

INSPECTION REPORT

WHIPPERLEY INFANT SCHOOL

Luton, Bedfordshire

LEA area: Luton

Unique reference number: 109559

Headteacher: Mrs Charmaine Howard

Reporting inspector: Miss Savi Ramnath
21334

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th June 2002

Inspection number: 195839

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Whipperley Ring Farley Hill Luton
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Telephone number:	01582 725868
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Kevin Batchelor
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21334	Miss Savi Ramnath	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Design and technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? (a) The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? English as an additional language
13807	Mrs Chris Haggerty	Lay inspector		How high are standards? (b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
109839	Mrs Hilma Rask	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Religious education Music Art and design	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? Special educational needs Equal opportunities
30669	Mrs Margaret SandercocK	Team inspector	English Geography History Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Whipperley is an average-sized infant school of 208 pupils between the age of three and seven. It includes a Nursery with 30 children who attend part time. There are slightly more boys than girls. Most pupils live close to the school and a large number join or leave the school part way through each school year. On entry to the school, the skills and knowledge of most children are well below those expected for their age. Many have limited social experience and a significant number do not speak or understand English well. Approximately 40 per cent of the pupils come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds, the majority being Pakistani and Bangladeshi in origin. The school has identified 35 of these pupils as needing additional support in English, with the majority in the early stages of learning English. This is very high when compared with the national average. Thirty-six per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. The number of pupils with special educational needs is below the average for schools of this size. One pupil has a statement setting out the specific provision to be made. This is in line with the national average. Special educational needs covers pupils with a range of learning difficulties, such as speech or communication and visual impairment. The largest single category, however, is pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Since the last inspection there has been a significant turnover of staff, including the headteacher. From September 2002 Nursery education will be provided by an external agency.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school, which provides a safe and caring environment in which to learn. Good teaching and positive relationships contribute effectively to this. Starting from a low level, pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment, though their performance in English, mathematics and science is below national expectations. Parents like the school and all staff work well together and share a commitment to further improvement. The leadership and management of the headteacher and governors are good, with some very good features. The school provides good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- The quality of teaching is good and this is improving the rate of progress that pupils make.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and is supported well by the deputy headteacher and governors.
- The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good. This has a significant impact on their achievement.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school has good links with parents. They are kept well informed and their participation is actively encouraged.
- The staff know the pupils well. They give good educational and personal guidance and child protection procedures are very good.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards in English, mathematics and science.
- The unsatisfactory levels of pupils' attendance and punctuality.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Whipperley Infant was last inspected in June 1997. A new headteacher was appointed two years ago and since then the school has made good progress in tackling the issues which were identified for improvement and in other key areas. As a result, there has been good improvement in the quality of teaching, in curriculum planning and in assessing pupils' attainment and progress. There has been a steady improvement in standards in English,

mathematics and science, which, although better than before, are still below the level expected nationally. This is partly because the majority of children start Year 1 at a low level in reading and writing and nearly half of the current Year 2 pupils joined the school either in Year 1 or Year 2. Standards in art and design and history are higher than they were and now meet national expectations. The provision for information and communication technology has greatly improved with the establishment of a computer suite. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the school now makes good use of outside agencies to help meet the needs of these pupils. Although the needs of higher attaining pupils are generally well met in English and mathematics, the needs of some of the pupils in average attaining groups are not always well met. The induction, support and training for all staff are good and are key factors in helping the school to move forward since the last inspection. The determination and commitment of the headteacher, governors and the now stable staff to improve the quality of education that the school provides and the standards pupils achieve are good. The school's capacity to continue to improve is good

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on based on average point scores¹ in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools ²
	1999	2000	2001	2001
Reading	E	E	E	C
Writing	E	D	E	C
Mathematics	E	D	D	C

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

In 2001, the teachers' assessment in science showed that pupils' performance was below average when compared with all schools but average when compared with similar schools. Although test results at the end of Year 2 indicate that boys do not perform as well as girls, inspection evidence shows little difference in their performance. The school's targets were met in 2001 and unmoderated results for 2002 show that for that year, test targets are likely to be met. Although test results in reading, writing and mathematics have been below national averages for the past five years there has been an upward trend. However, several factors affect standards. These include unsatisfactory attendance and punctuality, high mobility, and a substantial number of pupils who do not have sufficient command of English to achieve their full potential when the tests are taken.

When children join the Nursery many have poorly developed English language and social skills. They receive good teaching and achieve well. Despite this, many children do not reach the national targets for this age group in all areas of learning and, consequently, many children start Year 1 below the levels expected in the key skills of early reading, writing and mathematics.

Work seen during the inspection indicates that overall standards in English, mathematics and science for pupils in Year 2 are below the levels expected nationally although they are slightly better than indicated by the National Curriculum test and task results for 2001. In all other

¹ Average points score - pupils' levels in National Curriculum tests are converted to points and used to compare a school's performance with schools nationally and with similar schools.

² Similar schools are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals

subjects standards are at the level expected nationally; in music there was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements.

Pupils with special educational needs and those at the early stages of English language acquisition make good progress where support is well targeted and where teaching is good. More able pupils are identified and suitably challenged. However, the large number of pupils identified as average attaining are not doing as well as they could because their work, particularly in English and mathematics, is not always well matched to their needs. The school has not yet established procedures for identifying and supporting pupils who are talented or gifted.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and they show interest in their work. They respond well to the attitudes and values that the school promotes.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in lessons, in the playground and around the school. Pupils are polite and helpful.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils willingly take responsibility when opportunities are provided. Relationships at all levels are very good and there is a high degree of racial harmony in the school.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. In spite of good monitoring many pupils do not attend school regularly and a few are often late at the start of the day. This affects their attainment and progress.

Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes make a significant contribution to the life of the school. Attendance is below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching is good and enables most pupils to make good progress. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. This represents a considerable improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. The successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has resulted in good quality teaching in English and mathematics. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well and teachers pay good attention to developing these skills in some other subjects of the curriculum.

Where teaching is very good, teachers have high expectations, of what pupils are expected to achieve and of their behaviour. Lessons are well planned and activities are matched carefully to the needs of pupils who learn at different rates. The purpose of the lesson is made clear to pupils and very effective use is made of resources to support their learning. Questioning is often very intense and used well to probe and extend pupils' learning. Pupils are managed very well and this enables them to concentrate and to make progress.

Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and makes a strong contribution to the good progress the children make in their learning and to their being happy, secure and confident. Pupils with special educational needs and those at the early stages of learning English as an additional language receive a good level of support from learning support assistants. As a result, they make good progress and achieve the targets set for them.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. A broad and relevant curriculum is provided for all pupils, enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented well and assist in the raising of standards. Links with the community are very good and good use is made of the local area and of visits to benefit pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school provides well for these pupils whose needs are identified at an early stage. Parents are involved in reviewing appropriate targets for improvement.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils are well supported, enabling them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good overall. This aspect of the curriculum is covered well and is particularly strong in developing pupils' moral skills. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Arrangements to ensure the welfare and protection of pupils are very good. Pupils' behaviour is very well monitored. Although some good assessment procedures are in place the assessment of the work in core subjects for average attaining pupils is not accurate enough.

The school works very well with parents and keeps them well informed. Very good support offered to pupils reflects the priority given to their care and well-being.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is led and managed well. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has established a very positive climate for learning in the school. A dedicated team of teachers works well together, sharing responsibilities.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors have a clear sense of the school's direction, focusing on improving standards. They provide effective support and are involved in decision-making and evaluating aspects of the school's work. They meet their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school evaluates its performance well in a development plan and prioritises the areas for improvement. Good use is made of statistical data to target support where it is most needed. Procedures for monitoring teaching and learning are good.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Financial administration and control are very good and specific grants are used very well. The school seeks to get the best value when purchasing goods or services in order to make good use of the financial resources available.

The match of teachers and support staff is good. Accommodation and learning resources are good overall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Parents are pleased with most aspects of the school, but they are especially content that their children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • like school • behave very well at school • make good progress <p>They are also pleased that the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expects children to work hard and to do their best • is well led and managed • is welcoming 	<p>Parents raised no serious concerns. Only a very small number mentioned minor matters, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the way pupils' progress is reported • the consistency with which teachers set homework • the range of activities outside lessons

The parents are entirely justified in having the positive views about the school that they have expressed. There has been some inconsistency in the implementation of the homework policy and the school is working hard to address this. Inspectors found that the range of extra-curricular activities is better than in many similar schools and that the quality of information regarding pupils' progress is very good

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

This section should be read in conjunction with the section on standards in the summary. What is reported there is not necessarily repeated here. Details about standards will also be found at the beginning of each subject report and through examples given in those reports.

1. When the school was last inspected in 1997 standards for pupils in Year 2 were below the level expected nationally in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and in a number of the foundation subjects. Over the last five years, results of national tests and teachers' assessments fluctuated and standards have remained below the national averages in reading, writing, mathematics and science. However, for the past two years since the appointment of the new headteacher a high level of teamwork has been established and staff have been working hard to improve standards. Several initiatives have been put into place to raise levels of attainment. These include extensive monitoring of teaching and learning, improved assessment procedures, detailed analysis of statistical data, the implementation of schemes of work, the establishment of an information and communication technology (ICT) suite and the appointment of additional support staff. These measures contribute strongly to pupils' good achievement from the Foundation Stage upwards but have not had sufficient time to make an impact on standards at the end of Year 2. However, a number of contributory factors adversely affect standards and progress:
 - a significant number of children begin school with social skills and English language communication well below those expected of children of a similar age
 - an above average proportion of pupils in all classes are not yet fully fluent in English
 - a higher than average percentage of pupils with special educational needs
 - low rates of attendance and persistent lateness by a small minority of pupils
 - many pupils join or leave the school part way through the school year. Half the pupils in Year 2 joined the school in Year 1 or Year 2.

2. In 2001, the averages of the National Curriculum test results for pupils in Year 2 showed that standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well below the national average. The picture was much more encouraging, however, when compared with the performance of pupils in similar schools, where pupils' performance was average in reading, writing and mathematics. Since 1997, although standards have remained below the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics, there has been a steady improvement and the overall trend has been upwards. There are no science tests for this age group but the teachers' own assessments showed standards below the national average and average when compared with similar schools. There were some differences in the performance of boys and girls in these tests. Boys did not perform as well as girls. Positive steps have been taken to encourage the active participation of boys in lessons and no significant differences were noted during the inspection in the standards being achieved by boys and girls. The school has not yet identified any pupils as gifted or talented.

3. The headteacher and senior management team analyse assessment information carefully and have started monitoring the progress of pupils as they move through the school, in order to help raise standards. The performance of pupils from different minority ethnic groups is analysed by the local education authority, and the information well used to monitor the achievement of these pupils. The school's detailed analysis of pupils' test results has led to a number of initiatives in English, mathematics and

science. The grouping of pupils by prior attainment for English and mathematics in Year 2 and a focus on reading and investigative work in science are having a positive impact on standards, and test results for 2002 show an improvement on last year though they are still below the national average. Despite the number of factors which affect standards adversely in Year 2, the school set challenging but realistic targets for the pupils' performance in the English and mathematics tests in 2002. It has worked hard to achieve them and unmoderated results for 2002 indicate that they are likely to be met. In 2001 targets were met.

4. During the current inspection, standards, although better than those reported in the last inspection and in the 2001 national tests, are still below national expectations at the end of Year 2 in English, mathematics and science. In English and mathematics improvements have taken place because the school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and has targeted additional support to help raise standards in reading. In science, standards are slowly improving because of an increased emphasis on experimental and investigative work. However, the school recognises that delivery of the science curriculum over a two-year period needs to be reviewed in order to ensure that pupils' skills develop systematically from year to year. In all other subjects except music, standards are in line with the levels expected nationally. In music there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about standards. In religious education standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Starting from a low base, pupils' achievement is good overall in Year 1 and satisfactory in Year 2. Learning is sometimes limited in Year 2 because work, particularly in English and mathematics, does not always meet the needs of some of the pupils in the average attaining group. As a result, these pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
5. There is a very wide range of attainment among children who enter the Nursery. A large proportion do not speak or understand English well, because this is not the language used in their homes, and their social skills are generally underdeveloped. Overall, their attainment on entry is well below that of children of a similar age. The children are given a good start to school life, and most achieve well. As a result, the majority attain the expected standards in their personal, social and emotional development and creative development. In all other areas most children do not reach the expected standards and attainment by the end of the Foundation Stage³ is below the level expected nationally. Consequently, a significant proportion of children begin the National Curriculum in Year 1 at levels lower than expected in the important areas of early reading, writing and mathematical development.
6. The successful introduction of both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is having a positive effect on pupils' progress. In literacy sessions good opportunities are provided for pupils to write for a range of purposes, for example, information writing, making lists, and writing recipes and rhymes. However, in some other subjects like geography and history, recording skills are not fully utilised. From Year 1, pupils' numeracy skills are applied and developed well in some subjects. For example, in design and technology they are at the expected standards. Although opportunities overall are satisfactory there is no consistent planning to indicate opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.
7. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and who receive specialist support make good progress and attain standards that are comparable with and sometimes

³ Foundation Stage is the provision for children aged from three to the end of the Reception Year. The QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of Early Learning Goals for the end of the Foundation Stage. These goals are sets of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of five. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, language, literacy and communication, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

better than other pupils in the school once they have achieved a satisfactory level of competence in English. The good progress made by these pupils results from their good attitudes to learning which are encouraged by the school's positive ethos and the careful grouping of pupils so that they have support from their classmates during activities. The collaboration between class teachers and staff funded through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant is effective in promoting the progress of targeted pupils. The school has recognised the need for greater emphasis on the vocabulary linked to the subject as many of these pupils have difficulty with specific and technical vocabulary.

8. Pupils with special educational needs are identified well and make good progress both in lessons and over longer periods of time. Those with specific learning programmes are supported effectively by their teachers and other adults. The pupil with a statement is supported well and makes good progress in all subjects. Higher attaining pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science but their work is not always challenging enough in other subjects because the same work is often given to all pupils. Their progress is particularly evident in English and mathematics. Pupils identified as average attaining, especially in Year 2, are not always doing as well as they could. This is because the assessment of pupils' needs within this group is not precise enough and as a result the needs of all pupils are not always well met. Where teaching is good these pupils are often given work well matched to their prior attainment, but this is not always the case.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and they enjoy school. The good attitudes of pupils have been maintained since the last inspection. This has a positive effect on their learning and the standards achieved. They listen attentively to instructions from adults, responding well to teachers and to learning support assistants. They handle resources well and are confident when talking to each other. A very small number of pupils who have challenging behaviour or poor concentration respond well to the teachers, who use questioning and reminders to sustain pupils' interest and concentration. Pupils are keen to take part in the extra-curricular activities that are available. Parents are very happy with the standard of behaviour and the attitudes and values that the school promotes.
10. Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is very good and during assembly it is, on occasions, excellent. This is an improvement since the school was last inspected, when behaviour was judged to be good. Pupils are totally engrossed with the wide range of lunchtime activities which are available. They interact very well with the midday assistants and the headteacher who joins in playing with pupils every playtime. Pupils sit in friendship groups at lunchtimes, which are sociable occasions. Pupils and parents are confident that bullying is not an issue and any isolated incidents are always dealt with appropriately. Scrutiny of the school's behaviour records confirms this view. There is no recent history of exclusions.
11. Pupils with special educational needs show the same good attitudes towards school as their peers, and their behaviour is usually very good, both in the classroom and in small-group activities with support staff outside the classroom. Pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties are sensitively supported through positive behaviour management approaches, which enable them to learn appropriate ways of behaving.
12. Pupils' relationships are very good. This is an improvement since the last report, when relationships were judged to be good. Relationships at all levels in the school are very good. Pupils relate well to each other and spontaneously applaud each other's success. For example, when pupils in Year 1 were discussing their attempts at

recreating Aboriginal art designs, the comments were very positive. There is strong racial harmony in the school. During a religious education lesson a Moslem pupil confidently spoke about the similarities between the celebration of Eid and the Jewish celebration of Shabbat. Boys and girls of all ages and cultures play very well together. Parents say that children of all cultures get on very well together. This has a very positive effect on the life of the school.

13. Pupils' personal development is good. When given the opportunity pupils respond very well by using their initiative. For example, pupils in Year 2 take great pride in escorting the Reception children to their classroom after lunch. Pupils are involved in the life of the school and each class has monitors who take the registers to the office.
14. The attendance of pupils in the academic year 2001 was poor. However, the school has improved attendance by over two per cent in the 2002 academic year. The attendance of pupils, although still below the national average, is improving. The school has successfully addressed the issue of extended holidays in term time and no holiday in the current academic year has exceeded ten days. There is still, however, some parental condoned absence. The school is aware of this and is taking the appropriate action to bring about improvements. The unsatisfactory attendance has an adverse impact on the attainment and learning of the pupils concerned.
15. There is a small hard core of pupils who are regularly late. This disrupts the start of the school day and affects their learning and the learning of others. These pupils are not always asked to explain why they are late. Registration is taken quickly and efficiently and lessons start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The good quality of teaching has an important effect on standards. Teaching is significantly better than at the time of the last inspection, when 20 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. In all lessons seen the teaching was judged to be at least satisfactory, in 60 per cent of the lessons teaching was good and in a further 18 per cent it was very good. The improvements in teaching are partly due to the increased monitoring of teaching and learning, the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and improvements in assessment procedures.
17. Teaching that had a positive impact on pupils' learning was seen throughout the school. In Year 2, although the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good practice, the needs of the average attaining pupils are not always met. Good teaching was found in nearly all subjects. The teaching of English, mathematics and science and of nearly all of the foundation subjects is good. This has a direct impact on the good progress pupils make in these subjects as they move through school. No judgement could be made about the quality of teaching in music, religious education and design and technology, as there was insufficient evidence to make secure judgements.
18. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall and gets children off to a secure start. Teachers, nursery nurses and support staff in both the Reception and Nursery classes plan and work together very effectively to ensure that children learn well. Teaching is good in all areas of learning and, in particular, children's personal and social development is given good emphasis. This is significant in helping children take a more active part in other learning activities. Work prepared is interesting and children enjoy the range of activities offered.

19. The successful introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has had a positive effect on the teaching of English and mathematics. The teaching of these subjects is good. In the best practice teachers explain concepts clearly and, as a result, learning is good. In the whole-class sessions, most teachers lead discussions well and manage pupils effectively by using a range of strategies to promote learning. Discussions at the end of lessons are used well to review the main points of the lesson and to ensure that pupils have a secure understanding of the work before moving them on to the next stage in their learning. However, in some instances in Year 2 work is not always sufficiently well planned to meet the different levels of attainment of the large group of pupils identified as average attaining. As a result, their learning is limited.
20. Teachers' subject knowledge is good in most subjects and is well used for planning in most lessons. This was well demonstrated in a Year 1 science lesson, where the teacher's confident knowledge of the five senses enabled the pupils to use their senses to identify objects around them. In a Year 2 ICT lesson, pupils were successfully taught to use the right hand side of the mouse to 'click' and to 'drag' different items in order to change the music they had composed in the earlier session. Overall, there are no weaknesses in particular subjects and teachers pool their knowledge very effectively when planning.
21. Planning has improved since the last inspection. The adoption of the National Literacy and Numeracy frameworks has considerably helped planning for English and mathematics. Planning in these subjects ensures that objectives and tasks are identified for the less able and extend the most able. Shared planning in year groups has ensured that there is less variation in teaching and attainment between classes in each year group. In other subjects, the quality of planning is inconsistent. Learning intentions are sometimes more descriptive of the activities to be undertaken than of what is to be learned. Further, plans do not consistently identify the provision for pupils of different levels of attainment and there is sometimes insufficient differentiation to take account of their prior attainment. The needs of pupils with English as an additional language and of pupils with special educational needs are not routinely included in the lesson planning.
22. Teachers manage pupils very well and the positive relationships between teachers and pupils have a significant effect on pupils' attitudes to work. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson on adding pairs of numbers, the good relationships between the teacher and pupils played a significant part in giving lower-attaining pupils the confidence to talk about their methods for working out their sums.
23. Teachers' expectations of work vary. Overall, although teachers have high expectations of higher and lower attaining pupils, they do not always have appropriate expectations of average attaining pupils. When expectations are high pupils respond well to them and are keen to do their best, as they did in a Year 1 literacy lesson on answering questions from a non-fiction text. The teacher's clear expectations were shared with the class and, after a lively start, the pupils undertook a variety of activities, which were carefully planned to meet the needs of the pupils in the class. The result was that the pupils made good progress, and were pleased with what they had learned. Teachers do not always have high enough expectation of the presentation of work, which at times is poorly presented.
24. The teachers' use of questions to find out what their pupils know at the beginning, during and at the end of the lesson is good. Using their good knowledge of pupils, most teachers match questions well to different attainment levels as well as to levels of competency in English language skills. Teachers also make good use of the end-of-lesson discussions to review what has taken place during the lesson and to assess how well the pupils have got on. Very good examples were noted during a science

lesson in Year 2, where the teacher's effective questioning at the end of the lesson on investigating the best conditions for a snail's habitat helped pupils to consolidate what they had been taught while it was fresh in their minds. Pupils were eager to share their new knowledge and skills and this consolidated their learning effectively, as well as showing the pupils that they had made progress. Throughout the school teachers mark pupils' work but there is some variation in supportive comments and advice for improvement.

25. Teachers make good use of time and in the best practice, for example the mental mathematics session, not a minute is wasted. However, in a few lessons where the introduction is too long and the pace of the lesson slows, a number of pupils lose interest and become restless. Some teachers use time-targets well to inject pace and urgency into pupils' working, giving them five minutes to complete a task or reminding them that they have only 15 minutes left. From the very beginning, the school expects pupils to read at home and most do. Homework begins in the Reception class, partly to encourage links with parents, and increases as pupils move through the school. The inconsistency of the homework policy was an area of concern to some parents. This being monitored by the school.
26. The teaching of pupils learning English as an additional language and receiving targeted support in small groups is good. Most teachers take account of the bilingual profile of their class and take care to make meanings clear for pupils with English as an additional language. A strong feature of the school's commitment to meeting the needs of all pupils is the priority which the school has given to the appointment of learning support assistants in every class, and the good provision which is made for bilingual pupils through additional mother tongue support in lessons. In the good lessons teachers adapt their teaching informally to enable pupils with English as an additional language to take part in lessons, and all adults in the classroom give extra help to these pupils whenever they can. However, teachers' knowledge and understanding of the strategies used to support these pupils are still developing
27. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and this is an improvement from the time of the last inspection. The school works closely with the learning support advisory service to plan appropriate support for pupils with specific literacy learning needs. All classes have the benefit of additional learning support assistants, who work efficiently, under the class teachers' direction, to support the children's learning in the classroom. Where it is deemed to be appropriate to children's learning needs, occasional withdrawal for small group activities takes place. For example, one group of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 made good progress in re-ordering a sequence of simple sentences by talking this through with a learning support assistant before undertaking the task in the computer suite with her. Targets set in individual education plans are clear and fully understood by learning support staff and teachers share their plans with learning support staff at the start of each week. However, the school has recognised the need to further develop their approach to individual education plans, in the light of the requirements of the new code of practice. Although targets are set for all pupils in the school, pupils with special educational needs are not yet fully aware of their own individual targets. Scrutiny of planning and records indicate that provision for a child with a statement of special educational needs is carefully planned. Appropriate support is provided by the special needs learning support assistant.

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

28. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum which meets statutory requirements in all subjects, and takes good account of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. This represents an improvement since the time of the last inspection. The school follows the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education appropriately. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good and is matched to the Early Learning Goals expected for this stage. The school now provides sufficient time for the teaching of science although there is a need to review the way in which the subject is taught, to ensure that topics covered in Year 1 are revisited in Year 2. Shortcomings in the curriculum for design and technology, identified in the last inspection, have been addressed. The school has satisfactory policies in place for all subjects, and all schemes of work have been reviewed and updated in line with recent curriculum requirements. Although there will be no formal teaching of sex education, questions raised by pupils are answered frankly where they arise. Issues relating to healthy living, drug abuse and child safety are sensitively explored and physical education also makes a positive contribution to health, safety and personal development. Good use is made of circle time where pupils talk about their feelings. Through the development of the new computer suite, pupils have improved opportunities to develop their skills in ICT.
29. The school has effectively introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In literacy lessons, pupils with special educational needs have tasks set which match their identified learning needs. Additional mother tongue support provided for pupils learning English as an additional language assists these pupils in accessing the curriculum. However, not enough use is made of the strategies to teach writing across the curriculum and in mathematics there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to solve everyday mathematical problems.
30. All groups of pupils have equal access to the curriculum, as the school has prioritised the appointment of a learning support assistant for each class, and makes good use of additional bilingual support assistants. The deputy headteacher meets weekly with learning support staff to ensure that their work is appropriately directed to pupils' learning needs. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils are identified early and are effectively monitored as they work towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Good links have been established with external agencies which provide specialist advice and support when this is needed.
31. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good. For example, pupils visit the Stockwood Park Museum as part of their work on homes, houses and lifestyles. They visit the local Christian church and the Sikh Gurdwara as part of their learning in religious education, and local religious leaders visit the assembly. Visiting musicians from the Bedfordshire music service come in to play stringed and wind instruments, and a project with a local artist provided pupils with an opportunity to create a colourful mural. An additional 'Booster Club' for literacy and numeracy is provided by the school, and a sewing club is attended by a group of pupils. The school has established links with local junior schools and with a range of pre-school providers. The school takes care to support pupils with special educational needs and their families during the transition to the next stage of learning. The school has good links with nursery nurse and national vocational childcare training institutions.
32. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, and provision for moral development is very good. This represents an improvement since the time of the last inspection. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Collective worship meets the statutory requirements and pupils are encouraged

to reflect on their own lives and actions. Through shared celebrations and visits from, for example, the vicar from the local church, and the imam from the mosque, children gain further knowledge of and insight into different world faiths, values and beliefs. Spiritual development is encouraged across the curriculum. For example, pupils quietly reflected on their own moods and those portrayed on the faces of children in photographs during a calmly conducted dance lesson. Work undertaken in religious education also makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

33. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school's 'Golden Rules' are at the heart of its life, and remind pupils of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in a positive, consistent approach. This encourages pupils to consider the consequences of their actions right from the beginning of their time in school, and when they enjoy 'golden time' (time allocated for good behaviour) at the end of the week. Pupils know that they can earn back any lost 'golden time' during the week, by their own actions. Staff provide very good role models to the pupils and the headteacher makes an important contribution during outdoor play to assist lunchtime supervisory staff in maintaining high standards of behaviour. Minor incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with sensitively and effectively.
34. Pupils' social development is good overall. The very good relationships seen throughout the school encourage pupils to gain confidence and increased self-esteem. Pupils eagerly take on small tasks around the school, such as taking the register to the office, or distributing resources. However, there is scope to develop fuller opportunities for pupils to use their own initiative and to take on further responsibilities. Pupils make valuable charitable contributions to those less fortunate than themselves, such as to the NSPCC and Childline. They also visit the nearby home for the elderly, where they talk with the residents and sing to them.
35. Cultural development is good and is well promoted through activities, which extend all pupils' knowledge and understanding of a multi-cultural society. Pupils enjoy a range of visits, for example to Stockwood Park, a wildlife farm, a Sikh Gurdwara and a local church. Visitors into school, such as the storyteller from the traveller support service, a veterinary nurse, musicians, artists and the local fire service, enhance pupils' cultural experiences. Work undertaken in geography and history makes a valuable contribution to pupils' cultural development. For example, in geography pupils compare their own locality to the Island of Struay where, in contrast, there are farm vehicles, fields and cottages.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The care and guidance of pupils was judged to be good in the last inspection report. It is now very good and is a strength of the school. The staff know pupils very well and provide a very high level of care to all of them. Procedures to ensure the care, health and safety and protection of pupils are very good. Staff make good use of outside agencies to support pupils as and when required, and pupils are well supervised at all times.
37. There are very good procedures in place for child protection, which follow the local authority guidelines and meet legal requirements. The headteacher and her deputy have attended the appropriate training courses and all staff have received training on child protection awareness and the appropriate procedures. The policy for children who do not live at home is in place and is effective. The school liaises with other agencies and some care programmes are in place. There are good procedures for the induction of pupils new to the school. Pupils who join the school during the academic year have a buddy to show them around during their first week.

38. Procedures for first aid are very good. Some members of staff have attended a four-day and a one-day first aid course. This helps to ensure that all first aid incidents are dealt with appropriately. Parents are informed about all incidents. There are very good procedures in place to record when medication is dispensed. The school has very good policies and procedures to ensure the health and safety of pupils. All fire and electrical regulations are met and equipment used by the school is regularly serviced. Pupils are recorded when going on and off the school site during the day. A governor and the headteacher carry out an annual risk assessment of the building. The site manager regularly carries out risk assessment and reports to the headteacher. The school is in the process of complying with the new regulations for all volunteers to have full police checks.
39. Procedures for monitoring and promoting regular attendance are very good. The school is making very good use of the computer-generated information on attendance to target families whose children do not attend school regularly. A bilingual assistant contacts parents who are not fluent in English to explain the importance of attending school regularly. In addition to this the school has recently appointed a family support worker whose priority is to work with families to bring about improvements in pupils' attendance. An educational welfare officer supports the school and one family is being prosecuted because of parent-condoned absence. The school rewards pupils who attend school regularly with a £5 book voucher. Attendance is also linked to the school's rewards policy and the 'Compact Scheme', which runs every half term. The existing and new procedures now in place should bring about improvements in the attendance of pupils. The school introduced new procedures during the inspection to record and monitor punctuality more effectively.
40. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. Pupils understand the rules and want to do their best for their teachers. The whole-school policy recognises pupils' achievements and behaviour at weekly assemblies. Class teachers sometimes use class rewards to promote teamwork in the classroom. The compact scheme is very effective in rewarding all pupils who behave well, remember their books and complete their homework. The midday supervisors give stickers to pupils who are helpful at lunchtime and behave well. Procedures for eliminating poor behaviour are also very good. The headteacher maintains a central record of any inappropriate behaviour, the action taken and the outcome. Parents are involved at an early stage when there are concerns about a pupil's behaviour. Midday supervisors report any inappropriate behaviour to the class teacher; this ensures effective monitoring of playground behaviour.
41. The school has a good policy on race equality, which is in line with legal requirements. The very good educational and personal support and guidance demonstrate the evident respect for all groups of pupils.
42. As required, the school is currently reviewing the existing policy on special educational needs in the light of the new code of practice for pupils with special educational needs. The review process is well under way. The school has good assessment and monitoring systems in place, and this helps staff to identify pupils with special educational needs at an early stage and to take appropriate action to meet specific needs. The school has good links with a range of other agencies, such as the learning support service, advisory services for visual impairment, educational psychologists, and behaviour support service.
43. The development of assessment has a high priority. Good systems are now in use throughout the school. In all subjects, there is effective recording of what individual pupils can do and the skills they have learned from the Foundation Stage through to the end of Year 2. This represents a clear improvement since the last inspection, when this was recognised as an area in need of development. Pupils' progress is

closely tracked with the identification of National Curriculum levels on pupils' records and there is good provision for the assessment and tracking of pupils with special educational needs. However, as yet, the school uses few regular assessments at the end of each unit of work to check what pupils have learned and understood. The information available in all areas of the curriculum is used to plan work, with teachers referring to pupils' records in their regular planning meetings. However, the work, particularly in English and mathematics, for the group of pupils who the school considers are average attaining is still not assessed accurately enough. More precise challenges for pupils within this average band would ensure more rapid progress and raise standards further.

44. The teachers maintain good records of pupils' personal development. These are used to set detailed and accurate expectations regarding behaviour or attitude, for pupils with particular needs or difficulties. The good provision for personal development, together with this precise monitoring, ensures that these pupils gain in confidence and become more aware of the impact of their actions on others. They are challenged to strive to conform to the expected patterns, and the very high quality relationships evident in the school have a positive impact on ensuring improvement

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. Parents who attended the parents' meeting before the inspection or who completed the parents' questionnaire are very happy with what the school achieves and provides. There were some concerns about homework, after-school activities and the amount of information from the school. The inspection team found that the school offers more extra-curricular activities than other similar schools and that the quality of information provided by the school on pupils' progress is very good. The school is reviewing the homework policy in response to parental concerns.
46. The school has very good links with parents. Parents regard the headteacher as very approachable and friendly. The annual written reports on pupils' progress are evaluative of both knowledge and skills acquired. Targets are specific, clear and helpful to parents. However, attainment is not related to the levels set out in the National Curriculum and parents do not know how their child is doing in relation to other children of the same age nationally. There is a meeting in the autumn term when parents meet their child's teacher and the class routines are discussed. This meeting is very helpful to parents. There are parent-teacher consultation meetings in the spring and summer terms, when pupils' progress is discussed. The school ensures that interpreters are always available for parents who do not speak fluent English. Regular letters are sent home, which keep parents well informed of all the events which are happening in the school. The school organises one curriculum meeting per term but has been very disappointed with the response from parents. The school prospectus and the governors' annual reports are well written and very informative, but the school's National Curriculum test results for 2001 are compared with the national figures for the previous and not the current year.
47. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school, and the contribution of parents to their children's learning at home and at school, are satisfactory. The school is working very hard at encouraging and enabling parents to become more involved in their children's education. They are providing information to parents about attendance in home languages. Parents have access to a bilingual teaching assistant daily before and after school.
48. Some parents are helping the school by translating the school brochure into Turkish, Urdu and Bengali. They are also aiming to translate part of each school newsletter. This should prove very effective in encouraging more parents to come into the school.

The school organises a number of social events such as discos, which are well attended by parents. But curriculum meetings are not well attended. The majority of parents read regularly with their children at home and a significant number of parents attend the parents' meetings to discuss their child's progress. However, only six parents attended the parents' meeting before this inspection.

49. The school works hard to develop and extend links with parents of pupils who are on the special educational needs register. Parents are regularly invited into school to discuss children's progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans, and these plans include activities which may further support children with their learning at home. The school promotes the interests of all groups of pupils very well by the ways in which parents are kept informed about the life of the school and invited to contribute to children's learning at home. Bilingual staff make an important contribution in this area.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The headteacher is a very good leader and provides very clear direction for the development of the school. She has very strong support from parents, governors and staff and they attribute the improvements in the school over the last two years to her leadership and the very high level of teamwork established since her appointment. She has established among the staff, governors, parents and pupils a shared sense of purpose and a positive commitment to raising standards.
51. The overall improvement since the last inspection, in 1997, is good. Although little headway had been made in addressing the key issues from the inspection when the headteacher joined the school two years ago, on appointment she took up the challenge and started to make inroads in addressing the weaknesses. Standards in reading and mathematics, in spite of a dip before the headteacher took up her post, have risen steadily and, overall, standards are higher than at the time of the last inspection. Strategies for improvement are beginning to have a positive impact, particularly on the pupils in Year 1. The need to improve the content of the mathematics curriculum has been securely addressed and this has supported the improvement in standards. The staff team has agreed clear aims, shared by governors, which are evident in all the school's work, ensuring a caring and harmonious ethos. Effective support is given to pupils with special educational needs and the school now has in place very secure structures to support staff and provide ongoing training. The procedures for the induction of new staff continue to be developed and, as there have been several changes of staff, have been a vital asset in creating the strong team now in place. The actions taken in pursuit of improvement in standards of teaching and learning, in enhancing the curriculum for pupils throughout the school, and for secure financial management of the school, have been markedly successful.
52. The headteacher and the senior management team are now fully involved in evaluating the performance of the school and in dealing with the areas where performance is not good enough. The high quality teamwork, supported by the very strong relationships, ensures a singleness of purpose. All are keen to work with the headteacher in moving the school to greater success, valuing her support in enabling them to develop their role. Subject co-ordinators have a clear plan for development and this is well linked to the monitoring of teaching and learning, resource provision and expenditure, with each co-ordinator managing a budget for their subject.
53. The headteacher and governors monitor the effectiveness of equal opportunities carefully. There are good adult role models in the school, including adults from minority ethnic groups and the school takes care to invite visiting speakers from a

wide range of backgrounds and to celebrate their skills in support of equal opportunities. The visit of a member of the Traveller Education Service to tell a story in assembly is thoughtfully remembered and highly valued by pupils. The school's aims focus upon valuing pupils of every cultural background, and on promoting self-esteem and positive attitudes. These aims are promoted purposefully, engendering a positive ethos that is very supportive to learning.

54. The governing body gives good support to the school and is very effective in fulfilling its statutory obligations. Although there are vacancies on the governing body at the moment, the governors are keen and enthusiastic and have a clear understanding of their role. The governing body meets regularly and members are eager to see improvements in the school and to raise standards. They take advantage of the many training opportunities offered and their conscientious approach, together with their effective committee structure, ensures that they carry out their functions properly.
55. There has been a significant improvement in the way the school analyses and uses test results and other performance data in its drive to raise standards. The analysis of national test results ensures that the school now has accurate targets for improvement and adjusts the curriculum to work towards these targets. The attention given to curriculum planning and enhancing the role of the subject co-ordinators has paid dividends: the teaching has improved and there is greater empowerment of subject co-ordinators so that they monitor their subjects carefully, make sound judgements about teaching and maintain clear records of what pupils can do. There is a regular programme for release time for all subject co-ordinators, when they consider the performance in their subject and plan for its development.
56. Priorities for development are determined through consultation between the headteacher, staff and governors when they have evaluated the current position. The extent to which the whole team is able to gain an accurate picture of each subject's strengths and weaknesses is well supported by the school's regular programme for monitoring performance. Governors understand the need to find out for themselves what goes on in the school and many visit on a regular basis. They are becoming increasingly adept at identifying what works well and why, and where improvements need to be made. For example, the focus on investigative work in science and the changes to the programme for the teaching of reading are having a positive impact on standards. Similarly the commitment to the monitoring programme is proving invaluable in ensuring that co-ordinators and teachers understand their responsibilities for raising standards. The very high value the headteacher places on governors' support and the detailed information supplied for them ensures that they are clear about the school's priorities for development. These are reasonably aligned to those identified by the inspection team.
57. The headteacher, staff and governors share a firm commitment to promoting an inclusive school ethos, where all groups of pupils are valued. This is reflected in all school policies and documentation and in the daily life of the school.
58. The special needs co-ordinator provides good leadership. Good management of provision for pupils with special educational needs means that all teachers are involved in drawing up individual education plans, and in monitoring and evaluating progress. The co-ordinator and headteacher have ensured that all staff are fully aware of the requirements of the revised code of practice: additional staff training on this took place during the week of the inspection. The staff and governors share a strong commitment to the needs of pupils with special educational needs, and the chair of governors, who is also the governor responsible for special educational needs, is extremely well informed and takes a most active role in monitoring provision within the school.

59. The headteacher and the financial administrator manage the day-to-day financial procedures of the school very well. The longer-term financial planning is very clearly linked to educational priorities detailed in the school's development plan and governors are fully conversant with the details. The finance committee, led by a very efficient and knowledgeable chair, monitors the budget very carefully in order to target spending where it will best improve the quality of provision and raise standards. The headteacher and the governing body are committed to giving both teachers and pupils as much support as possible; their prudent financial management enables them to meet this commitment by employing a much higher number of teaching assistants than in most schools of a similar size. This ensures that for a large part of the day the pupils can be taught in smaller groups. The good progress made by all pupils and in particular by the pupils with special educational needs and those who are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language, is in no small part due to this level of investment. The commitment of the governing body to supporting parents and the community is made concrete in their spending to provide a Nursery building from the 'carry forward' monies available when the headteacher was appointed. The Nursery, supported by community funding, will open in September and provide much needed educational and financial investment for the young children in the neighbourhood.
60. The governing body is well versed in the principles of best value. The governors use information from the national tests to compare the school's performance with other schools in their drive to raise standards, and care is invariably taken to seek competitive tenders for all large items of expenditure. The headteacher, financial administrator and chair of finance drive a hard bargain when seeking the best prices for improvements to the building, like the planned double-glazing. Specific grants for special educational needs and for pupils from minority groups are very well spent, as are the other standards fund grants. They are invariably used to support the pupils and enhance their learning opportunities.
61. The school runs very smoothly and all staff, including office staff, site manager and ancillary staff, work in an efficient, calm and professional manner, supporting the school's work extremely well. Good arrangements are in place for the performance management of teachers, and statutory requirements are met relating to the performance management of the headteacher. Targets for improving standards and arrangements for the continuing professional development of the teachers are well linked to the school's performance management procedures. Collectively, the teaching staff have a good range of experience to teach the Foundation Stage curriculum, religious education and all subjects of the National Curriculum, although governors recognise a need to recruit a confident music specialist. The school's staff development programme ensures that the induction and training of all staff are given a high priority. Very clear handbooks and very good support from senior teachers ensure that new staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have opportunities to continue with training and can watch more experienced colleagues at work. This has contributed significantly to the feeling of belonging to a team as new staff have been appointed.
62. The use of new technology is used well. The school's finance administrator fulfils the responsibility for managing the finances of the school, using a computerised accounts system very efficiently. A very high level of expertise ensures that procedures concerning invoices, statements and budget figures are accurately completed. Registers are managed electronically, and the level of skills demonstrated in using new technology is high. In other areas of the school, the supply and use of new technology are developing reasonably. The newly refurbished suite for computers is well used, though often classroom computers are not in use. Although planned opportunities to teach pupils ICT skills have improved since the last inspection, there is room for further development in using e-mail connections to other schools and

Internet information across the curriculum.

63. The school is fortunate in having spacious and attractive accommodation, which meets the needs of pupils well and is very well maintained by the site manager and the cleaning team. Newly refurbished toilets, a new Nursery building, the existing Foundation Stage accommodation and the suite for computers in the library are all improvements undertaken during the last two years. The well-appointed classrooms are bright, very clean and appropriately furnished. The adjoining practical areas allow a range of activities to be undertaken by small groups of pupils and the high level of support ensures that pupils use these opportunities well. The planned expenditure on double-glazed windows will appropriately improve the external character of the building, which has suffered somewhat from minor vandalism, for example of the Foundation Stage play area, and does not reflect the high quality care seen inside the building.
64. The school has a good range of books, materials and equipment to teach its curriculum in the core subjects, ICT and religious education. In other subjects and in the Foundation Stage the range is adequate, except in music, where improvements need to be made. The library facilities are good; the range and quantity of books are being improved steadily. The new attractive information books are up to date and support pupils' learning well. In addition, each year group has a good collection of fiction and information books that are well chosen to interest the pupils and support the systematic development of reading. Money has been spent judiciously to reflect the wide range of cultural backgrounds and attainment groups within the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. In order to further improve the quality of education and raise standards, governors, headteacher and staff should:

□ **Improve standards in English, mathematics, science by;**

- refining the assessment procedures for the large number of pupils in the average attaining group and ensuring that the information gained is used consistently to assist planning to meet the needs of these pupils
- providing regular planned opportunities for all, especially the higher attaining pupils, to write extensively
- ensuring that opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills in other subjects are fully utilised
- providing more opportunities for pupils to use mathematics in everyday situations and to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve number problems
- improving pupils' understanding of mathematical language
- reviewing the teaching of the science curriculum to ensure that all the aspects are regularly taught.

[Paragraphs 4,6,8,17,19,28,43,55,76,80,82,83,88,89,91,92,97,99]

□ **Continue with efforts to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality.**

[Paragraphs 14,15]

In addition to the key issues, the governors should consider the following minor issues for inclusion in the action plan. Measures should be considered to ensure that:

- teachers' short-term plans in the foundation subjects identify more precisely what pupils of different abilities, including those with special educational needs and those who are not fully fluent in English, are expected to learn and do by the end of the session *[Paragraphs 21,100]*
- the quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work is consistent so that comments encourage pupils and inform them about ways to improve their work *[Paragraphs 24,100]*
- teachers' expectations of pupils are clear in relation to the quality of the presentation of their work *[Paragraphs 23,84,92,99]*
- more opportunities are provided for pupils to use their own ideas, to make choices about their work and take on further responsibilities. *[Paragraph 34,97]*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	22	8	0	0	0
Percentage	0	19	59	22	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR- Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	15	178
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	64

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR-Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	33

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	56

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	11.1
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	41	25	66

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	33	31	37
	Girls	18	19	17
	Total	51	50	54
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	77 (71)	76 (78)	82 (72)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	32	36	33
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	52	56	53
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	79 (75)	85 (76)	80 (76)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	7
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	12
Indian	4
Pakistani	37
Bangladeshi	15
Chinese	1
White	95
Any other minority ethnic group	7

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes:

YR- Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.7
Average class size	29.7

Education support staff:

YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	239

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	48
Number of pupils per FTE adult	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001 - 2002
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£

Total income	540,605
Total expenditure	518,117
Expenditure per pupil	2,658
Balance brought forward from previous year	52,334
Balance carried forward to next year	74,822

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6.0

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

208

Number of questionnaires returned

47

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	34	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	70	30	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	37	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	49	4	2	4
The teaching is good.	72	26	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	30	13	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	38	0	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	34	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	51	40	6	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	49	49	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	46	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	48	11	0	13

The small number of returns means that statistics have limited significance.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

66. Since the time of the last inspection, provision for the youngest children in the school has been reorganised, and children now enter the two Reception classes annually on a full-time basis, during the year in which they will be five. The Reception classes are accommodated in a spacious and well-designed area, with three interconnecting classrooms, one of which is used as a shared activity area. It also has a secure and attractively landscaped outdoor play area. At the time of the inspection, the school was also providing 30 part-time nursery places in a Nursery class on a temporary basis. A new Nursery, run by a voluntary provider, is being established next term in the new purpose-built building on the site, as a part of the 'Flying Start' initiative. Although some children in the Reception classes have had the benefit of time in the Nursery class, where there is access to an outdoor play area, many other children have had limited outdoor play opportunities in their pre-school setting, and a number of children have had no pre-school experience.
67. Overall provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The school has successfully introduced the Foundation Stage curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception classes, and the overall management of this provision is undertaken by the enthusiastic and well-informed co-ordinator. Two qualified nursery nurses work in the Reception classes in good partnership with the two teachers, and the Nursery class is staffed by an experienced nursery nurse and a classroom assistant. Teachers' planning is good and takes good account of the recommended Early Learning Goals for children of this age. Ongoing assessment is also good and staff keep detailed and informative records of the children's progress. Baseline assessments, which are undertaken during the first six weeks in school, indicate standards which are well below expectations for children of this age in all areas of learning and experience. No children attained above average scores on entry to school this year. The school is starting to systematically analyse the baseline assessment evidence, although there have been some inaccuracies in this in the past, which the school has recognised and addressed. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall in all areas. Children make good progress towards the expected Early Learning Goals in the Reception and Nursery classes. However, many children are not yet fluent English speakers, and in addition, a number of children are identified with special educational needs. By the end of their time in the Reception classes the majority of children attain the expected standards in personal, emotional and social development and in creative development, but despite the consistently good teaching, most children are still consolidating their knowledge, skills and understanding towards the expected goals in the other areas. Very few children are likely to achieve above the expected levels this year.
68. Provision for children with special educational needs, and those learning English as an additional language, is good in the Foundation Stage. There is early identification of children with special educational needs and their progress is well monitored. Appropriate additional support is provided when required to support identified learning needs. Staff value the range of different mother tongue skills which children bring with them to school and also ensure that such children have good opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of English through purposeful classroom activities alongside their classmates.

Personal, social and emotional development

69. Teaching in this area is good as all staff give high priority to establishing the 'Golden Rules' of the school, from the start, and the children learn to respect one another, to share and to take turns. The consistently good attitudes and behaviour seen during the inspection reflect the positive approaches to behaviour management seen during all lessons, where staff make clear their own expectations for good behaviour. The children learn to distinguish between right and wrong behaviour. Children in the Nursery learn to develop early social skills through games and turn-taking play routines and this is extended in the Reception classes through sessions such as circle time, where the children pass round a small toy as they take turns to talk and listen. Work undertaken in religious education, such as a focus on the story of Noah's ark from the Bible, makes a valuable contribution to children's understanding of the need to care for one another and to keep promises. The children demonstrate genuine care as they bandage and administer to the toy animals in the vet's surgery set up in the classroom. Children have good opportunities to undertake tasks and activities which they initiate independently, but there is scope to develop this further through, for example, closer monitoring of self-chosen tasks and involving children in recording their own choices. Children enjoy taking on small tasks around the classroom, and they carry out these sensibly. Overall by the end of the Foundation stage, the majority of children reach the expected Early Learning Goals in this area, although some will still be working towards the goals.

Communication, language and literacy

70. Good teaching ensures that children make good progress in the early stages of literacy. Staff take care to provide many opportunities for children to talk about their first-hand activities and to develop accurate listening skills. Early reading skills are introduced through handling books in the Nursery, and in the Reception classes teachers develop children's knowledge of letter sounds through lively sessions using the 'Jolly Phonics' programme. Children enjoy sharing large books together with their teachers where they are encouraged to find words which they recognise on sight, and to use their knowledge of initial letter sounds. In small groups children are eager to share stories and factual books together, and good use is made of small props, such as a bird's nest, to engage the children's interest. Parents are invited to support with reading at home, and children take home books on a regular basis. In the Nursery children have good opportunities to undertake mark making and to start learning how to write their own names. In the Reception classes they learn how to form different letter shapes with increasing accuracy and to write their names independently. Some children start to write short sentences, showing emerging understanding of letter sounds and knowledge of frequently seen words. Children have good opportunities to write, and staff comments, alongside children's own attempts, provide a good record of development and encourage children to make further progress. However, teachers need to ensure that they take fuller account of the National Literacy Strategy, in order to challenge higher attaining children and prepare them better for the next stage of their schooling. A small number of children are likely to achieve the expected standards by the end of the Reception year, but the majority will still be working towards the Early Learning Goals and none are likely to achieve at a higher level.

Mathematical development

71. Teaching in this area is good and the children have many opportunities to undertake practical mathematical activities. In the Nursery, they enjoy playing number games and exploring sand and water, and in the Reception classes they extend this experience to focus on recording numerals and starting to learn about simple addition and subtraction, counting and problem solving. Children explore the properties of solid shapes and learn about making repeating patterns, using threaded beads, pegboards and gummed paper shapes. The most able children record repeating patterns in a sequence of four and count reliably up to ten objects. They enjoy counting beyond this

with their teacher, and when working outside on large apparatus, staff emphasise vocabulary such as 'through', 'under', 'bigger' and 'smaller' which extends children's use of mathematical language. The children learn about symmetrical patterns and make patterns to reflect this. Teachers build in opportunities to undertake mathematical problem solving and everyday mathematics when they undertake daily routines such as the register with the children. However, teachers are not taking sufficient account of the National Numeracy Strategy by the end of the Foundation Stage, to challenge higher attaining children and prepare them for the next stage of their schooling. Although a few children are likely to reach the standards expected by the end of the Reception year, none are likely to achieve at a higher level and the majority will still be working towards a secure grasp of the Early Learning Goals.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

72. Teaching is good and provision is carefully planned to extend children's experiences of the world about them. In the Nursery, the children have sound opportunities to learn about different types of animals and to handle a range of different types of construction materials. In the Reception, good use is made of a visit to a wildlife park to provide a rich first-hand experience of unusual birds and animals. The children were filled with enthusiasm when they returned from the trip and said that they liked the pigs, the wallabies and the baby chicks especially. The children were well prepared for the visit by the staff. They learned to classify pets and found out, for example, that fish have scales, and dogs have fur. A play area is set up as a vet's surgery and the children learn about the care of animals through this. Children have good opportunities to develop their computer skills; for example, they learned to use a mouse to click on items of a teddy bear's clothing. Some more able children show developing skill in word processing their early writing attempts. Children learn how to construct models using a range of recycled and junk materials, and evidently feel proud of what they achieve. By the end of the Foundation Stage some children reach the expected levels but the majority of them are still working towards the expected Early Learning Goals in their experience, knowledge and understanding of the world.

Physical development

73. Teaching is well planned and effective use is made of the outdoor area to provide children with opportunities to develop their gross motor skills. A safety surface in one part of the play area allows children to explore small climbing apparatus safely, and they are enthusiastic when exploring moving through tunnels and climbing up and down a small frame, although the children's overall use of space is not well developed, and they are slow to follow instructions. Children have access to a small range of wheeled toys and other equipment such as balls and tyres outdoors, but there is insufficient outdoor equipment such as trolleys to pull and push and this limits the range of collaborative play and skills development. Fine motor skills are well taught as the children have good opportunities to handle different types of tools, such as scissors and staplers and to use a range of construction materials. By the end of the Foundation Stage, although some children are likely to achieve the expected level, the majority will still be working towards the recommended targets.

Creative development

74. Teaching in this area is good. Children in the Nursery have good opportunities to handle a range of different materials and enjoy using rice and pasta to create pictures. They enjoy taking part in songs and rhymes and circle singing games. Children in the Reception classes are encouraged to try out their own ideas when painting and when selecting collage materials; they produced an attractive class collage linked to a story of walking through the jungle. Colour mixing is well taught. One child was very surprised to find that dry paint did not flow easily onto paper, and learned how to add water and mix colours together. The Reception class children learn about the work of the Impressionist artists and experiment with paintings in this style. In the role-play

area, the Reception class children enjoy dressing up and acting out the role of the vet and pet owners in the vet's surgery. Children also enjoy learning a range of familiar songs and rhymes and good use is made of taped music from a range of cultural traditions to enhance musical appreciation. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority of children are likely to achieve the expected Early Learning Goals although a few will still be working towards them.

ENGLISH

75. The pupils' performance in English has improved steadily over time. However, there was a dip in test results in both reading and writing two years ago, and writing results did not recover last year. Test results in 2001 showed pupils' performance by the end of Year 2 was well below the national average in both the reading and writing tests. However, results are in line with what is found in schools with similar characteristics and the number of pupils reaching the higher level 3 in writing in 2001 is slightly above what is found in similar schools.
76. The school has taken positive steps, particularly in reading, to address the weaknesses identified in the last inspection report. Reading and spelling skills are taught on a regular basis and the programme ensures good progress as pupils move through the school. Inspection evidence indicates that the majority of pupils reach the expected level 2 by the end of Year 2, but the number confidently exceeding this level and attaining the higher level 3 remains below the national average. The reasons for this are: a very high proportion of the pupils in Year 2 have moved into the school during the year and others have moved out, so that there has been a lack of continuity in learning; in spite of good support for their learning, the command of vocabulary demonstrated by those pupils whose mother tongue is not English has not yet flourished; and although challenge for the majority of pupils in Year 2 is accurately related to need, the assessment of pupils' needs within the group designated as average is not precise enough, so that higher attaining pupils within this group could do better. The impact of the school's programme for improvement is more evident in Year 1. Here there is less movement of pupils and the good emphasis on teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and spelling has led to standards in line with the level expected nationally. Many opportunities for speaking and listening and for using reading and writing skills are given in other subjects. For example, in geography, pupils talk through ideas and phrase questions carefully and pupils for whom English is an additional language receive good support in developing their vocabulary through the teaching of key words. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in tests and inspection evidence confirms this to be the case.
77. Throughout the school, pupils' listening skills are at the level expected and skilled teaching in all lessons ensures that pupils concentrate without losing interest. As a result of the school's good programme for promoting personal and social development, many pupils speak confidently in the familiar context of their classroom. Teachers foster confidence very positively and during the literacy hour, give warm encouragement when questioning and plenty of praise for accurate answers. Having listened carefully to explanations or examples of text, pupils show a reasonable appreciation of what has been read to them. However, in Year 2, pupils at the early stages of English language acquisition still find the command of vocabulary and sometimes the grammar of spoken English difficult. The support given to these pupils to encourage understanding and to respond is very good. Support staff give advice and clarification, often in the pupils' mother tongue, but otherwise slowly and carefully to ensure sufficient time to understand and absorb a particular concept. This was evident in lessons in Year 2, when during the whole-class text session, another teacher sat close to pupils needing mother tongue support, and quietly gave the information required and translated questions. In other subjects, teachers adapt their

questions sensitively, so that all pupils are able to understand, with the result that all pupils develop the ability to explain themselves clearly. These skills develop well amongst higher attaining pupils as they move through the school, as does the ability to pick out the main points in a discussion. By the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening amongst these higher attaining pupils are above average, with a number speaking about their work in all subjects with confident assurance. However, the limitations of many pupils in speaking skills, particularly in the command of vocabulary, mean that standards for the majority of pupils are below what would normally be found.

78. Due to the significant movement of pupils in the year group and fewer pupils attaining the higher level 3 in the year group than is usual, standards in reading among the current Year 2 pupils are below average. The pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and, by Year 2, the higher attaining pupils are accurate, fluent readers who show considerable understanding of both fiction and non-fiction texts. Their research skills are developing appropriately. When talking about books, all pupils understand how to use an index or contents list effectively. They have opportunities to use the school library, and choose books carefully, expressing preferences for particular types of books or, in some cases, authors. As there has been less movement of pupils in Year 1, standards in Year 1 are average. Good teaching, with sometimes very good teaching, ensures that pupils' learning is promoted well; across the curriculum, the teachers use a wide range of texts, including poetry, stories and information books, to engender enthusiasm for reading.
79. Each class in the school has an intensive session devoted to reading activities each day and the lively pace of these sessions with accurately devised tasks, together with the high quality support from both teachers and support staff invariably ensures that pupils focus well on their reading tasks. All teachers give due emphasis to teaching letter sounds, and strongly encourage the pupils to sound out unknown words. This is effective, and even the younger pupils, those whose mother tongue is not English and the pupils with special educational needs use the strategy automatically. This has contributed significantly to the improvement in the pupils' reading and spelling. Pupils are aware of how different styles of print, such as 'bold', affect the way in which text is read. The pupils take a range of books home regularly and the majority of parents give good support by reading with their children and keeping in touch with teachers about their progress.
80. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy supports pupils' writing and reading skills well. During their literacy lessons the pupils are expected to write for a range of purposes, for example information writing, making lists, writing recipes and writing rhymes. These short, focused activities, coupled with the strong programme for teaching spelling, ensure good improvements in the quality of pupils' writing as they move through Year 1 and Year 2. However, in some other subjects like geography and history, recording skills are not fully utilised. With more careful planning of tasks, teachers could ensure that pupils practise their writing skills more frequently.
81. The last inspection identified a need to devise a more coherent structure for teaching writing skills. This weakness has been securely addressed. Teaching is now good. Teachers are usually very aware of each pupil's needs and throughout the school use a structured approach in developing the basic skills in writing. Teachers' marking comments upon what has been learned and sets clear and precise targets which challenge pupils to develop their skills so that the vast majority make good progress. This is particularly evident in Year 1. From writing a simple sentence at the start of the academic year, the higher attaining pupils in Year 1 can sequence the events of a story, retelling it accurately, or write a coherent account stretching to ten sentences. Sentences are usually punctuated with full stops and capital letters. In Year 1 good use of support staff during whole-class sessions ensures that all pupils are very well

challenged. Teachers separate pupils into groups and present tasks which accurately address their needs, for example encouraging the improvement of spelling using word fans for lower attaining pupils and challenging average and higher attaining pupils using phoneme frames. This ensures a good grasp of spelling and ensures average standards in writing. Lower attaining pupils, who were only able to make marks and form a few letters correctly at the start of Year 1, can now write high frequency and simple words accurately, demonstrating a clear understanding of letter sounds and can write sentences which make sense, sometimes using full stops accurately.

82. By the end of Year 2, higher attaining pupils can accurately use full stops and capital letters in sentences, also using capital letters for names. Some use exclamation marks and bold print for emphasis, and use quotation marks to punctuate and enliven their work. However, this emphasis on accurate and imaginative writing is not always evident in lessons. Sometimes in lessons in Year 2, above average pupils are marking time. Whole-class sessions concentrate too heavily on clarity in explanations for pupils of lower attainment or with less command of English. Whilst these pupils are well supported and their tasks accurately reflect their needs, so that their progress is good, insufficient demands are sometimes made on the above average pupils. The highest attaining pupils are recognised, well challenged and reach the higher levels, but tasks for the group of pupils identified by teachers as average, are not precisely matched to pupils' needs. Opportunities for these pupils to focus on an absorbing and exciting piece of writing are not extensive enough to ensure that pupils are constantly challenged in all subjects.
83. Regular handwriting practice in one class in Year 1 leads to higher standards than are usually found for their age, but this is an area that could usefully be developed in other classes, where handwriting is not so well formed. By the end of Year 2 very few pupils have developed a cursive script, though the majority form their handwriting neatly and carefully in written work in English. However, teachers' expectations of presentation and accuracy in punctuation are not consistently high and often handwriting skills are neither emphasised nor used in other subjects.
84. The quality of teaching is good, and examples of very good teaching were seen during the inspection. Teachers have a clear understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and have adapted its use well to suit the needs of their pupils. They are confident about what they are teaching and basic skills are well taught. The pace of lessons is usually well judged so that pupils work hard and have the satisfaction of completing tasks. The teachers make very effective use of resources. For example, the use of individual whiteboards or word fans in Year 1 classes for spelling practice means that all pupils have an opportunity to respond. The support staff know what the pupils are expected to achieve and how they can best support them. Clear procedures ensure that the adults record what pupils have learned, though in Year 2 not enough attention is paid to accurate assessment of the work of the average attaining pupils. The targets set for some average attaining pupils, particularly in writing tasks, are insufficiently challenging to ensure that they reach the higher level in writing, and thus their progress could be better.
85. The pupils with special needs invariably receive good support, either from the teacher or from a classroom assistant, so that they listen attentively and improve their skills well. They are warmly encouraged to discuss their work and ask for help, and the very positive relationships between support staff and pupils foster a good attitude towards work. The pupils who are learning English as an additional language are similarly well supported by teachers and classroom assistants.
86. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and works hard to improve the school's provision for English. Having analysed the results of national tests and the areas of learning that need development, the co-ordinator has set in place a programme for improvement

and has begun to monitor its effects on standards. She has monitored the teaching and further observations are included in the plan for the near future. She oversees the planning of lessons and, through discussion and the analysis of plans, has an accurate picture of how the school is performing and what steps must be taken to improve standards further. This positive influence has had considerable impact on raising standards and improving teaching since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

87. Pupils currently in Year 2 attain standards below those expected for their age in mathematics although some elements of number are at the level expected nationally. Although standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection they are slightly better than those reflected in the National Curriculum test results for 2001. Results for that year showed that overall standards were well below the national average when compared with all schools and average when compared with similar schools. Since the appointment of the new headteacher, the school has worked very hard to improve pupils' performance in mathematics through numerous initiatives, including the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the grouping of pupils by levels of attainment. This means that the needs of all pupils are better met. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are better supported and achieve as well as other pupils. There is no difference in the performance of boys and girls.

88. Standards in Year 2 are affected by a number of factors including high mobility, unsatisfactory attendance and a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs. In addition, a significant number of the present Year 2 pupils started Year 1 not having achieved the expected levels in mathematical development. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage has now improved. As a result, pupils are given a good start in building up their mathematical skills and understanding in the Reception class and this continues in Year 1. However, pupils identified as being in the average attaining group in Year 2 do not always achieve their full potential. This is because teachers do not consistently plan work to meet the wide range of the levels of attainment within this group. Assessment information is not used sufficiently well in planning and teachers do not have enough information about the level at which individual pupils are working. Despite these minor weaknesses standards are improving from the Reception class upwards but initiatives have not had sufficient time to make an impact on current standards at the end of Year 2.

89. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully introduced and many features, such as the 'discussions of strategies', are firmly embedded. All pupils benefit from the 'mental sessions' at the start of lessons. Previous work shows that all aspects of mathematics are covered; some opportunities are provided for pupils to undertake investigations, but work in this area is limited, with pupils being offered few opportunities to structure their own investigations. Pupils use mathematics to help learning in other subjects. For example, in science, pupils measure the growth of plants and the units of work in design and technology show the successful use of measurement.

90. In Year 2 most pupils are developing a sound understanding of the number system and of place value. Some lower attaining pupils read and write numbers correctly, add single-digit numbers to a total of 20 and subtract numbers from 20 with confidence. They count in twos and tens and recognise patterns in number such as odd and even, and are beginning to solve simple mathematical calculations. Average and higher attaining pupils in this middle group have a more secure understanding of what is

taught and sometimes apply the same concepts to larger numbers. Previous work shows that the small proportion of pupils in the top group (the highest attaining pupils) are beginning to use numbers up to 100 and above and have a good understanding of addition and subtraction, and their understanding of these as reverse processes is developing quickly. Most successfully order three-digit numbers, know that 300 must be added to 523 to make 823 and know the operations that are involved when solving word problems. All pupils gain an appropriate range of practical experience, for example, when measuring the different parts of the body using standard measures and investigating objects in the classroom that are longer than one metre. Since the last inspection the improvements in ICT teaching have provided all pupils with good opportunities to develop their data-handling skills.

91. Most pupils enjoy mathematics and respond positively to challenge. Good behaviour is usually maintained. Most pupils are attentive and try hard to answer questions; in many lessons the atmosphere is of active involvement. However, a small number of pupils find it difficult to sit still and concentrate when the introductory session is too long. This slows the pace of the lesson and pupils cover less work than they should. On the whole, children take pride in the quality of their work and the standard of presentation is generally satisfactory although this is inconsistent throughout the school and depends on the standards set by the teacher.
92. The quality of teaching varies, but is good overall. In all lessons there is an appropriate balance of class and group work. Teachers have good subject knowledge and have integrated the numeracy strategy into their teaching effectively. They consistently employ, and encourage pupils to use, the appropriate mathematical vocabulary. In the most successful lessons, teachers ensure that all pupils are fully involved in the mental sessions. Relationships are very good and this gives pupils of differing attainment the confidence to offer answers, knowing that they will be appreciated. In these lessons, questions are carefully targeted to challenge all pupils. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 1 lesson where pupils rolled a dice and then added the two numbers. They knew that '6' and '7' are 'near doubles' and confidently explained that "doubling 6 and adding 1" is a simple strategy for getting the correct answer. Pupils with special educational needs were fully involved, assisted by a learning support assistant. Overall, the quality of planning is good and work is generally well matched to the prior attainment of pupils. However, on some occasions the needs of some of the pupils who have been identified as in the middle attaining group in Year 2 are not always well met and work is sometimes too challenging for the less able pupils in this group. Teachers generally assess pupils' work well and use their assessment to guide future planning. Pupils with special educational needs or with English as an additional language are taught effectively. Teachers give good support in the class and classroom assistants are well briefed to support the groups they are working with.
93. The present co-ordinator has had responsibility for approximately a year. Nevertheless, much has been achieved since the last inspection. She is actively involved in monitoring planning, pupils' work and teaching. An action plan is in place and this is incorporated into the school development plan. Resources including those for ICT are used effectively to support mathematics. Although standards are rising, the school recognises that the needs of some pupils are not met at all times.

SCIENCE

94. Standards in Year 2 are below the level expected nationally and similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Below average standards are reflected in the teachers' assessments for Year 2 pupils in 2001. Results for that year showed that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level 2 was well below the national average and the proportion reaching the higher level 3 was below the national average. When compared with similar schools, standards were average at level 2 and above average at level 3. Over the past two years since the appointment of the headteacher, pupils' performance has started to improve. This is partly due to better quality teaching, additional resources and an increased focus on experimental and investigative science. As a result, standards in Year 1 are better than before and are now broadly in line with national expectations. Overall, standards in Year 2 are affected by a number of factors including the high level of mobility in the school, the higher than average percentage of pupils with special educational needs and the underdeveloped literacy skills of many pupils, which prevent them from recording what they know and understand.
95. Throughout the school there is now an increasing emphasis on learning through enquiry and practical investigation, and, as a result, pupils have an increasing understanding of how to plan and conduct experiments. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, achieve well. Pupils in Year 2 have experienced a wide range of science topics and are developing their predicting and recording skills. Some use scientific vocabulary with increasing confidence and understanding and make good progress in their investigative skills. For example, they enthusiastically investigate different objects that will roll, spin, slide and bounce and whether the surface of a ramp affects the distance that a vehicle travels. Many successfully identify and name the different parts of the human body and of a plant. They learn about the life cycle of the butterfly and build on their earlier knowledge of materials and understand the difference between naturally occurring and man-made materials. In Year 1 many pupils have a good understanding of basic scientific facts across the range of the science curriculum. They know the five senses and the part of the body associated with each. Many have a clear understanding of the differences between living and non-living objects and learn the ideal conditions needed for good plant growth. They investigate objects made from wood or plastic and make decisions about which material is best suited for specific purposes, for example when making a window for a doll's house.
96. The majority of pupils respond well to the subject. They listen and behave well and show an eagerness to learn and undertake activities because they are well motivated by the teachers. All enjoy investigative, practical work and this is especially beneficial to those pupils with poorer literacy skills who find it difficult to record their findings. They behave well individually and in small groups. This was evident, for example, in a Year 2 lesson where pupils were investigating which surface a snail prefers to travel over. Pupils show clear enjoyment of their lessons through good interaction with their teachers and contribute willingly to discussions, making many thoughtful and informed observations, as seen in a Year 1 lesson on the senses. This contributes well to their attainment and progress.
97. There has been improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. Teaching, including that of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, is good and this accounts for pupils' good progress, especially in Year 1. Teachers' confidence and competence have improved and, overall, teachers show secure understanding of the science curriculum. There is a clear emphasis on experimental and investigative science. However, teachers' planning and a scrutiny of pupils' work show that, although teaching is good overall, there are some areas which require improvement. For example, all pupils are often

given the same task regardless of their levels of attainment. Medium and short-term plans do not always provide sufficient detail about how the work is to be matched to the different groups of pupils or the specific provision to be made for pupils with English as an additional language.

98. Where teaching is most effective, lessons have clear objectives and these are shared well with pupils so that they know what is expected. This was particularly noticeable in a Year 2 lesson on investigating appropriate conditions for a snail habitat. Teachers have high expectations and the management of time, pupils and activities is usually good. They carefully target questions to individual pupils, ensuring that all ranges of ability are involved in the lesson. Good examples of this were well demonstrated in the Year 1 lesson on the five senses where pupils used their senses to identify objects around them. Across the school teachers manage pupils well and this promotes a calm learning environment in which pupils enjoy what they do. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Attitudes and behaviour are good. The quality of presentation of pupils' work varies and teachers do not always have high enough expectations of how work should be presented.
99. The co-ordinator gives good leadership, is enthusiastic and is keen to raise standards. The subject policy has been updated, and medium-term plans written by the subject co-ordinator, based on national guidelines, provide clear guidance. However, neither the short-term nor medium-term plans make sufficient reference either to the needs of pupils of different levels of attainment or to those at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory. Teachers' planning, pupils' work and teaching and learning of science across the school have been monitored. An audit of the subject has been completed and a detailed action plan for its development has been produced. The school has recognised the need to review the delivery of the curriculum in the light of unsatisfactory attendance and the high percentage of pupils who join and leave the school other than at the normal time. This will help to ensure that pupils' skills and knowledge develop systematically from year to year. Marking of work is of variable quality. Although work is marked, there are very few comments made as to why work is good and what pupils need to do to improve further. The co-ordinator has started collecting examples of work to assist teachers in assessing the attainment of their pupils with reference to National Curriculum levels. The subject contributes satisfactorily to literacy with appropriate use of scientific language. The use of ICT is underdeveloped. Resources are good and fully support the teaching and learning of science throughout the school.

ART AND DESIGN

100. Standards in art are broadly in line with expectations and this demonstrates an improvement since the time of the last inspection. The school has adopted a recommended scheme of work and clear long and medium-term plans have been formulated, to ensure that the children cover the full range of the art curriculum.
101. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy talking about paintings by artists such as Delauney, Magritte, and Chagall and are eager to identify a range of different viewpoints which the artists have used. They work enthusiastically when they try to recreate what they have seen in their own work using oil pastels or cut paper to explore the different shapes they find in the paintings. In Year 1 pupils make clay houses with careful attention to texture and the detail of roof tiles. They also make lively pencil portraits of their friends, and learn about colour mixing with paints. In an interesting project Year 1 pupils have recently worked with a community artist to produce a highly colourful series of large panels for display in the school building.

102. Pupils behave well in lessons throughout the school. They respect one another's work, and share resources sensibly, and girls and boys collaborate well. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, have opportunities to use a range of different media, including clay, modelling plaster, papier-mâché, oil pastels, crayons and paints. However, there is scope to extend pupils' painting and brush skills in Year 2 to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the possibilities of such materials and processes.
103. Teaching is good. Teachers are well prepared and make good use of reproductions of works of art to develop the children's critical appreciation in lessons, drawing on different cultural traditions to develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, Year 2 pupils were fascinated by the patterns and shapes in a series of Aboriginal paintings which their teacher showed them, and commented on the difficulties of finger painting as they created their own work in this style. "Our hands are not very good for this!" said one child to his friend. Teachers also take care to include time at the end of lessons for all groups of children to comment on their own work and that of their classmates.
104. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and is keen to further promote the teaching of art within the school. Insufficient use is made of sketchbooks to maintain a record of work undertaken but the school has just started to keep a portfolio of work samples for assessment purposes.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. No design and technology lessons were observed during the period of the inspection, as the school's focus for the term is art. There was insufficient evidence on which to form a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. Scrutiny of work on display, discussions with pupils and an examination of teachers' plans enabled other judgements to be made. Overall, standards are at the level expected nationally and have been maintained since the last inspection.
106. The subject is delivered in blocks of time over three half-terms a year. Each unit of work includes the aspects of designing, making and evaluation including modification. Food technology is appropriately represented in the school's planning. In Year 1 pupils investigate a range of full-size playground equipment before beginning a unit of work based on playgrounds. They learn about structures and how to make them stable and the load-bearing capacity of various materials. Linked to their work in science, they investigated the properties of different types of materials, then made decisions about which were best suited for the slides, the swings, the climbing frames and the roundabouts. By the end of the year pupils develop satisfactory making skills, understand the process of designing a product for a particular purpose and are able to change their design ideas to overcome problems encountered. This was well demonstrated when pupils were making puppets in Year 2. Pupils first looked closely at different types of puppets and how they were made. They then made decisions about the kind of puppet they wanted to make and for whom, and created a working design with a list of what they would need and the type of fabric that they would use. Working with parents, they assembled their materials, measured, cut and joined them and solved the problem of whether they needed a 'seam' or not. They matched their finished work against the original design and were able to evaluate how it might be improved. Completed work shows that boys and girls, including those with special educational needs or those who have English as an additional language, have full and equal access to the curriculum.

107. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the subject and are full of good ideas. They are proud of their work, take a pride in the finished product and are willing to discuss their work in great detail. They find the work enjoyable and are aware of safety issues in the way they handle tools.
108. Co-ordination of the subject is effective. The co-ordinator has an action plan and has made a very good start to raising the profile of the subject in school. Teaching and learning of the subject have been monitored, and assessment procedures are in place. Resources, including those for food technology, are carefully ordered and allocated to match units of work, supported well with detailed topic boxes. The policy has been recently updated. Medium-term plans based on national guidelines and produced by the co-ordinator, provide helpful guidance to teachers. Overall, there has been good improvement in the curriculum and quality and quantity of resources since the last inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

109. The school covers the programme of study for geography and during the inspection, it was possible to observe lessons as well as analysing work, displays and pupils' records, and talk to staff and pupils. Standards in geography by the end of Year 2 are average, which represents a slight improvement since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and their learning keeps pace with that of others. Good teaching, which places a strong emphasis on clarity of presentation, ensures that new vocabulary which must be learned and the new skills and knowledge that must be acquired in the subject are presented at the right level for each pupil to understand. Pupils with English as an additional language are also well supported and given due consideration in planning, so that there is no difference in the standards they attain, when compared with others. The high quality support available in classes ensures personal dialogue and explanation, so that questions are answered and geographical terms explained.
110. The standards among Year 2 pupils are in line with what is expected for their age. Pupils are able to draw simple route maps from stories, to illustrate journeys in 'The Bear Hunt' or on the Island of Struay and can identify the features along the route. They are learning that a plan or classroom map is really an aerial view and have a good concept of this, with the higher attaining pupils accurately plotting the main features in the right position. They are aware of the characteristics of a clean and pleasant environment and their responsibility for ensuring this. Local visits support pupils' learning well and ensure familiarity with the locality for the many pupils who have entered the school during the school year. Appropriate links are made with art: pupils sketch buildings in the locality such as the church. When studying contrasting United Kingdom locations they are aware of the characteristics of the Island of Struay, featured in the story of Katy Morag, recognising that the farm vehicles, fields and cottages are different from the features of their own locality. They know that there are some tourist attractions near to Luton, others in the United Kingdom, like the Tower of London and that places like Paris are outside the United Kingdom. Pupils are very keen to learn and teachers provide interesting resources to stimulate discussion. Although teaching is good, there is insufficient emphasis in Year 2 on extending writing in the subject, for example, using lists, charts, explanations and descriptive writing. An over-reliance on worksheets means that some opportunities to write are missed.
111. The work in Year 1 in geography is better than is usually found at this age. Teaching is invariably good and sometimes very good, with careful attention to planning for pupils of different attainment in order to match challenges exactly to pupils' needs. Teachers use resources well and support staff are well deployed so that help is available just where it is needed. This strong teaching ensures that pupils are doing well, for

example, in their work about the locality and mapping skills. Year 1 pupils understand the essential features of a town map, and can interpret correctly many of the symbols used for different features. They know that a map should have a key, and are able to draw their own map of a town, identifying correctly particular locations, such as schools, hospitals or the mosque. They are beginning to discuss the amenities in an area and compare differences between the town and the country, stating preferences for where they would like to live like, "because I'd like to be a farm lady", and "I'd like to ride a horse" or "because I like to be near the shops". Local visits and a visit to Bekonscot Model Village support this work very well. Pupils gain a high level of new knowledge in walks around the neighbourhood or on visits, and on the journey to and from their destination show great interest in the features of their surroundings.

112. The co-ordinator has worked hard to introduce and resource the scheme of work and has ensured a uniformity of approach in parallel classes. The whole-school planning now identifies what will be taught in each year, and teachers record consistently the skills and concepts learned. These records of progress indicating levels of attainment are well kept. The marking of pupils' work is invariably encouraging and gives reasonable indication of what pupils have learned. In conjunction with the good teaching, this ensures that progress from Year 1 to Year 2 is good, which represents an improvement since the last inspection. Opportunities to use ICT are not yet fully exploited. Although the computer is sometimes used for word processing, the use of the Internet on a regular basis, for example to research places of interest, has not yet been fully explored and nor has the use of e-mail to establish a link with other schools in the United Kingdom.

HISTORY

113. The school covers the programmes of study for history and geography at different times of the year. This term the focus is on geography, so no history lessons were observed. However, the analysis of teachers' planning and pupils' work through the year and discussions with pupils and staff indicate that standards in history are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and that the curriculum enriches pupils' cultural understanding well. This indicates an improvement in standards since the last inspection. Another weakness identified at the time of the last inspection was the need for clear records of progress and this issue has been addressed well. Records of pupils' learning show the acquisition of skills and knowledge over the year, and comment upon the levels of understanding, linking these to national standards.
114. Pupils in Year 2 have been learning about the Great Plague and the Great Fire of London and in discussion, some pupils could remember fine detail such as the fire fighters passing buckets of water because there were no hosepipes, and the slow escape by river in rowing boats whilst the "water bubbled" because boats did not have outboard motors. Clearly the subject continues to be well taught and the provision is now good. Information tumbled out and pupils' enthusiasm for the subject is very evident. They discussed changes in styles of clothing, lifestyle and housing with clarity. This enthusiasm was evident too when discussing Florence Nightingale and when discussing the Greek Olympics. The graphic detail of the hospital wards and the operations and the comparisons with today's nurses and hospitals, together with the mimed demonstrations of discus and javelin throwing, confirm the view that pupils have very clear factual knowledge. They are beginning to understand why things happened in the way they did and how things have changed. However, there is a gap in knowledge relating to chronology that needs to be addressed. Although very clear about differences between the past and the present, pupils are sometimes unsure about when things happened and which events came first. With such a high level of enthusiasm and such good retention of facts, this weakness could be quickly addressed.

115. The work in history provides good opportunities to use non-fiction texts and promotes research skills well. The work of Year 1 pupils shows the good use of other resources like old and new toys and pictures and videos of Victorian life. They know that the Victorian drawing room is more formal than their lounge or front room, having “a piano and a fire” and being “used for visitors”. They can compare old vehicles with modern ones and recognise that the materials used for making toys in Victorian times are different from the plastic and metal used today. Visits are well used. The transport museum in Stockwood Park provided very good opportunities for the comparison of old and new vehicles and for pupils to see artefacts from the past. Teaching remains good. A good level of factual detail is evident together with appropriate encouragement to observe and draw things like a carpet beater, a dolly tub and dolly stick. Year 1 work provides good opportunities to write as well as represent work pictorially. Pupils use skills like making lists and making comparisons, which support their work well.
116. Planning for learning is now well organised and ensures that stimulating opportunities are provided which considerably enrich the lives of these young pupils. The co-ordinator has opportunities to observe what is planned and taught and this guarantees a consistent approach and gives all pupils the same good opportunities for learning. The co-ordinator’s development plan for the subject highlights appropriate areas for the development of the subject and indicates that she has a clear vision for the future, which should raise standards further.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

117. Standards of attainment for Year 2 pupils are in line with national expectations. This is similar to the situation reported in the last inspection. Since then provision overall has improved considerably. An ICT suite has been established, the optional national scheme of work has been adopted, assessment procedures are in place and teachers’ confidence and competence are improving. The school has clear plans for further improvement. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language, make good progress in this subject from entry into the Foundation Stage.
118. Pupils in Year 1 have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the layout and use of the computer keyboard and many skilfully use a mouse for pointing, selecting, dragging and moving items around the screen. They word process short sentences and produce labels, deleting and inserting letters, and using the upper and lower case type with accuracy. Linked to their science topic, they successfully label the different parts of a plant using their knowledge of the ‘backspace’ key to correct errors and communicate their findings about their favourite food, using computer-generated block graphs to good effect. In Year 2, the majority of pupils work with relative independence on the computer and have a developing understanding of the uses of ICT in the world around them. They confidently ‘log on’ and ‘log off’ the computer and can save and print their work with little adult support. In Year 2 there is some extension of the work on word processing and pupils learn to change the type and size of text and to delete or retrieve their work. They are learning to interrogate a database for specific information and to control the movement of a floor robot using a sequence of commands. Throughout the school, pupils develop an appropriate vocabulary and talk about what they have done using appropriate technological language such as *mouse*, *select*, *icon*, and *file* with accuracy. Although some use is made of computers to support work in the numeracy and literacy sessions, pupils’ previous work shows that the use of ICT has yet to make a significant impact on pupils’ learning in all subjects of the curriculum. The range of skills that pupils bring with them from home is not always successfully extended and opportunities are sometimes missed to challenge higher attaining pupils.

119. The quality of teaching and learning is good. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or those at the early stages of learning English, make good progress due to the good support they receive. Teachers have at least a sound knowledge of the subject and all classes have additional sessions in the computer suite to further extend and reinforce pupils' skills. Where the most effective learning takes place, preparation and planning are good. Teachers use demonstration well and take time to explain exactly what they require pupils to do. Written instructions are provided so that less confident pupils have additional support and guidance. This was well demonstrated in a Year 2 lesson on using the right hand side of the mouse in order to change the music they had composed in the earlier session by 'clicking' and 'dragging' different frames. The teacher gave clear instructions using relevant vocabulary, which ensured that pupils knew how to use the controls on the mouse. Pace is brisk, which keeps pupils on task, and praise is well used to motivate and encourage participation in the lesson. There is an appropriate focus on relevant vocabulary and questions are posed to check pupils' understanding. Adults interact well with pupils, providing support when necessary to make sure that all can achieve the learning intentions. An area of weakness in planning is that, although objectives are clear for the teaching of specific ICT skills, short-term plans do not identify when ICT will be used to support other subjects. The needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, English as additional language or of different levels of attainment, are not always clearly identified. A good system of assessment is in use. This enables teachers and other adults to record whether pupils have achieved the intended learning outcomes
120. Pupils clearly enjoy ICT. They enjoy their sessions in the computer suite and are reluctant to leave when the lesson ends. They show good levels of concentration and motivation. Although they often use computers independently they are quick to offer to help each other when necessary. They are happy to try new things and are able to discuss and explain their work. A good example of this was seen in a Year 1 lesson where pupils were learning to enter and store information in a variety of ways. During a group session Year 2 pupils listened well and stayed on task for most of the time. They sensibly answered questions on how to access their class files, handled all equipment with care and showed pleasure and amazement when their musical composition changed to reflect the new instruments they had chosen. Pupils confidently ask questions of their teachers; they understand about taking care of equipment and do so responsibly.
121. The subject is well managed so that all members of staff are enthusiastic and share commitment to develop ICT in the curriculum. The co-ordinator provides a good level of support for teachers, ensuring that they are introduced to new software and can use it confidently. She has produced useful medium-term plans, taking into account national guidance and ensuring coverage of the skills of ICT, but these have not yet become an integral part of the rest of the curriculum. Plans are in hand to monitor teaching and learning in the autumn and spring terms. Resources for ICT are good and the school now has appropriate computer hardware and software to teach all pupils to the requirements of the National Curriculum.

MUSIC

122. Since it was possible to observe only one music lesson during the week of the inspection, no firm judgement can be made on standards or the quality of teaching. However, from the evidence of planning seen, staff discussion and the singing in assembly, teaching is likely to be broadly satisfactory.
123. Year 2 pupils were eager to offer their own ideas when attempting to make up simple notation to represent animal tunes with their teacher. They were able to maintain a

steady beat with their teacher, and they shared percussion instruments sensibly when they tried out their own composing of animal tunes. Their behaviour was good, but they had only limited time to experiment with their own compositions. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language made the same satisfactory progress as their peers.

124. During assembly children throughout the school sing sweetly and tunefully, and they enjoy singing alongside a favourite taped song in canon. Satisfactory use is made of a range of music tapes from a wide range of cultural traditions during assemblies, and the school makes use of the *Compose* program, linked to work undertaken by Year 2 pupils in ICT, to enhance composing skills.
125. Satisfactory use is made of visiting musicians to enhance the music curriculum, such as a string quartet and a wind ensemble from the Bedfordshire music service. Pupils last year had the opportunity to participate in the Luton choir festival, although there is no school choir at the present time. The school has a good range of taped music and has a satisfactory number of percussion instruments from around the world, but many of these instruments now need replacement and the overall range of instruments requires expansion.
126. The co-ordinator for music has no specialist knowledge of music, but has an enthusiasm for developing the school's approach to the subject and is providing satisfactory leadership. The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work and also draws on a commercially published scheme of work, which is designed for the use of non-specialist music teachers. The school plans to review the use of this, following staff in-service training by a music specialist adviser next term. The school and governors are aware of the need to develop staff subject expertise in music and have identified this as a priority.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

127. At the time of the last inspection, standards were sound and pupils made satisfactory progress. The analysis of pupils' records, discussions with teachers and pupils and the work seen during the inspection, when the timetable allowed only for dance lessons to be observed in Year 1 and Year 2, indicate that standards are still average by the end of Year 2. This represents good progress, as pupils come into Year 1 with standards below what is usually found in physical development.
128. The secure programme for learning ensures that pupils experience the full range of dance, games and gymnastics activities during the year. Unlike at the time of the last inspection, all pupils now change into appropriate clothing for their physical education work. Safety issues, like not wearing jewellery and paying due care to the personal safety of others during lessons, are clearly addressed by teachers. Physical education makes a positive contribution to health and safety education and to pupils' personal development. Teachers now record pupils' progress regularly and this ensures that skills improve at a good rate and that a good check is kept on pupils' physical development.
129. In Year 1 and in Year 2 teaching is good. Teachers, support staff and the vast majority of pupils are enthusiastic participants in lessons. Teachers plan lessons carefully to include a good warm-up and a cooling-down time. A lively 'follow the leader' session in Year 1 brought to a conclusion an enjoyable and worthwhile lesson. Pupils need a good deal of encouragement and instruction, and clearly focused activities ensure that the pace of the lesson allows for this. In dance lessons, teachers ensure a calm and thoughtful ethos, which makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual development. In Year 1 pupils were given time for reflection on their own mood and the mood

portrayed on the faces of children in photographs. In Year 2, pupils clearly understand the rule about waiting for “one, two, three and start”, which gives opportunities for a time of stillness and quiet thought before they move. Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of the use of space when warming up and know that the warm-up “makes your blood flow to your muscles”. The majority can skip and run well, controlling their legs and arms appropriately. Good teaching ensures that, even though enthusiastic and sometimes exuberant, pupils behave well and are thoughtful about their dance work. Demonstration is well used to encourage refinement of movements. In their ‘meet and greet’ dances, pupils worked well, changing partners so that everyone was included. They demonstrated a range of dances with partners, using two hands, one hand, crossed hands, circling and skipping side-by-side. When compiling their group circle dance they paid due attention to rhythm, though the music could have been better used in stimulating the dance and encouraging more adventurous and rhythmic movements, rather than merely being played to accompany the finished piece.

130. In Year 1, where good teaching again ensures that pupils work in a very calm ethos, the same under-use of music is again evident. Supporting adults join in with these young pupils, some of whom are lacking in confidence and skill in performing simple movements like skipping. This support is invaluable in modelling good standards of movement and results in pupils making good progress in lessons. However, although the tambourine was used effectively as a stimulus to stop the movement, opportunities to use musical instruments as a stimulus to encourage a strong response to a rhythm or to change the speed or refine the quality of movement were missed. Awareness of space develops well through Year 1 and Year 2 due to clear reminders from teachers in dance lessons. Encouragement to evaluate their work is developing appropriately, though more could usefully be done, and these opportunities support the development of speaking and listening skills well. Very good relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils result in good attitudes and behaviour so that safety is assured in lessons.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

131. From the evidence seen in the scrutiny of work, classroom displays, and in the one Year 2 lesson observed, teaching appears to be at least satisfactory, although it is not possible to make a secure overall judgement.
132. Pupils in Year 2 learn about the Jewish celebration of Shabbat, and consider how sharing food and family celebrations have meaning in their own lives too. In a moment of thoughtful reflection in a Year 2 lesson, one child suggested that the video he had just watched on the Jewish celebration of Shabbat reminded him of his own family celebrations at the Moslem festival of Eid, when everyone has a special meal together. The pupils thought quietly about their own special wishes whilst the teacher lit a candle on the table, and they recorded their wishes in writing and drawings.
133. Year 2 pupils are able to identify at least two different places of worship and they record the different features inside a mosque and inside a church. One child wrote about the importance of the Bible to Christians and showed understanding through the comment, "It helps people to be good." Pupils in Year 1 also start to learn about special places through stories from a range of different religious traditions. The school has developed good links with local places of worship which pupils visit as a part of their religious education lessons. Local religious leaders from Christian churches, the mosque and the Gurdwara also visit the school from time to time. Pupils with special educational needs, and those learning English as an additional language, make the same sound progress as their peers.

134. Satisfactory links are made with literacy to record work undertaken on religious education, although insufficient use is made of writing frames to support less experienced writers. The school has a satisfactory range of resources for use in lessons, and the good use of artefacts, first hand visits and visitors, enriches teaching and learning. There has been sound monitoring of teaching in the subject in the short space of time since the headteacher took up her appointment.

135. The co-ordination of the subject is good and the new co-ordinator is being efficiently introduced into her role by the headteacher, who has taken overall responsibility for the management of the subject for an interim period. The school has adopted the locally agreed Bedfordshire and Luton syllabus and has a comprehensive scheme of work, which draws on the guidelines for the locally agreed syllabus. Long-term and medium-term plans are in place across the school, and regular lessons in religious education are planned and undertaken in each class. Sound assessment is undertaken through checking pupils' knowledge and understanding at the end of each unit of work and this contributes to the end-of-year reports to parents.