers to control external events, such as programming model vehicles to move.

154. The quality of teaching is good overall, and very good where classes are taught by the specialist co-ordinator. Following training, teachers generally have good information and communication technology skills, and classroom assistants are used very well to give individual support to pupils. The co-ordinator prepares excellent help sheets to support the pupils when they are learning to apply new processes. These step by step instructions, with good illustrations, form a good starting point for pupils. Additional materials are produced to support pupils with special educational needs, and this ensures that they progress at the same rate as their classmates. The practice of teaching pupils in half year groups is very effective and ensures that pupils receive the individual levels of attention they need. The quality of pupils' learning is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy working on the computers, and are particularly good at helping one another. However, although most have good levels of confidence, some are hesitant about altering their work, as they are afraid it might be lost. Activities in the computer suite take good account of the pupils' prior learning, and this ensures good progress.
155. The co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subject, and has helped to raise the profile of information and communication technology in the school. She has a good overview of standards, and a clear sense of how the subject will continue to develop in the future. Teachers make good ongoing assessments of the pupils' progress and attainment, enabling them to match work closely to pupils' needs. Computers in the suite are often used well to support pupils' learning across the curriculum, but the school is aware that there is inconsistency in the use of classroom computers, mainly because of the lack of appropriate software.

## **MUSIC**

156. Pupils' attainment in music is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. The subject is allocated a suitable amount of time in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and the use of the national scheme of work ensures that pupils make steady and systematic progress as they move through the school in terms of the knowledge, understanding and skills they acquire. Pupils of all ages and abilities make satisfactory progress, and Key Stage 2 pupils enjoy taking part in a small range of additional lunchtime activities such as choir, guitar club and recorder club. The school currently benefits from the input of a part-time music teacher who works with all classes in the school. However, this additional support will cease at the end of the current academic year. Standards have been successfully maintained since the time of the last inspection.
157. Pupils of all ages enjoy singing, and do so with high levels of enthusiasm and involvement. However, although pupils' sense of rhythm is good, their sense of pitch is only satisfactory, and a number of older Key Stage 2 pupils do not make enough effort to sing in tune. Younger Key Stage 1 pupils benefit from singing a wide range of action songs which are often fast in pace and require them to articulate words quickly and

clearly. These songs help the pupils in their pronunciation of the English language, and are a great source of amusement and pleasure to many pupils. Older Key Stage 2 pupils do not have enough experience of singing in parts, and this is an aspect of their singing that could be developed.

158. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have experience of using a small range of instruments to make simple compositions. They copy and generate simple rhythmic patterns, and most keep a steady pulse. Pupils name and recognise most percussion instruments, but are not always confident about explaining the type of sound they will produce. As they move through Key Stage 2, pupils become more skilled at devising rhythmic patterns, and in putting different patterns together to create a layered effect. Songs are often used well as a basis for composition work in both key stages, with pupils adding instrumental accompaniments to their singing. For example, during the inspection, Year 3/Year 4 pupils composed short sections to reflect the various actions of the song 'Mama says no play'. They effectively represented such sounds as nails being hammered, and floors being swept, and successfully came in at the appropriate time with their sections. Because of a shortage of resources, pupils do not have enough opportunities to compose melodic pieces, and in Key Stage 2, this prevents the pupils from learning about such composing devices as the pentatonic scale. Although pupils in both key stages regularly take part in composing activities that are directed by the teacher, there are too few opportunities for them to work independently and to compose imaginative pieces that express different moods or create pictures. Key Stage 2 pupils do not have enough opportunities to record their work using different forms of notation.
159. Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils regularly listen to recorded music when they enter the hall for assembly, and in class. However, they often have little recall of what they have heard, and almost no knowledge at all of the work or style of any well-known composers. Year 5/Year 6 pupils are currently learning about the 'Songs of the Fifties and Sixties', as part of their ongoing history topic, and they are thoroughly enjoying listening to the songs of the Beatles and their contemporaries. These pupils confidently express their preferences for certain types of music, and appreciate that music can convey a particular mood or idea. In music lessons there are good opportunities for pupils in both key stages to consider the main features of recorded music, and in a lesson seen during the inspection, Year 6 pupils picked out an African drumming pattern, and made a clear distinction between two pieces of music, one that was fast and energetic, and one that was peaceful.
160. The teaching of music is satisfactory overall, and some good examples of teaching were observed during the inspection in both key stages. At the start of a lesson, teachers often use a good range of introductory activities and musical games to capture the pupils' attention, and enthuse them in their learning. Action songs are often enthusiastically presented by teachers, who are very successful in the way in which they motivate pupils and encourage them to take a full and active part in the activities. Lessons take good account of the pupils' previous learning, but teachers do not always stretch the pupils far enough in terms of composing, mainly because some teachers lack confidence in this element of the music curriculum themselves. There are many good opportunities for the pupils to perform, both individually and as a group, and these opportunities help to raise the pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Where the best teaching occurs, teachers encourage pupils to appraise and evaluate their own work, and that of their classmates, but this practice is not consistent throughout the school. Most pupils have good attitudes to music, and are keen to perform and to take part in lessons. However, a few of the older Key Stage 2 pupils sometimes do not put in enough effort, especially when they are singing. Currently pupils keep no written

records of their work in music, and this makes it difficult for pupils to recap on their previous learning. Very little use is made of homework to extend and enhance the pupils' learning, and this is an area the school could usefully develop.

161. The subject is satisfactorily led by the part-time music co-ordinator. However, she is only employed on a temporary contract until the end of the academic year, and the school has not yet appointed her successor. The school has made effective use of the services of the part-time specialist, and her work alongside classteachers has been helpful in raising the confidence of her colleagues. The co-ordinator makes regular assessments of the pupils' progress, and teachers keep additional records of what the pupils have achieved. Although assessment is satisfactory, even more could be done to formalise the assessment procedures through the school, and to link them more closely to the National Curriculum levels. There has been no formal monitoring of teaching and learning through classroom observation, but in practice the co-ordinator has a good overview of how the subject is taught because of her regular contact with each class and their teachers. Currently pupils make very little use of computers to support their learning, but this is a proposed area of whole-school development. The range, quality and quantity of learning resources are unsatisfactory. The school does not have enough tuned instruments, and only a limited range of ethnic instruments. There are too few reference books to support the pupils' learning, and not enough video material to help contextualise their learning and to bring the subject to life for the pupils. The pupils do not have enough opportunities to experience music in the wider sense, through visits to concerts or performances, and this reduces the opportunities to extend the pupils' cultural knowledge and understanding.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

162. During the week of inspection no physical education activities were observed in Key Stage 2 in any aspect of the subject and so it is not possible to make judgements about the levels of attainment or the progress that pupils make in this key stage. However standards are below average in swimming by the time that pupils leave school. The school makes appropriate provision for swimming but not all pupils reach the required standard within this time. Planning and discussions however, clearly show that over the course of the year pupils experience a full range of activities in dance, gymnastics and games. An appropriate amount of time is allocated to the teaching of physical education. Teachers plan appropriate tasks and seek to ensure that pupils' prior attainment and experience are built on and developed as they move through the key stage. Standards in physical education are at the nationally expected level at the end of Year 2. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress over time. Standards and provision in the subject have been maintained since the time of the last inspection.
163. By the end of Year 2 pupils show an appropriate awareness of space when taking part in physical activities. Pupils know the importance of warm up activities and recognise that exercise is an important feature of a healthy lifestyle. When taking part in small game activities pupils show satisfactory levels of co-ordination and throw and catch balls with a reasonable degree of accuracy. The higher attaining pupils have good hand-eye co-ordination and pass balls with speed and accuracy. When working in small groups not all pupils follow the simple rules that have been explained to them and experience some difficulty in working together or flout the rules of the game. On occasions this has an adverse impact on pupils' learning. Teachers' planning shows that over time pupils throughout the school take part in a wide range of different

physical activities that cover most elements of the curriculum. Pupils are provided with appropriate opportunities to learn to swim but not all pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the time that they leave school. The school has accurately identified the need for pupils to develop outdoor pursuit skills because at present there are few opportunities for pupils to take part in this important aspect of the physical education curriculum.

164. Teaching and learning in the subject are satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Planning is clear and takes account of the needs of pupils with different abilities. Appropriate attention is devoted to the development of specific skills in dance, gymnastics and small games. Teaching places appropriate emphasis on the direct teaching of specific skills and ensures that enough time is provided for pupils to practise, refine and where possible enhance their skills. Teachers stress the importance of exercise in ensuring a healthy lifestyle. Pupils clearly enjoy taking part in physical activities. Most pupils behave well in lessons and work co-operatively, although a minority of pupils become a little too exuberant or behave in an inappropriate manner if they do not win a particular game. Teaching is at its best when opportunities are seized upon to use exemplars of good physical activity by individual pupils to the rest of the class. This impacts most positively on pupils' learning and there is an immediate improvement in the performance of the class. Although pupils are generally managed in a satisfactory manner there are occasions when teachers do not gain the full attention of the class when making relevant and pertinent teaching points. As a result not all pupils listen and important developmental points are lost.
165. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, knowledgeable and is determined to improve provision and standards in the subject. The co-ordinator is keen to develop a wider range of extra-curricular activities and to raise the importance of physical activity amongst the pupils and their parents. The school runs a football club and has recently started a 'movement to music' club, both of which are attracting a growing pattern of interest from pupils. Attendance at after school activities is sometimes lower because of the other commitments of the pupils. The school takes part in inter-school competitions and tournaments and pupils have benefited from coaching sessions from local football clubs. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and has carried out a limited number of lesson observations and plans are in hand for a more systematic and rigorous approach when the subject is an identified priority area on the school development plan. Resources to support teaching and learning in the subject are satisfactory.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

166. Standards in religious education are in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those at the early stage of learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress and achieve at an appropriate level in relation to their ability. Pupils' oral knowledge is often at a higher level than the amount of their recorded knowledge because of weaknesses in pupils' writing skills. Improvement has been satisfactory since the time of the last inspection.
167. By the end of Year 2, the pupils recognise and value the importance of friends and people that play an important role in their lives. Pupils have a sound understanding that buildings such as churches and mosques have a special significance for the people that visit them. Pupils know that different religions have special festivals and special books, but are not always able to recall them. Pupils are beginning to grasp the early concepts of religious symbolism such as light and a cross. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity is satisfactory with pupils showing an appropriate awareness of the stories of the Bible. Much of the work that is done in the subject is done orally and so the level of oral knowledge is not always reflected in pupils' workbooks.
168. During Key Stage 2 pupils acquire religious knowledge and understanding at a steady rate and by the end of Year 6 standards remain in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils learn about world faiths and many pupils have a good understanding of Islam because it is their own faith. Pupils also have a satisfactory awareness and understanding of Judaism, Sikhism and Christianity. Pupils know that Sikhs had Gurus as teachers. Pupils name the Five Pillars of Islam. Pupils have a sound knowledge of major Christian festivals and of important events in Christians' lives such as baptism and know and understand that Easter is the most important religious festival for Christians. Pupils show a readiness to compare the similarities of different religions rather than dwelling on the differences. But at times pupils' ability to remember previously covered work is more limited. Whilst there are some good examples of the subject being used to enhance pupils' literacy or computer skills, there are other occasions when opportunities are missed. Whilst pupils talk confidently about their work in religious education the amount of work that is recorded is too little and this prevents pupils from having an effective point of reference to recall previously learnt work. The provision that is made for developing pupils' knowledge and understanding in the subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
169. The quality of teaching and learning in the subject is satisfactory. Teachers' planning within lessons and over time ensures that there is the systematic coverage of different faiths and cultures and pupils are encouraged to discuss their own feelings and beliefs. This is often done in a sensitive manner and many pupils respond well because they know that their views and beliefs will be listened to and respected by teachers and pupils alike. Teachers often try hard to encourage pupils to take a full and active part in discussions and lessons. Behaviour in lessons is often good. Whilst many pupils are always ready to ask and answer questions a minority show more reluctance and are content to rely on their classmates to make contributions. Pupils are certainly not disruptive within lessons but are sometimes rather passive and rely on adult guidance rather than taking initiative and responsibility for their own learning. This is sometimes reflected in the amount of work pupils complete in a lesson or series of lessons. This is despite the prompting and encouragement of teachers.

170. Teachers often use their own subject knowledge to try to enthuse and motivate the pupils. The teachers show good levels of respect for different faiths and religions, shown for example, when the teacher washed her hands before handling the Qur'an and emphasising the unifying rather than divisive features of Christianity and Islam. Planning indicates that all aspects of the locally agreed syllabus are covered. However, whilst there is some understandable repetition of, for example, different faiths, the repeated work does not always sufficiently build upon the pupils' earlier experiences. The best teaching occurs when the subject is taught in a regular, systematic manner where pupils can more easily recall previously learnt work and use this information well to guide and inform the next steps of learning. Some good examples were seen of the marking of pupils' work to set targets for improvement or merely to lay down expectations in terms of the amount of work that is acceptable. This often leads to improvements in the content, quality and quantity of pupils' work. This very good practice is not as consistent across the school as it should be. Homework is not always used effectively to enhance pupils' learning, although at times not all parents play an active enough role in supporting their child's educational development.
171. The subject has not been a focus for development in the last two years because of the priority given to other subjects of the curriculum. The subject is led in a satisfactory manner overall. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and the co-ordinator provides appropriate informal guidance and support for colleagues. Although there has been no formal monitoring of lessons, plans are in hand to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in a more rigorous manner when the subject is an identified area on the school development plan. Resources to support pupils' learning are at a satisfactory level. The co-ordinator has a secure grasp of areas for development in the subject, which include using the subject as a vehicle for enhancing pupils' literacy and writing skills.