

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HAMP NURSERY AND INFANT SCHOOL**

Bridgwater

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123681

Headteacher: Mrs P Jordain

Reporting inspector: Robin Thelwell  
20977

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> April 2002

Inspection number: 196109

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery and Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Rhode Lane Bridgwater Somerset
Postcode:	TA6 6JB
Telephone number:	01278 422012
Fax number:	01278 431264
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Johnstone
Date of previous inspection:	14 <sup>th</sup> – 17 <sup>th</sup> July 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20977	Mr RWG Thelwell Registered inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage; Equal Opportunities; Science; Information and communication technology; Geography; History.	The school's results and achievements; How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
13911	Mrs J Gallichan Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22578	Mr G Jones Team inspector	English; Music; Design and technology; Physical education.	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22058	Mrs C Richardson Team inspector	Special educational needs; Mathematics; Art and design; Religious education.	

The inspection contractor was: MSB Education Ltd  
Broomhill  
Wimborne  
Dorset  
BH21 7AR

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Hamp Nursery and Infant School is part of the Bridgwater Education Achievement Zone, and is situated to the south west of the town centre. Nearly all pupils come from families living in council or other rented accommodation. At present, 184 pupils are on roll, including 73 children in the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup> (reception). There are seven classes with an average size of 26. A further 36 children attend nursery on a part-time basis. Children enter nursery following their third birthday, and join reception at the start of the school year in which they become five. Statutory assessment on entry to reception shows three-quarters have skills and understanding below those expected for their age; half have levels well below those of similarly aged children. The school has identified 69 pupils as having special educational needs. This represents 37 per cent, and is well above the national average. Three pupils have statements of special educational needs allocated to them under the terms of the DfES Code of Practice<sup>2</sup>; which proportionally is broadly average. Eighty pupils are eligible for free school meals. At 43 per cent of those attending full time, this is double the national average. All pupils have English as their first language.

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

Hamp Nursery and Infant School is a happy and caring school with many strengths and good features. It is very well led and managed. Although there are areas still in need of improvement, the headteacher, staff and governors work very well as a team. They have established a very positive and caring ethos that supports and promotes pupils' learning. Very good relationships and behaviour are the norm. Good teaching across the school results in pupils' very good attitudes to learning. Pupils' personal development is very good. Although overall standards in English, mathematics and science for seven year olds are below national averages, all pupils, including the above average proportion with special educational needs, achieve well in terms of their prior attainment. The last three years has seen a marked increase in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels by the end of Year 2. This represents good achievement when taking into account pupils' low levels of attainment on entry to school. Efficient use is made of time, money and resources. Although the unit cost per child is above average, this is an effective school that gives good value for money.

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

- Provides a caring community where pupils are known well and valued as individuals. It creates an orderly climate for learning.
- Promotes and achieves very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- Provides very good learning opportunities and good teaching.
- Makes very good provision for pupils' personal development.
- Good provision for pupils with special educational needs results in them achieving well.

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<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage refers to children from entry to the nursery up to and including age six when they complete the reception year.

<sup>2</sup> The Department for Education and Skills' Code of Practice gives practical advice to schools about their responsibilities to ensure that all pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

## What could be improved

- Overall standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Structure and use of time related to literacy lessons.
- Use of information from statutory assessments to determine how best to modify the curriculum to raise standards.
- Information in the school development plan giving clear indications as to how standards will be improved.
- Statutory compliance regarding information in the school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents.
- Pupil attendance.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress in addressing the issues arising from the last inspection of July 1997. There has been a marked improvement in the quality of teaching. Teachers' planning is now very good and is underpinned by schemes of work for each subject, together with the effective use of good procedures to assess what pupils know and can do. Attainment in religious education now meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Provision for pupils' understanding of cultures other than their own has improved. Resources have been improved where weaknesses were identified, and end of year reports informing parents of pupils' progress now comply with requirements. The school has successfully introduced national strategies for literacy and numeracy, together with that for the performance management of teachers. Governors have overseen a number of structural changes and improvements to the building and the ongoing improvement in provision for information and communication technology (ICT). The school now gives better value for money than at the time of the last inspection and is well placed for continued improvement.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores<sup>3</sup> in National Curriculum tests.

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

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

Although making good progress in all areas of learning whilst in nursery and reception, when pupils enter Year 1, half are still below, or well below, average in reading, writing and mathematics. Despite year-on-year improvements in the proportion of pupils reaching nationally expected levels of performance, results of end of Year 2 assessments for 2001, showed overall standards in reading, mathematics and science to be well below national averages. They were very low in writing; consistent with the lowest five per cent nationally. When compared with similar schools, although performance is average in mathematics, it is below average in reading and well below average in writing. However, of the year group assessed, 57 per cent had special educational needs. Reorganisation of class structuring,

<sup>3</sup> Average points scores refers to the average of pupils' scores weighted by Ofsted for each level attained in each subject.

effective deployment of an increased number of learning support assistants, together with other initiatives, has led to further improvements in pupil performance. For pupils currently in Year 2, where the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is considerably lower than last year, attainment in reading is now broadly in line with that expected for seven year olds. Although the greater majority of pupils work at appropriate levels in writing, mathematics and science, the proportion doing so is below national averages. By the end of Year 2, pupils' performance is in line with nationally expected levels in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, music, physical education and religious education.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They are interested in their work and respond well to good teaching. This has a positive effect on the progress they make.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' very good behaviour allows maximum time to be spent on teaching and learning.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. Relationships between pupils and amongst pupils and staff are very good, and contribute well to learning.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Despite the school's best efforts to encourage parents, the rate of pupil attendance is well below national averages.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Good with very good features	Good with very good features

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

The good quality of teaching across the school has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good. Strengths lie in very good planning, together with effective ongoing assessment to help plan what is to be taught next. Pupils know exactly what is expected of them because teachers explain clearly lesson objectives at the start of lessons. In literacy, teachers' enthusiasm and skilled questioning, together with interesting activities, are underpinned by good subject knowledge. Mathematics lessons contain enjoyable activities that reinforce pupils' understanding of concepts taught. Pupils are challenged regularly through mental arithmetic sessions. Teachers successfully meet the needs of pupils at different stages of learning, ranging from those with special educational needs, to higher attaining pupils. Teaching in lessons observed was never less than satisfactory. Teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall in the six areas of learning, and on occasions very good.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good provision is made for children in nursery and reception. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils receive good provision that is well managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Pupils make good progress in relation to prior attainment and targets in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Good provision is made for cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Child protection together with procedures for health and safety are good. Effective provision is made for monitoring academic performance of children in nursery and reception, and in English, mathematics and science for pupils in Years 1 and 2.

The school's good partnership with parents makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning despite very low levels of attendance.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives very good leadership. The very good support she receives from the deputy headteacher, staff and governors, results in the school having a very positive and caring ethos that supports and promotes pupils' learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are closely involved in strategic and financial planning, monitoring and evaluation. They have a clear understanding of the school's provision for all aspects of the curriculum and standards achieved. Apart from omissions in the prospectus and annual report to parents, statutory obligations are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching. More to be done regarding use of data from statutory assessments to determine curriculum modification to raise pupil attainment.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes efficient use of all resources to support learning. Governors apply the principles of 'best value' at every stage of planning and evaluation.

The school is well staffed to meet the needs of children in nursery and reception, for pupils in Years 1 and 2 of the National Curriculum, and those who have special educational needs. Accommodation is adequate overall. Resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory with strengths in religious education, physical education, and for children in the nursery and reception year of the Foundation Stage.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils like coming to school. They are taught well and make good progress.</li> <li>• The school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed; it keeps parents well informed on pupils' progress.</li> <li>• The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible, and behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with a question or a problem.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Fifty-four parents returned the Ofsted pre-inspection questionnaire, and five parents attended the meeting with the Registered Inspector. Inspection evidence confirms the positive views expressed by parents, and finds the provision for pupils' activities outside of lessons to be satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. When children join the nursery, initial assessment shows attainment for nearly all to be below that expected for their age. Nearly two-thirds perform at levels well below expectation; this is particularly the case for skills relating to language and number. Statutory assessment of children on entry to reception shows three-quarters have skills and understanding below those expected for their age, with a half at least well below the norm. The school makes very good provision for children in the Foundation Stage, enabling them to make good progress in all areas of learning. By the time they leave reception, nearly all achieve the officially recommended learning goals for personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical, and creative development. However, despite making good progress, because of their low starting point, less than half achieve the expected levels in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical development. As a consequence, the majority of children enter Year 1 with standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics below, and in many cases, well below those expected for their age.

2. Since the last inspection, end of Year 2 assessments in reading, writing and mathematics, show standards have been consistently below, or well below, the national average. However, over the last three years, there has been a 22 per cent gain in the school's proportion of pupils gaining nationally expected levels for seven year olds in reading and mathematics. There has been a 20 per cent rise in spelling, and a 14 per cent gain in writing. The gains made in reading enabled the school to meet the Bridgwater Education Achievement Zone's target for pupils' reaching the nationally expected level. It narrowly missed the target set for mathematics, and was some way short of the writing target.

3. Despite these considerable improvements, end of Year 2 National Curriculum results for 2001 showed overall standards in reading, mathematics and science to be well below national averages. In writing, where no pupils achieved the higher level, standards were very

low; consistent with the bottom five per cent nationally. When compared with similar schools, based on eligibility for free school meals, results were average for mathematics and science, below average in reading, and well below average in writing. However, of the year group assessed, 57 per cent had special educational needs, and as such, this had a considerable negative impact on pupils' assessed levels of performance.

4. In order to improve standards, as from the start of the current school year, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were placed in classes determined by prior attainment. Support from the special educational needs co-ordinator and the good number of learning support assistants is weighted in favour of classes containing the greater proportion of pupils requiring extra support. Greater provision was made for independent and guided reading, additional to that given within literacy lessons, and the school successfully implemented a commercially published scheme to support pupils' learning of phonics. Speaking and listening skills remained an ongoing focus of attention. In keeping with the school's good policy of inclusion, the school engages, part-time, a teacher who, together with the headteacher, supports literacy skills of higher attaining pupils.

5. Inspection evidence regarding pupils currently in Year 2, confirms the trend of improvement which is aided by the fact that although 42 per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, this number is substantially lower than that of the previous year. Although overall standards in English, mathematics and science are below nationally expected levels, this represents a significant achievement and good learning.

6. In English, despite making good progress in speaking and listening skills within lessons observed, overall standards at the end of Year 2 are below expectations. However, many average and higher attaining pupils reach the expected levels, and make effective use of an appropriate breadth of language, including subject specific terms.

7. In reading, attainment is now broadly in line with nationally expected levels for seven year olds. This reflects very good teaching and learning. Pupils read accurately, and many with good expression. Pupils make good progress in writing, and build well on what they have learnt earlier. However, standards are below average on entry to Year 1, and progress is insufficient for attainment to meet national expectations at the end of Year 2. The quality of handwriting is below that expected for pupils of this age.

8. In mathematics, the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy together with a number of school based initiatives, has been successful in raising standards. Although pupils at age seven learn well, with the greater majority now working at the expected level, the number doing so is not yet sufficient for the school's overall performance to meet national expected levels. Mental arithmetic is developed well through regular 'mental agility' activities, and mathematical vocabulary is introduced and reinforced well.

9. In science, inspection evidence confirms pupils currently in Year 2 learn well in lessons. However, although standards are improving, they are still below expectations. When carrying out investigative activities, most pupils understand what makes a test fair. In information and communication technology, all pupils make sound progress and standards at the end of Year 2 meet expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education and by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 2, they achieve standards in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils have an appropriate knowledge of Christian and Hindu beliefs.

10. Across Years 1 and 2, pupils make sound progress and achieve nationally expected levels of attainment in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. Regarding the several elements of pupils' personal development, their spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Pupils' cultural development, that includes their understanding of cultures other than their own, is good.

11. Across the school, all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs are given good support and achieve well against the targets in their individual education plans. Evidence from lessons observed and review of work, confirms higher attaining pupils are provided with suitably challenging work, and make appropriate progress.

12. In order to raise standards and ensure pupils achieve their full potential, the school sets individual pupils realistic but challenging targets for learning. The school has a very positive attitude to raising standards, and the headteacher, staff and governors work together to this common end.

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

13. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and have a positive impact on learning and the standards achieved. This is an improvement since the last inspection; greater consistency has been achieved across the whole school. Teachers' high expectations of how pupils should behave mean they try hard and are eager to please. There is mutual respect between all members of the school community. Very good relationships are a key feature of the positive ethos that prevails throughout the school. Almost all parents responding to the Ofsted parents' questionnaire stated their children enjoy coming to school and behave well when there. Inspectors fully agree with their view.

14. In the nursery and reception classes children move around with confidence and happily take part in all activities provided for them. They listen with interest when required and are keen to make a contribution to discussions, albeit often with only a few words. They know how to take turns, and respond well to the clear structure and organisation of the day – helping their teachers to complete the planning board at the beginning of the day. Children are curious and want to find out more, as demonstrated by their fascination with real fresh fish in the nursery class. In a physical development session nursery children listened very carefully to instructions on a tape that led them through the story of 'We're going on a bear hunt'. They showed their delight when the chorus, with which they were familiar, was repeated, and joined in enthusiastically with the actions and movements. In a reception class numeracy lesson children very sensibly moved positions in their circle when creating a pattern, making sure that they stood still in the correct position. In both the nursery and reception classes behaviour is always very good.

15. At the time of the last inspection pupils' attitudes and behaviour were not as good as they became older. This is now not the case; pupils' attitudes and behaviour in Years 1 and 2 are very good. Pupils are eager to get into their classrooms and start the day's activities. They give teachers their full attention and listen carefully. Praise and encouragement constantly motivates them to try hard and persevere. Pupils move around their classrooms purposefully and quickly settle to work at their tables when required. In a Year 2 numeracy lesson pupils listened and followed instructions well, quickly organising themselves into a circle when asked and then helping the teacher to 'build' a graph. Pupils remain interested in activities until it is time to go home. During Year 1 story time, pupils took an active interest in the story to be read and asked questions, showing empathy with the lamb who could not find its mother.

16. Despite pupils' obvious enthusiasm and enjoyment of school, levels of attendance are very low in comparison with other schools. Increasingly, holidays are taken during term time and many children are away from school with frequent illnesses. Too much learning time is lost by these children, and, despite the best efforts of teachers, this time cannot always be made up. During the inspection parents made a special effort to get their children to school on time. However, registers show that punctuality is not normally as good.

17. Behaviour is now consistently very good. It was exemplary in assemblies during the week of the inspection. Pupils play happily at break and lunchtimes and immediately fall silent when the bell is rung, waiting for the instruction from teachers to line up ready to return to classrooms. Lunchtimes in the hall are happy, sociable occasions with noise at a level which enables friendly conversation at the tables.

18. Very good relationships underpin the positive, supportive ethos that exists throughout the school. Pupils enjoy each others' company and relate well to all adults that help and support their learning. There is mutual respect and pupils respond with delight to the praise and encouragement they receive. They are especially proud to wear badges that show they are the 'special helper' for the day. At lunchtimes when the weather is fine pupils play with bats and ball, skipping ropes and other small equipment, they treat this equipment with care and with the support of adults are learning to share these fairly.

19. Pupils are given many 'special jobs' to do, such as taking the register to the office, handing out book bags, or helping to put away benches at the end of assemblies. They take these responsibilities seriously and try to do their best. Pupils help themselves to the resources they need, for example one pupil quickly offered to hand out scissors when he realised his group had to cut shapes out and stick them onto a template. Overall, pupils' personal development is very good.

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

20. Good teaching is a feature of this school. Teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better in all lessons observed. Overall, it was good in 62 per cent of lessons seen, and very good in a further 12 per cent. This marks a significant improvement to that reported in the previous inspection when 21 per cent of lessons were judged unsatisfactory. All teachers and support assistants work very well as a team, sharing good knowledge and expertise. The quality of teaching has a positive effect on pupils' responses and the progress they make.

21. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes was never less than satisfactory. It was judged to be good or better in nearly three-quarters of lessons observed, of which a quarter was very good. Planning is very thorough and is based on the recommended Early Learning Goals. It covers all required areas of learning for children aged between three and six, and links well with the early stages of the National Curriculum. Children are provided with a very good range of relevant and interesting experiences. Very good knowledge and understanding of the educational needs of the age group are reflected in the preparation and delivery of lessons, and in the careful monitoring of children's performance. Staff co-operate well in providing children with an appropriate balance between teacher directed activities, and those children choose for themselves. Many opportunities are created to develop and extend children's language, and they are a marked feature of the good practice observed.

22. From the start of the current school year, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have been taught in classes organised by prior attainment. In each year group, one class has a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The very good level of support from the learning support assistants is weighted in favour of these classes. This strategy enables pupils to be taught in smaller groups, and allows teachers to focus the content of their lessons on the needs of pupils with similar levels of attainment. Inspection evidence confirms that in all lessons observed, teachers set suitably challenging work, well matched to pupils' stages of learning. Across Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching was judged to be good in almost three-quarters of lessons, including three per cent very good. The remainder was satisfactory.

23. Teachers have benefitted, since the last inspection, from a good programme of professional development, particularly in literacy, numeracy, and, most recently, in ICT. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of subjects taught. They are enthusiastic, and this contributes to positive, well managed classes. On many occasions,

pupils' understanding is significantly enhanced by teachers' clear explanations and effective demonstrations. For instance, in a science lesson, pupils in Year 2 were given clear, step-by-step guidance on how to access the Internet and search for information. During an outdoor games lesson, the teacher gave a clear demonstration on how pupils should control and pass the football to each other.

24. In nearly all lessons observed, teachers remind pupils of the importance of listening carefully, and of the protocols expected when wanting to answer a question or give information. They explain the lesson objectives well at the start of lessons, ensuring pupils understand fully what they are expected to achieve. Teachers have suitably high expectations of pupils and give them good ongoing support and reassurance. A notable feature in all lessons is the attention all staff pay to good effort.

25. Across the school, classrooms are well organised to promote learning. Teachers were observed using a range of teaching strategies, including individual, group, and whole class teaching to good advantage. The use of questioning techniques by staff is very effective and has a positive effect on pupils' learning, particularly speaking and listening skills, which are an ongoing focus for improvement. The same is true of teachers' encouragement of pupils to use correct vocabulary within lessons, especially in mathematics and science. Good examples of both practices occur regularly at the end of lessons, when pupils talk about what they have learnt. Teachers regularly recap on what pupils have learnt previously, and make effective use of time to advance learning. Staff often capture pupils' imagination by thoughtful introductions and effective use of resources, whether it be a range of puppets to help develop pupils' understanding and use of phonics, or the construction of a three-dimensional map to learn about coastal features. A significant contribution to the effective teaching observed, came from the school's team of support assistants. They work in close partnership with teachers to enhance pupils' learning. Teachers ensure all those working with them have a clear understanding of the lesson objectives, together with the methods and resources to be used.

26. Teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. This is the case whether pupils are given support in class, or withdrawn to work in small groups. Individual education plans relate well to the needs of pupils for whom they are written. Staff use these plans well to meet specific needs. Teachers give clear instructions and use praise constructively. As a result of good support, such pupils make good progress in relation to prior attainment and to targets in their education plans. In keeping with the school's clear policy for inclusion, the school engages part-time, a teacher to support learning opportunities of higher attaining pupils.

27. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Eight of the ten literacy lessons observed were judged to be good; the remainder was satisfactory. Lessons are characterised by the enthusiasm of teachers, expressive reading and leading of stories, together with skilled questioning that ensures pupils' understanding of texts, and develops their understanding of phonics and word-building. Although the structure of the National Literacy Strategy is used to good advantage, and interesting activities are provided for pupils, on several occasions, the 'literacy hour' lasted for up to seventy-five minutes. Where this was the case, towards the end of lessons, there was a marked reduction of pace and in quality of learning. Pupils benefit from good mathematics teaching. Lessons are well planned with a range of activities that reinforce pupils' understanding of the concepts taught. Good opportunities are given pupils to develop their mental arithmetic skills.

28. Teachers' planning is very good. Since the last inspection, the school has implemented schemes of work for all subjects to support the systematic development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers make effective use of good ongoing assessment to help plan what is to be taught next; a feature that is an improvement on the last inspection. In addition to pupils being given good oral feedback during lessons, teachers write suitably constructive comments in books; such marking gives pupils clear guidance on

how to improve their work. Teachers make satisfactory use of homework to support learning; the amount set is appropriate for the age and capabilities of pupils concerned.

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

29. Since the last inspection the school has made a number of significant improvements to its curriculum, addressing all the criticisms made in that report. Planning across the school is now detailed and ensures that both teaching and learning build systematically on what pupils already know and understand. In order to do this, teachers now make their learning intentions clear and precise; a further criticism made in the previous report. Most medium and short term planning now shows in detail how the school provides for the officially recommended learning goals in each area of learning for children in the nursery and reception years of the Foundation Stage, together with requirements of the National Curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2. As a result, the school now provides a very good curriculum across the school that includes a very good range of learning opportunities. Programmes of study for children in the Foundation Stage, and those for the National Curriculum link well together; some aspects of the Early Learning Goals<sup>4</sup> for the Foundation Stage being used well into Year 1 for some pupils. Teachers present pupils with a wide range of experiences that are relevant to pupils' own experiences and serve to challenge pupils' wide ranging ability. Planning for religious education is based upon the locally agreed syllabus.

30. The school has made effective use of both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. It has been proactive in customising the strategies to suit the particular needs of its pupils and is now in a good position to take this further, especially within its work in literacy, where some lessons are too long and better use could be made of the teaching time.

31. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the DfES Code of Practice is fully met. The school has a clear focus, and there is a high level of inclusion in lessons and in the life of the school. The standard of provision has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils receive specific help in literacy and numeracy lessons, and there is good support for pupils with emotional and behavioural or physical needs, or those who attain at a higher level. Teachers and learning support assistants work with the special needs co-ordinator to prepare and review individual education plans.

32. The school's well considered and effective grouping of pupils in Years 1 and 2, has led to all pupils having equal access to the curriculum. In order to make this effective, the school has provided a good number of well trained and able support assistants, who work very well alongside teachers to give support to both pupils with special needs and a smaller group of pupils who attain at a much higher level.

33. The school has a clear policy for personal, social and health education which gives teachers guidance as to what might be included in discussions about how pupils should look after their bodies, correct terminology to use, and a basic knowledge of how some substances can harm them. Opportunities for this type of teaching, together with 'Circle Time'<sup>5</sup> during which pupils sit together and talk about social and emotional issues in a secure environment, appear on many but not all class timetables. Bearing in mind the social and emotional needs of pupils, it is perhaps to be expected that time for these discussions should appear on all timetables.

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<sup>4</sup> QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Early Learning Goals' for children in this stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of six. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

<sup>5</sup> In these lessons, pupils sit in a circle, and, through agreed rules, have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other talking about issues that concern all of them.

34. Whilst a small percentage of parents think that the school should offer more activities outside lessons, the inspection finds that when taking into account the age of pupils, the activities on offer are satisfactory. However, more importantly, the school gives pupils good opportunities to visit places of interest in connection with their class work and to receive a range of interesting visitors at the school. For instance, whilst children in nursery visit the local church to enact a christening ceremony in relation to their 'special water' topic, other groups, as for example, pupils in Year 2, visit Woodspring Museum to consolidate work in both geography and history. Pupils benefit from very useful visits from members of the community who discuss their jobs, and talk of events and experiences of years gone by.

35. Homework is used well in all classes. Parents are kept well informed of the work with notice boards by most class bases. Ninety per cent of parents, who responded to the Ofsted pre-inspection questionnaire, were happy with the arrangements made for homework. The inspection agrees with the majority of parents that homework is well planned, and supports pupils' learning.

36. The school has good links with the local community, made stronger through the Education Achievement Zone. Local supermarkets and fast food outlets have supported school activities. The church is used during the year for particular services and events to which parents are invited. Governors are linked with individual curriculum areas and visit the school to observe activities and the curriculum in action. They note details of both teaching and learning and report back to the governing body at the earliest opportunity.

37. The school has good links with nearby schools. The school receives students from Bridgwater College and Rolle College to work with pupils. These students bring enthusiasm and new faces to which pupils respond well. This gives good support to children's social development.

38. The provision for pupils' personal development is very good overall. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, especially for spiritual and cultural development. Provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Assemblies, with pupils' confident singing and exemplary behaviour, are special occasions that provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on the wonders of the world around them and respect individual differences. Staff and visitors tell stories well and the music that is played as pupils enter enhances the purposeful and spiritual nature of assemblies. Pupils acquire an awareness of the beauty of nature through art, music and literature because they are encouraged to look carefully at the shapes, colours and sounds around them. They anticipate the birth of the ducklings in the incubator with enthusiasm, welcoming another example of new life and beginnings. The school clearly recognises the value of pupils' work; teachers display and mount it carefully so that pupils look at photographs and displays of their work around the school with pride and pleasure. The displays make a very strong contribution to the positive and stimulating learning environment in which pupils grow in self-esteem, respect others and are respected.

39. There is a clear code of behaviour throughout the school. This provides a very good framework in which pupils can grow and practise moral decision making. The school has worked very hard to develop an environment where pupils are clear about the expectations that they will behave well and follow any rules, such as listening and looking carefully. For example, when the bell goes in the playground, pupils stop immediately, sometimes freezing like statues because they find it fun. Pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. They clap spontaneously when someone achieves something new or produces some very good work. They enjoy seeing others receive rewards for their success. Pupils glow with pride and pleasure when the teacher or a visitor praises their work; they value the praise and rewards given by staff. Relationships in the school are very good and teachers provide pupils with good examples on which to model their social and moral behaviour.

40. There is very good provision for social development. Teachers plan many opportunities for pupils to work together well in lessons, in groups or pairs. They are helpful to each other and are encouraged to look after pupils who are new to the school so that they settle in happily. Pupils are given, and take on, responsibility around the school, as for example, when they take registers to the office or carry out duties around the classroom as the 'special helper of the day'. There is a warm, supportive atmosphere in the school and a sense of community so that all pupils feel valued and included. The sense of community is developed well through regular visits to the library, the church, and walks around the area in geography to see where everyone lives. There are times when pupils sit in a circle to discuss their feelings and emotions. These sessions are very valuable because they encourage pupils to take turns in speaking, and listening to others, and help them grow in confidence.

41. There is now good provision for cultural development. Pupils learn about Hinduism in religious education and the whole school celebrates Diwali in an exciting and enjoyable way. Pupils taste Indian food, make 'divas', dress in Indian clothes, learn Indian songs and write their own version of the story of Rama and Sita. In geography they learn about India. Pupils celebrate Chinese New Year as well as having special services in the church for Harvest, Christmas and Easter. During the year pupils celebrate many special days and festivals and enjoy the sharing of knowledge and skills when classes contribute to assemblies. Pupils look forward to the country dancing club and the Country Dancing Festival, which provide them with an opportunity to learn more about their own cultural traditions. The school has worked hard and successfully to improve the quality of its provision for all aspects of personal development and monitors it informally to ensure that it continues to reflect the school's aims.

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

42. Pupils' care, health and welfare is of the utmost importance to the whole school community. Very good relationships permeate the school, providing pupils' with a safe, caring and consistent environment in which to learn successfully. This area of the school's work was reported on favourably at the time of the last inspection: the school has maintained and improved upon the good standards evident at that time.

43. Good attention is paid to matters of health and safety. Regular checks are made of the premises and risk assessments carried out for any out of school visits. Fire drills take place regularly and first aid is organised very efficiently by well qualified and experienced staff. Staff are well informed about their responsibilities regarding child protection and all requirements are met. Break and lunchtimes are supervised well by a large number of adults, ensuring pupils' care and safety at these times.

44. Much time and effort is invested in working to improve levels of attendance. Reasons for unexplained or frequent absence are quickly and carefully followed up by teachers, the headteacher and, when necessary, the education welfare officer. Computerised records enable quick and accurate analysis of absence, helping to identify pupils who might need support to sustain regular attendance. The school does all it can to promote the importance of regular attendance with parents.

45. The school very successfully promotes good behaviour. Pupils can be assured of a consistent and supportive approach from all adults, who continually reinforce and praise the right behaviour, which encourages others to behave in a similar way. Pupils' self-esteem and confidence are promoted through the use of badges, for example for 'special helpers', 'good listening' and 'good looking'. Pupils are proud to be awarded these badges and are keen to tell visitors to their class why they are wearing one. Stickers and stars are used to recognise good work, good behaviour or being kind to each other. Pupils are picked out from assemblies to sit on benches at the front when they try hard to sing well or sit particularly still and quiet. All these strategies clearly show pupils how they should behave and what is

expected of them. Pupils' behaviour is monitored carefully and any child falling short of the school's expectations is given extra support and guidance to help them overcome difficulties.

46. The large number of learning support assistants complement most successfully teachers' work to give very good support and guidance to pupils. Staff work hard to ensure total inclusion of all pupils in every school activity and opportunity. Learning support assistants' commitment to helping pupils to succeed is all too obvious as they work with individuals and small groups of pupils within classes. They involve themselves fully in the life of the school and contribute in many ways. For example, one organises a nurture group during lunchtimes for those children who might benefit from speaking and listening in a small group to help raise their self-esteem and confidence.

47. Teachers and support staff know pupils well. Individual education plans and assessments of pupils with special educational needs are carried out with care and thought. The support for pupils with emotional and behavioural needs is of very high quality. Learning takes place in a purposeful, stimulating and supportive atmosphere. Staff work together very effectively, carefully monitoring and assessing pupils' work. There is very good liaison with external agencies which benefits pupils greatly. For example, Education Achievement Zone funding has enabled the school to have music therapy and to develop the extremely valuable 'total communication' programme, involving the use of signs and symbols throughout the school. In addition, speech and language therapists are training learning support assistants to take listening and communication groups.

48. Overall, monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development is very good. At the last inspection, procedures for assessment were noted as being 'insufficiently structured'. The school has, since 1997, changed and adapted its procedures, which are now judged as being good.

49. As a result of good ongoing assessment and record keeping in the nursery, children there are seen as individuals and receive programmes of teaching and learning that are modified extensively to cater for their particular needs. On entry to reception, a statutory assessment is made of children's skills and understanding in order to establish future needs. Information from this assessment is used well to make adjustments to the curriculum on a termly and a day-to-day basis. Following this, teachers and support assistants continue to make assessments in order to track pupils' progress and to determine their readiness to begin work in the National Curriculum.

50. In many cases, assessments show that quite a number of pupils need to remain on the Foundation Stage curriculum during most or part of their time in Year 1. The school copes well with this need and has enough detailed test results in order to prescribe a suitable course of learning for all pupils, irrespective of their age and abilities. It makes good use of its growing database to help place pupils in particular classes to ensure they can receive different types of specialist support.

51. In order to predict pupils' possible range of achievements, the school checks progress with a variety of tests, which, coupled with ongoing assessments in literacy, numeracy and science, give class teachers a growing set of data, which they use well. Opportunities for assessment are clarified in short-term plans. It is from this data that the school decides which pupils should receive a variety of available support and what the next stage of learning might be. This may range from special needs support, Early Literacy Support, extra time with reading and much more. As a result, pupils make good progress.

52. Target setting is in place. Pupils' progress is checked against the national programmes for literacy and numeracy and the next stage of learning forms the basis of pupils' targets. These are discussed with pupils and at the next available parents' evening, with parents. Targets are regularly reviewed and new targets set.

53. At the end of Year 2, following the National Curriculum assessments, the school analyses the results in order to compare itself with other schools, and against its previous results. However, it is not yet carried out in sufficient depth in order to have a marked effect on the detail of both teaching and learning for pupils in the following year. Fine tuning of the curriculum provision or teaching does not yet arise from such an analysis. At the same time, it is now appropriate for the school to further examine its assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science in order to check whether these assessments are fulfilling the same needs. Assessments are often noted in planning, carried out informally, but are not recorded in order to safeguard the information.

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

54. Parents are very positive about the quality of education children receive. The school works hard to communicate with parents and does so in a suitable and effective manner. Homework is well organised and most parents help with their child's learning at home, which has a positive influence on learning. However, some parents are missing the opportunity to ensure their children gain the very best from what the school has to offer, by not bringing their child to school punctually or regularly. This results in well below average levels of attendance for the school and has a negative impact on standards.

55. Parents responding to the Ofsted parents' questionnaire state their children are expected to work hard, are taught well and therefore make good progress. Most parents recognise that the school is well led and managed and they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions and concerns. Inspectors agree wholeheartedly with parents' positive views; their confidence in the school is well founded. A few parents have concerns about the range of activities outside of lessons. Inspectors judge this aspect of the school's provision to be satisfactory.

56. Parents are provided with a range of good quality information overall. Regular letters keep parents well informed of school events and activities. Whiteboards outside of classrooms inform them in a most appropriate way about what their child has been taught and how they can reinforce learning at home. When pupils begin school, helpful booklets are provided giving advice and guidance on how to prepare their child for school. Workshop evenings are organised to help parents understand more about the curriculum; for example a recent science evening was attended by a good number of parents. Although the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are detailed and give parents a good overview of the school's expectations and its achievements, both documents are missing some required information.

57. Parents are well informed about how their child is progressing. Formal consultation evenings are organised in the autumn and spring terms and a detailed annual report is provided during the summer term. Reports now meet statutory requirements, an improvement since the last inspection when they did not. Parents are encouraged to come into school and speak with teachers at the end of the school day if they want more information and many do. The special educational needs co-ordinator ensures parents are kept fully informed about their child's individual education plans and the agreed targets. Targets, and details of any reviews are shared with parents and their children.

58. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school and the contribution to children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory. Only a very few parents help in school regularly, although many more are willing to help with 'one-off' activities or to accompany visits out of school. Parents willingly help with fund-raising or social events organised by the school, but at present there is no parents' association to support the school. A number of parents serve as governors and their commitment to the school is admirable.

59. Homework is organised in such a way that parents can actively support their child's learning at home. Parents are encouraged to share books and games with their child regularly. A 'share' club is now well established and encourages parents to work with their children on a range of activities.

60. The school seeks the views of parents regularly and continually works to communicate effectively with them. The school has maintained its good partnership with parents since the time of the last inspection.

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

61. As reported at the time of the last inspection, the headteacher gives very good leadership. She sets a very clear direction for the school's development, based on her thorough understanding of the needs of pupils. This has resulted in a significant rise in standards, particularly over the last three years. Recent successful initiatives include the introduction of teaching pupils in classes determined by prior attainment, together with increasing the provision of learning assistants, ensuring they are deployed to best advantage for pupils' learning. The headteacher is given very good support by the deputy headteacher, who, along with the governing body and a hard working staff, have a strong commitment to providing quality education. This has resulted in the school having a clear set of aims and values that are reflected in its day-to-day life. The headteacher, staff and governors have successfully created a very caring and supporting ethos that reflects fully the school's mission statement: 'To create a happy, secure and stimulating environment in which all members of the school community can grow in self-esteem and develop their full potential in every way'.

62. Together with the governing body, the headteacher manages the school very well. Day-to-day management and organisation are good. Roles and responsibilities are well defined, and staff have specific management responsibilities that support the school well. Written communication regarding all aspects of school life is regular and informative. This aspect of management is undertaken well and appreciated by parents.

63. Management of the curriculum is delegated to members of the teaching staff, each of whom takes responsibility for co-ordinating subjects or aspects of school life. The role of co-ordinators is well developed. In addition to being fully involved in planning, resourcing and evaluating standards pupils achieve, co-ordinators support the head and deputy headteacher in the regular monitoring of the quality of teaching across the curriculum. Although analysis of data from assessment results has been used to identify relative strengths and weaknesses, it has yet to be undertaken with sufficient rigour to determine future curriculum modification and provision in order to raise standards.

64. There is regular and productive communication between headteacher and chair of governors. The governing body is supportive and committed to raising standards, including reviewing its own performance. As such, governors are about to embark on a programme of self-evaluation. Committees, covering a range of management areas meet regularly. In addition to discussing subject policies and documents and receiving presentations from co-ordinators, governors each have oversight of a subject. Through visiting, observing and working alongside pupils, collectively, governors have a good understanding of the school's curriculum provision and standards achieved.

65. The preparation of the school development plan is well managed, with governors and staff successfully involved. The resulting document is clear and well structured. It establishes relevant priorities, responsibilities and resource requirements, together with criteria that will be used to evaluate success. However, although the plan is a useful tool for development, targets do not relate in sufficient detail to raising standards or to the specific actions to be taken to improve levels of attainment.

66. Neither the school prospectus nor the governors' annual report to parents contains all the required information. In all other respects, the governing body meets statutory requirements, including those relating to a daily act of collective worship. The school has good procedures that comply with the new Special Educational Needs Code of Practice<sup>6</sup> for the identification and provision for pupils with special educational needs, and ensures good equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils. The school has a helpful policy that informs the management of special educational needs. The newly appointed special needs co-ordinator carries out her duties well, and liaises effectively with teachers, support staff and outside agencies.

67. The match of teachers to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and for children at the Foundation Stage is good. There are sufficient well qualified and experienced teachers who benefit from available opportunities for training and learning additional skills and knowledge of their subjects. The school has good systems for the induction of new staff. Teachers and learning support assistants are supported well by their mentors and by other staff. The arrangements for the professional development reviews and performance management of staff are good, and the school provides effectively for the training of nursery nurses and new teachers. Teachers are given very good support by skilled learning support staff who are deployed well and give valuable support for pupils' learning. Teamwork throughout the school is of a very high standard. Staff responsible for administration, premises upkeep and school meals are efficient and contribute well to the smooth running of the school.

68. The overall level of accommodation is adequate. The main building has suitable classrooms and a good hall. However, there are several old temporary classrooms and there is no covered way between them and the main building. Attractive displays of pupils' work enhance all rooms and have a positive impact on pupils' learning and their feelings of being valued.

69. Since the last inspection, there has been an improvement in resources for geography and religious education. Resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory in all subjects, and are good in religious education, physical education and for children in the Foundation Stage. The school makes good use of visits, the local area and a good number of visitors to the school further enrich pupils' learning and experiences.

70. The standards of financial planning and management are good and effectively link to the needs of the curriculum. An audit of the school's financial management systems undertaken on behalf of the local authority shortly before the inspection, found the school's financial controls to be very good. The audit raised very few minor recommendations for improvement. Governors are closely involved in budgetary matters and are given further guidance through employing the services of an education finance officer. All expenditure, including funding for special educational needs and staff training, is carefully targeted and used appropriately. Expertise provided by those such as music or speech and language therapists, funded by Education Achievement Zone grants, is deployed efficiently. At the time of inspection, the school's 'carry forward' from the previous year's budget was in excess of recommended levels. However, discussions with governors and senior management confirm it includes sums allocated for an appropriate range of initiatives and developments, particularly to the building. In keeping with the school's application of the principles of 'best value', all spending decisions are evaluated for cost effectiveness.

71. Although the school's unit cost per pupil is above average, when taking into account:

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<sup>6</sup> The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, published by the Department for Education and Skills, became effective as from January 1<sup>st</sup> 2002. It replaced the Code of Practice published in 1994.

- Attainment on entry, and the good added value in terms of performance when pupils leave at the end of Year 2;
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs;
- The quality of the school as a community and the effective education it provides;
- The efficient deployment of staff and use of resources;

Hamp Nursery and Infant School gives good value for money. This marks an improvement on the 'satisfactory' judgement of the previous report.

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

72. In order to improve overall levels of performance in English, mathematics and science, governors, headteacher and staff should now:

**Make** greater use of analysis of information from statutory end of Year 2 assessments in order to modify and improve curriculum provision by:

- Developing further the school improvement plan, to show more clearly the prioritised and specific actions to be taken in order to raise pupil attainment.

*(Paragraphs: 6, 7, 8, 9, 53, 63, 65, 89, 90, 98, 99, 108, 113.)*

**Reduce** overall length of many over-long literacy lessons to a time scale that reflects more closely pupils' attention levels;

**Within** literacy lessons, consider breaking teaching into smaller, more manageable units of time by alternating teaching with activities;

**Carry out**, as planned, a review of the school's approach to the teaching of handwriting, with a view to introducing a policy that is implemented consistently across the school.

*(Paragraphs: 27, 92, 96, 97.)*

**Comply** with statutory requirements to ensure the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents contains all the required information.

*(Paragraphs: 56, 66.)*

**Maintain** the high profile already given to raising levels of attendance.

*(Paragraphs: 16, 54.)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	6	31	13	0	0	0
Percentage	0	12	62	26	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 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)	19	184
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	80

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	69

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.5
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	35	40	75

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	21	27
	Girls	28	28	30
	Total	49	49	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	65 (58)	65 (60)	76 (78)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	27	29
	Girls	28	30	34
	Total	51	57	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	68 (59)	76 (56)	84 (78)
	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	1
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	182
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

### Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	3	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)	9.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	25.8

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

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	220

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	62.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	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.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	583442
Total expenditure	560105
Expenditure per pupil	2511
Balance brought forward from previous year	27911
Balance carried forward to next year	51248

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	203
Number of questionnaires returned	54

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	37	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	70	30	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	40	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	49	8	0	4
The teaching is good.	65	31	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	30	7	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	24	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	30	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	29	48	9	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	51	42	0	0	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	31	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	33	12	6	10

*Figures may not total 100 per cent due to rounding*

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

73. Currently, 36 children attend nursery on a part-time basis. A further 73 are in the reception year of the Foundation Stage. Children enter nursery following their third birthday and join reception at the start of the school year in which they become five. Initial informal assessment shows that on entry to nursery, nearly all children have levels of attainment below those expected for their age. Nearly two-thirds perform at levels well below expectation. Not all children move on to the school's reception classes; up to a quarter of nursery children move on to other schools. Statutory assessment made when children join reception confirms three-quarters have attainment below expectation, with a half at least well below the norm, particularly in terms of their acquisition of skills relating to language and number.

74. The school makes very good provision for children in nursery and reception classes. Teaching is good overall in the six areas of learning, and, on occasions, very good. Children benefit from a curriculum that provides a very good range of interesting and relevant activities for each area of learning, well matched to children's different stages of learning. Those now in reception make good progress, and nearly all are on course to reach the Early Learning Goals in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, of knowledge and understanding of the world, together with physical development and creative development. However, despite making good progress in lessons observed, because of their low starting point on entry to reception, less than half are on line to achieve the officially recommended goals in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical development by the end of reception.

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

75. Children's progress in personal, social and emotional development is good. Staff are extremely sensitive to the needs of children in the early years of schooling. They successfully create a happy and purposeful atmosphere where children settle quickly into the routines of school. Children work together in a friendly and supportive manner, and show respect for each other, friends and visitors. Sensitive talk and guidance from a good number of supportive adults in each class, helps children understand the difference between right and wrong, and reinforces their understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. This strategy results in children being well behaved, able to show growing independence in making sensible choices from a range of activities and who can sustain concentration when working. Children take part in a good number of self-chosen and adult led activities, and handle resources with care. Where staff have set up activities that require children to share or take turns, they do so willingly. Teachers and support staff give well paced, very clear instruction. As a result, children listen to what they are told and begin activities eagerly. Children are sensitive to the needs of others, and show pleasure in friends' successes as well as their own. Children have good attitudes to learning.

76. Teachers' planning successfully provides many opportunities for the development of children's self-esteem, confidence and independence. Children carry out their class helper/monitor responsibilities well. In all activities, staff give children good encouragement and praise for noteworthy effort. Children line up and move around the school in a sensible manner, put on and take off aprons when working with paint or water, and clear up after themselves sensibly and quickly. They undress and dress for physical activities with increasing ability. Many food technology activities reinforce children's awareness of the importance of washing hands before handling food.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

77. Children have good attitudes and make good progress in this area of learning. Both in nursery and reception classes, children have many planned opportunities to speak with, and listen to adults and to each other, in groups or as a class. From the start of their time in school, children are taught the importance of listening carefully, taking one's turn to speak, and to look at the person to whom they are talking. Although children demonstrate growing confidence when answering questions, most are still hesitant speakers with limited vocabulary. For example, when children sat in a circle and, with the help of 'Talking Ted', stated what made them happy or smile, whilst one child responded with, "When my dog licks me, it makes me smile," most responded with a single word such as "Cat". Children listen attentively, and, when required, answer questions about, and join in the telling of stories they have been told, including 'Jump, Frog, Jump', 'The Hungry Caterpillar' and 'Farmer Duck'.

78. Most children develop sound book skills. They enjoy sharing books, and handle them with increasing care. Children know that text conveys a message, and that it is read from left to right. Through a well structured and taught programme of phonics, children recognise letters of the alphabet and associate sounds with them. They enthusiastically help and correct the puppets Minnie, Ollie and Ellie with their sounds. Carefully chosen texts are used well to help children recognise a number of words in familiar contexts. A number of older, higher attaining children read texts from the school's reading scheme; they understand the terms 'author' and 'illustrator', and correctly explain what each does.

79. Children undertake much 'pretend' writing as part of their activities in their role-play and writing areas, where they make lists, write cards and take down telephone messages. By the end of reception, most children write their name, make labels for work they have completed as when, having looked at a range of information books, children make and illustrate their own 'books' on a range of subjects. A number of higher attaining children write complete sentences. Children are taught the correct way to shape letters, and copy examples of writing with increasing control.

## **Mathematical development**

80. Progress in mathematical development is good. Children count and recognise numbers to ten, many to 20 and beyond. With the help of a 'magic wand', children in nursery count correctly the number of children present at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. Children in reception count forward and backward to work out how many are absent or present. They sing and play a range of number rhymes and finger games, and put together number puzzles and jigsaws to reinforce learning. Through a range of carefully directed activities, children develop their understanding of addition and subtraction. Children sort objects in a variety of ways, for instance, by colour, shape and size. In lessons observed, children in reception identified and continued repeating patterns through the use of coloured cards, bricks, body positions and sounds. Throughout the activities, teachers work hard to help children establish the pattern or sequence; "Keep looking at the pattern," "Say the pattern to yourself – 'yellow, red, green, yellow, red...'" Ongoing encouragement and praise is a marked feature of such activities. Children are given further guidance and support for their work on patterns when they tour the school grounds searching for pattern sequences, both natural and man made. In so doing, they correctly identify patterns and name the shapes 'circle, square and rectangle'. They gather information and make a tally of favourite fruit and draw class pictograms to show their findings. They compare measurements of length, height and weight, using vocabulary such as 'more than' and 'less than', and arrange objects in size order. Children develop an awareness of capacity and volume through regular play tasks with sand and water. Throughout all activities, adults work directly with children to support, reassure, question and praise, and this results in good attitudes to learning.

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

81. Thorough planning results in a good range of purposeful activities and enables children to make good progress in this area of learning. They observe and discuss weather, and understand why we wear different clothes for each season. Children develop an awareness of place when walking and studying the layout of the school and its grounds. Together with a good number of adults, children in the nursery walk the immediate locality and note several important features. A large three-dimensional map helps them tell the story of, and follow the route taken by, 'The Gingerbread man'. Children understand the difference between living and non-living things, and use their senses to investigate objects and materials. In such activities, adults guide children to look for similarities and differences. Having examined both the inside and outside of fresh fish purchased from the local fishmonger, children quickly state that fish and humans are similar in that they both have a heart, blood and tongue. Whilst children in nursery check each day to see whether their tadpoles have grown legs, those in reception eagerly await the first signs of ducklings emerging from the eggs in the incubator.

82. Children receive a good introduction to 'design and make' activities. Having learned the rhyme 'Baa Baa Black Sheep', children in nursery make a collection of bags and containers to help them design and make a container to carry a ball of wool. Their resulting designs and completed artefacts are noteworthy, and all work. In reception, children progress to designing and making bodies with jointed and moving limbs. Good provision is made for activities relating to food technology, and gives children good opportunities for observation, language development and preparation skills. Regular opportunities are given for children to develop skills of information and communication technology. They handle computers with growing confidence to enjoy interactive story programs, and to use the mouse to control, colour and move items on screen. Children are enthusiastic and have good attitudes to learning.

## **Physical development**

83. Children make good progress in their fine manipulative skills. They handle tools, including knives to spread butter and sandwich fillings, scissors, paint brushes, construction kits and malleable materials safely and with increasing control. In indoor activity lessons, children show good control of movement as they explore different ways to travel along, though and over large apparatus. They jump and land safely, and respond well to teachers' clear instructions. Such lessons are well managed. Teachers have suitably high expectations of children's performance, and praise is used well to encourage and acknowledge good effort. In outdoor structured play, children enjoy an appropriate range of wheeled toys, which they use with increasing control of speed and direction. In all activities, children show growing confidence, together with a willingness to share and take turns. Children enjoy taking part in activities both indoors and outdoors.

## **Creative development**

84. Children make good progress in this area of learning. They use a range of media to draw, paint, print and make models. Teachers give children good opportunities to examine items closely, often with lenses, before drawing their own representations. For instance, whilst children in nursery study closely the colour and patterns on fish, those in reception examine the texture and shades of colour of a collection of eggs. They follow colour mixing charts and experiment with making their own colours and shades. Children create many small imaginary environments, and act out scenes in them, exploring ideas and feelings. They have good opportunities for role-play, with adults often joining in activities to add realism. Children enjoy singing songs from memory. They sing enthusiastically, tunefully, and, as with their accompaniment to 'The Bear Hunt', with a developing sense of rhythm.

85. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very well managed and makes a positive impact on children's learning. The deputy headteacher, in her capacity as co-ordinator for the age range, liaises effectively with her colleagues and gives good advice and support. Good procedures are in place to support children's induction into nursery. In addition to the useful informal assessment made on entry to nursery, a statutory evaluation of performance is carried out shortly after children join reception. Information from this is then used to inform subsequent planning and teaching. Children's systematic development in learning is aided by careful observation and record keeping, and ongoing assessment.

## **ENGLISH**

86. Results of end of Year 2 National Curriculum assessments for 2001, showed standards in reading were well below average, while standards in writing were very low in comparison to results of all schools nationally. When compared with similar schools, based on pupils' eligibility for free school meals, results were below average in reading and well below average in writing. Since the last inspection, in 1997, at which time reading, writing and spelling were judged to be below national expectations, standards have been consistently below or well below national levels. However, these overall test results disguise the progress made by the school in raising standards in both reading and writing each year.

87. Over the last three years, year-on-year trends have resulted in a 22 per cent rise in the proportion of pupils gaining the expected level in reading, and a 14 per cent increase in the proportion gaining the required level in writing. When considering 57 per cent of pupils in the year group assessed had special educational needs, pupils achieved well. The school was effective in taking pupils from a very low level of attainment on entry, to a position where 65 per cent were attaining the nationally expected level for both reading and writing. The scores in reading reached the target set by the Education Achievement Zone in 2001.

88. In order to make further gains in levels of attainment, more opportunities were given for individual reading, to complement the group reading undertaken in literacy lessons. A greater focus was given to speaking and listening skills, and an emphasis placed on giving pupils further opportunities for extended writing. Of equal importance was the school's purchase of a commercial programme to support pupils' understanding of phonics to help reading, spelling and writing. A final and very significant decision was to group pupils in both Years 1 and 2 into classes determined by prior attainment. Whilst making the range of ability less in each class, the school provided a very high level of support, including the headteacher and the special needs co-ordinator, for the class with lower attaining pupils. At the same time it maintained a lower level of support for the higher attaining pupils but based some of this effective support within literacy lessons. This inclusive approach to its provision for English lessons illustrates the school's wish to cater for all of its pupils and to raise standards further.

89. The proportion of pupils currently in Year 2 who have special educational needs is, at 42 per cent, well above the national average. However, it is significantly lower than the proportion in the previous group assessed. Inspection evidence based on lesson observations, review of work and discussions with pupils, confirms a further improvement in standards of reading and writing for pupils currently at the end of Year 2. Whilst standards in reading are now broadly in line with national expectations, they are below average in speaking and listening, and for writing. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against the targets of their individual education plans.

90. Although pupils make satisfactory, and, on occasions good progress as they move through the school, standards in speaking and listening at the end of Year 2 are below national averages. Pupils tend to listen better than they speak. Very many children have very limited speaking skills on entry to the nursery, and, in spite of very well targeted work in both nursery and reception, when they enter Year 1, only half respond well to stories and speak clearly. In most literacy lessons teachers ask general questions in order to interest as wide a

number of pupils as possible. They then try to encourage pupils to extend their phrases and sentences by targeting the questions more specifically. In a Year 2 lesson, in which pupils discussed the works of Roald Dahl, the class teacher, through careful questioning, encouraged pupils to discuss information they had found from books on Dahl's life and works. Several spoke well, giving good detail of their findings. Subject specific terms are carefully introduced and used in relation to mathematics and science, but not all pupils have sufficient confidence to use them in response to questions.

91. Inspection evidence confirms recent initiatives have had a major impact on standards in reading. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is now broadly in line with national averages. Furthermore, a minority of pupils already read at the higher than expected level. Pupils' progress is consistent with very good teaching and learning for this element of English. However, pupils' reading experiences and attitudes to reading vary considerably, with some reading little or nothing outside of school. Although by Year 2, most can read accurately, their further progress is inhibited by a limited ability to look critically at text in order to explore and understand its meaning. The school is endeavouring to compensate for these weaknesses through increasing further pupils' individual reading opportunities with adults. The recently introduced programme of phonics (where children associate letters and blends with sounds and actions) is much enjoyed by pupils and is already having a positive effect on pupils' skills of word building. A new picture and word sign system is being used in the school, so that even pupils with the least extended vocabularies can understand items on display.

92. Although the school recognises the need to improve handwriting, the quality of which is below expectation, it has yet to put in place a scheme which can be used throughout the school and which all teachers use in a consistent manner. At the same time, there are currently many small differences noted in the way teachers themselves write in class. This needs to be tackled alongside the introduction of a new handwriting policy and scheme of work.

93. The low levels of experience and understanding of writing which very many pupils bring with them to school has a lasting effect on their ability to write. In spite of good work in the nursery, over 13 per cent of children in their early days in reception still score nothing in the early writing assessments. When they leave reception there are still around quarter of children unable to write their name. By the time pupils reach the age of seven, they have made good and sometimes very good progress, building well on work in their previous classes, through good teaching and a curriculum which is well modified to suit their needs. Attainment at age seven is below national expectations. Pupils in Year 2 write for a variety of different purposes, including stories, diaries, note taking and writing instructions. Evidence of work previously completed in Year 1 shows pupils write instructional text on how to make bread and what utensils to use. In Year 2, pupils have a number of opportunities to retell, in their own writing, well known stories such as 'Rapunzel', 'The Three Little Pigs' or write about characters from 'Hazel and Gretel'. Higher attaining pupils, while they are writing about a 'Jealous Giant', use words such as 'bad tempered' and 'selfish'. Later, they write instructional text regarding directions from their home to school, or how to access a computer program. This is clearly written and the writing is at times above national averages.

94. Within their writing, although spelling and punctuation improve through the school, they still remain weak in literacy work. Pupils in Year 2 show regular use of capital letters, full stops and some use of direct speech. However, when writing more freely, they do not always remember the rules, and make mistakes as they do not routinely check their work or have literacy partners to help them. Standards of accuracy are higher in work that is well planned, drafted and corrected for display, with the quantity and quality of this work increasing steadily through the school. Although teachers make use of pupils' literacy skills in other subjects, this deserves further exploration. Missed opportunities are noted within both science and work on display in design and technology. However, appropriate use of literacy skills was noted in history work about 'The Fire of London', 'Florence Nightingale' and 'Guy Fawkes'.

95. During the inspection, teaching and learning were both good overall; an improvement on the satisfactory judgement of the last inspection. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. In all classes teachers plan carefully. As a result, lessons cover a range of suitable activities at a sound pace that takes pupils' learning forward. Texts are well chosen and lesson objectives are carefully explained to pupils. Much effort is put into recapping on learning as pupils often have difficulty in remembering their previous work. The recently introduced scheme for teaching phonics is leading to well focused instruction, connecting both reading and writing skills. Most effective teaching was characterised by very careful planning, put into effect in a lively way, making best use of very good relationships within the class, very well taught basic skills, good use of other adults and a step by step approach, building clearly on previous learning. In a good lesson in Year 2, good questioning was a key factor in pupils making good progress, whilst in a Year 1 lesson, the teacher saw the need to spend rather more time recapping previous work before attempting to take pupils' learning forward.

96. The National Literacy Strategy has been adopted well by the school and is beginning to be adapted to suit the particular needs of pupils. There are still further opportunities for teachers to reduce the length of lessons, some of which last well over an hour, in order to relate more closely to the attention span of many pupils. At the same time, further consideration could be given to restructuring the use of time in order to reduce the lengths of teacher input, interspersing this with pupils' activities, rather than a lengthy input followed by brief activities.

97. The subject is well managed and has a positive impact on learning. Good assessment procedures have been established, and results are used well to elicit what pupils know and can do, to determine pupils who require support, and to give teachers good information upon which to base slight modifications to their planning. The same depth of information is not yet being acquired from the results of Year 2 National Curriculum assessments which could be used specifically to modify and improve curriculum provision, with a view to raising standards.

## **MATHEMATICS**

98. Although results of end of Year 2 assessments for 2001 showed standards in mathematics to be well below national averages, they were average when compared with similar schools. This was a creditable achievement when taking into account 57 per cent of those assessed were on the school's register of special educational needs. Standards for pupils currently at the end of Year 2 are below national averages. However, when taking into account 42 per cent of the year group have special educational needs, pupils achieve well. At present, there are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls and all pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress in relation to prior attainment. There has been a significant improvement in the provision for learning in mathematics since the last inspection, and trends since then show a year-on-year increase in pupils' attainment. The rise in pupils' attainment is attributable to:

- The creation of several groups of pupils with similar abilities so that tasks are matched well to pupils' abilities. Assessment is used well for the formation of these groups;
- The thoughtful deployment of learning support assistants which ensures that pupils have adult support to maximise their learning;
- Consistently good teaching, with careful attention to the use of specific mathematical vocabulary. This is reinforced well in other lessons: for example, art and design, and physical education;
- Effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy which is thoughtfully adapted to meet the needs of pupils and ensures that lessons are not too long;
- A programme of work that places a strong emphasis on practical activities and the use of number patterns to solve problems;

- Daily assessment of pupils' progress in lessons.
99. Areas for further development are:
- Greater use of analysis of information from statutory end of Year 2 assessments to identify weaknesses in pupils' learning;
  - More use of information and communication technology in data handling.

100. With the help of their favourite puppet 'Emu', pupils in reception and Year 1 count to 20. They quickly pick up his mistakes when he says 'three teen' and 'five teen' because they are engrossed in the activity. Most understand that if they have seven 'sausages' for their rhyme, they need three more to have ten in the pan. They build symmetrical patterns of five or six bricks by using a mirror because they have good support from an adult who talks with them about their choice of bricks as they build. Higher attaining pupils successfully copy the mosaic patterns made by another pupil in their group. In another class, pupils count to 100 on a 100-square in tens and fives. The rhythm of their counting increases when they get to 35 because they see the pattern more clearly. Pupils find it more difficult to count back from 104 in tens, but the support of the teacher and the large 100-square enable them to complete the task well. Pupils recognise coins of similar value and count out the cost of vegetables accurately using one pence coins. The majority has difficulty in changing for example, seven pence to include two pence coins, but higher attaining pupils use these confidently and some use a five pence coin as well.

101. Higher attaining pupils in a Year 1 and 2 class calculate doubles and halves of numbers whilst other members of the class count forwards and backwards to 20 very accurately, using the rhythm of the tambour to keep the pattern in their mind. They know that when you go forwards, "You go from the smallest number to the biggest and backwards is the other way round." Pupils solve simple problems by creating the appropriate sum to show how they find out the number of lollipops needed for all the group.

102. Pupils in Year 2 build successfully on their understanding of counting in tens using bundles of straws and a counting stick. They sort numbers and letters in their names into columns and know that they are organising data into lists. This is a challenging task but pupils think hard about it, identify any problems, and produce a good final list as they learn to use a tally. Higher attaining pupils work with multiples of ten up to 100 and are so excited by the task that they respond very quickly when asked to write down how many more tens are needed to make 100 if you have 70. Pupils concentrate very well to find lines of symmetry by the use of a mirror and use peg boards to create interesting symmetrical patterns. Pupils with special educational needs extend their learning of number lines and number cards to make a list of numbers between 14 and 23. They demonstrate developing skills of organising their work and have little difficulty in recognising and writing the numbers accurately.

103. Pupils' attitudes towards mathematics are good. Many pupils say that it is their favourite subject because they feel they are successful. They are keen to take part in lessons and learn. Their behaviour is very good and they settle to their written or group tasks very well. Pupils enjoy the mental mathematics sessions at the start of lessons. There is a ripple of pleasurable anticipation when they are asked to give out white boards and they listen carefully to the objectives of the lesson because they like to know what they are to learn.

104. The quality of teaching and learning is good and teachers make lessons fun and interesting because they plan them thoughtfully. Teachers break down the skills into small units of work so pupils have time to practise their new knowledge in a series of stimulating practical activities. They assess progress in each lesson and this helps them to set targets for groups and individuals. They structure the lessons well so that there are several activities during the lesson and sufficient time at the end of the lesson for pupils to discuss what they

have achieved. Learning support assistants and teachers work very well as a team because they plan lessons together and have a good understanding of pupils' needs.

105. Teachers make their expectations of good listening and looking clear and share the purpose of the lesson well with pupils so that at the end of the lesson they see what they have achieved. They pick up pupils' responses quickly and try to help pupils explain their ideas clearly. Many pupils find it difficult to think of the right word or phrase, but adults' skilful questioning helps them to extend their thinking and ideas. Teachers plan more advanced work for higher attaining pupils and ensure that lower attaining pupils are given work that helps them to progress. Information and communication technology is used effectively but the school is aware that more use could be made of it to support data handling lessons.

106. The subject is managed well by the enthusiastic co-ordinator who is well aware of the strengths and areas for development in the subject. The monitoring of lessons and pupils' work is sufficiently rigorous to enable the co-ordinator to have a good overview of the subject. Numeracy is used effectively across the curriculum and the National Numeracy Strategy clearly supports teachers in planning interesting lessons that develop pupils' knowledge systematically and has a good impact on learning. Mathematics makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the wide range of opportunities for learning and working together.

## **SCIENCE**

107. At the time of the last inspection, standards were reported to be satisfactory in science. Results of end of Year 2 teacher assessments for 2001 showed the proportion of pupils reaching either the expected or higher levels to be well below the national average. However, of the year group assessed, 57 per cent had special educational needs, and as such, this had a marked negative impact on standards. Following a review of assessment results, the school recognised that although overall skills in writing were much below average, there was a need to provide more opportunities for pupils to write their own accounts of activities they had undertaken, and to record findings for themselves. This action, together with the organisation of classes by prior attainment, with a high level of support given to classes containing lower attaining pupils, has resulted in a rise in standards.

108. Of pupils currently in Year 2, the greater majority learn well and reach national averages. However, the proportion doing so is not yet enough, and overall attainment is below average. When considering 42 per cent in the year group are on the school's register of special educational needs, this represents good achievement. The programme of study meets requirements of the National Curriculum and places appropriate emphasis on each element of the science curriculum.

109. By the end of Year 2, pupils know features of living things, understand that different species of animals and plant life are found in different locations and habitats, and know how the changing seasons affect lifestyles. Pupils have a sound understanding of the life cycles of creatures such as frogs, hens and butterflies. Through conducting investigations, pupils appreciate their senses, and their importance to us in everyday life. Pupils know and name parts of the human body and understand the importance of the skeleton. They understand the need for a healthy diet and know of different food types. During the inspection, pupils showed a clear understanding of the process of digestion. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the basic structure of plants, together with what they need for healthy growth. They investigate and understand the range of seeds produced by different flowering plants. Pupils work confidently with a range of materials that they classify according to a range of criteria; they test a range of materials to find out if their shape and state can be altered, and whether the process of change can be reversed. Pupils have a clear understanding of living and non-living things, and of natural and man-made objects. They understand the use of electricity, construct simple circuits, and draw them correctly. Their studies of slides, swings and other

park play area amusements provide pupils with a satisfactory understanding of forces, as do their investigations as to what items are attracted to a magnet, and those that are not.

110. Most pupils understand what makes a test 'fair'. In activities such as investigating the distance toy cars travel across different surfaces after travelling down a ramp, pupils consider what must be done to ensure the enquiry is carried out in a fair manner. However, many pupils have limited language skills and find it difficult to describe their experiments in oral or written format. Where this is the case, they do not readily ask questions about their work, and their scientific enquiry is based on observation rather than investigation.

111. Within lessons observed, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, made good progress in relation to prior attainment. Pupils' attitudes to science are good. They show interest and enthusiasm, and become thoroughly involved with their work. Pupils at all stages of learning respond well to the good encouragement and support given by teachers and support staff.

112. The quality of science teaching is good overall. Teachers' thorough planning is underpinned by sound subject knowledge. Staff give pupils clear explanations and provide interesting tasks well matched to pupils' levels of attainment. A feature of the most effective lessons is the use of open-ended questions to elicit responses and prompt further enquiry, and the way in which subject specific vocabulary is introduced and used. Learning support assistants are well briefed and used to good advantage, not only with pupils who have special educational needs, but with higher attaining pupils. Satisfactory use is made of ICT. For example, during a walk around the school site to observe, note and identify trees and flowers, aspects of pupils' work, including the trees and plants they examined, were recorded for future use on a video camera. Similarly, as part of their work on rock pools, pupils accessed further information through the Internet. In all lessons observed, teachers had suitably high expectations of pupils' behaviour and performance. Staff make effective use of day-to-day assessment to help plan what is to be taught next, and, at the end of each unit of work, pupils are assessed on what they know and can do.

113. The co-ordinator gives effective direction for science. Through lesson observations, she monitors the quality of teaching and learning, and gives appropriate advice and support. A clear and helpful policy, together with a scheme of work provides good support for staff in their planning. Science frequently supports the development of other areas of the curriculum, including observational drawing, art and design, and ICT, as well as the skills of speaking and listening. However, the subject's contribution to pupils' writing skills has yet to be fully developed, as has the rigorous analysis of statutory assessment results to improve and modify curriculum provision in order to raise standards.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

114. By the time they are seven, pupils produce work in art and design that is in line with national expectations and achieve well because of the good teaching they receive. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress because they are frequently given additional support and guidance to develop their own ideas. Pupils make particularly good progress in observational drawing.

115. Most pupils enter Year 1 with creative development in line with expectations for their age. By the time they are seven, pupils use paint, printing, collage, pencils and crayons to produce an interesting range of imaginative and illustrative work of good quality. They mix colours for their work very effectively. For example, pupils in Year 1 experimented with different techniques to paint pictures of fruit and vegetables. Learning support assistants skilfully encouraged pupils to look carefully at colours and shapes they saw on the food they had chosen. Having taken an onion, a pupil found there was no colour to paint it accurately.

The pupil therefore mixed blue and red together until the right shade of purple was obtained exactly. The pupil painted it with a finger on the wet paper, looking carefully at the markings and shape of the onion. Other pupils matched the tones of green for spring onions and the shades of yellow and brown for a pineapple. The final paintings were realistic and attractive.

116. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 learnt very quickly how to make good observational drawings of a friend's face. The teacher showed pupils how to measure the distance from hairline to eyes and to use their fingers to work out the shape of cheekbones and chins. Pupils' attention was focused very thoughtfully on the shape and features of their friend's face, and adults' carefully phrased questions to reinforce what the teacher had said. Pupils produced very lively, recognisable drawings of other pupils in the class, not forgetting freckles and glasses. Pupils in Year 2 produced very good line drawings of buildings in charcoal and paint in the style of artists including Monet, Van Gogh and Andre Derain. In so doing, pupils demonstrated good use of paint and different brushstrokes and an understanding of how to use a colour wash to good advantage.

117. Pupils enjoy their lessons in art and design and show good attitudes to learning. They concentrate very well and this helps them to gain a greater awareness of the world around them because they learn to look perceptively at flowers, twigs, buildings and people. They grow in confidence as they attempt their own designs and try hard to mix colours that they like. Staff encourage pupils to describe their work and think about their choices, which helps pupils to extend their thinking and speaking skills.

118. Teaching and learning are good overall because activities are carefully planned to develop skills, knowledge and understanding of processes. Art is used extensively to support other subjects. For example, observational drawings are used well in subjects such as geography and religious education. Teachers and learning support assistants work very well together, using the same relevant vocabulary, and encouraging pupils to reflect upon their work and what they have achieved. Information and communication technology is used regularly to give pupils different challenges in drawing and composing pictures.

119. The subject is well co-ordinated and there is an enthusiasm for improving pupils' observational skills and giving them a wide experience of techniques and media. Pupils' work is framed and mounted before it is displayed importantly around the school. Attractive displays of two and three-dimensional work in each class confirm that pupils' work is valued. Art and design makes a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, and cultural development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

120. No lessons in design and technology were observable during the inspection. However, evaluation of pupils' work on display, together with review of teachers' planning and discussions with staff, confirm that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Standards at the end of Year 2 are similar to findings of the previous inspection, in that pupils make sound progress, and attainment meets national expectations.

121. In Year 1, complex models are noted of playground rides. This followed an examination of what pupils wanted from playground rides and how any models required a stable base if they were going to support a framework. Pupils drew their designs, wrote a list of suggested materials and set about joining their materials with glue and tape, and using glue guns. The final models were evaluated in order to see if they met the requirements of the designs.

122. Pupils in Year 2 examine different wheeled toys in order to understand how the various parts function. They study axles, wheels and windows. Having made drawings, which are labelled to show the various parts, pupils use a small range of tools and materials to construct their models. Although rather too much is made with recycled materials and not

enough opportunities are given for pupils to choose from a wide range of new materials, the completed models are of a satisfactory standard.

123. Although no direct teaching of design and technology was observed, planning of previous work was noted as being satisfactory. The development of pupils' skills and understanding is based on works from a nationally recommended scheme. The school has set further targets for its work in design and technology, including strengthening the links with literacy skills, to encourage pupils to write more about their designs and models, and to make more use of information and communication technology skills for writing and drawing.

124. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a clear understanding of how to further improve the subject and raise standards. She has outline plans for the ongoing improvement of resources including tools, the development of food technology, and the further promotion of assessment to improve standards and report strengths and weaknesses.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

125. No history lessons were observable during the inspection. However, evidence based on lesson observations in geography, together with a review of pupils' work, photographic evidence, and teachers' planning, confirms that for both subjects, programmes of study meet requirements of the National Curriculum. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. By age seven, overall standards are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection, in that attainment in each subject meets national expectations.

126. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a clear understanding of their immediate locality. They draw simple maps of their routes to school, including features of the nearby area. In addition to drawing such maps by hand, pupils make effective use of computer programs to compile routes and road layouts. Maps are then used to develop pupils' understanding of direction as pupils are required to give directions from one point to another. Pupils have good understanding of seasonal changes in weather and the effect this has on life in general. Members of the 'Bear' family are popular within each class. Pupils enjoy learning about the bears' travels, and look forward to receiving cards they and their minders send back to school from different locations. Such activities help develop pupils' understanding of places both near and further afield, and support their use of maps and atlases. Pupils compare and contrast their life in Bridgwater with that on the fictional 'Island of Struay'. They identify similarities and differences, together with perceived benefits and drawbacks of their urban way of life when compared with the rural confines of a small island. Pupils consider what each lifestyle has to offer, which they prefer, and give reasons for their preferences.

127. By age seven, pupils have a sound understanding of chronology and change. In Year 1, pupils compare and contrast toys from years ago with those of today. Their understanding is enhanced by a range of toys sent into school by parents and grandparents. Pupils find out how their homes are different from those a long time ago, and investigate how they themselves have changed since they were babies in terms of clothes, needs and abilities. Pupils' appreciation of change in fashion and pastimes was developed when several members of staff provided photographic timelines of themselves since childhood. In Year 2, pupils learn of famous people and events including Florence Nightingale and the work she undertook in the Crimean War. They consider how hospitals and the care of the sick have changed since then. Pupils have a sound understanding of the events of the 'Fire of London', and appreciate the value of Samuel Pepys' diaries as sources of evidence. History comes alive when pupils visit 'Clara's Cottage' museum, where, through observation and handling artefacts, they appreciate what home life was like a century ago.

128. In lessons, pupils show positive attitudes to geography, and are enthusiastic about the work given them. They work well in groups, often talking sensibly about the task on which

they are engaged. The quality of teaching was satisfactory overall. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. Teachers provide interesting and purposeful activities that meet the needs of pupils at different stages of attainment. In the most successful lesson observed, questioning was used well to elicit understanding, and prompt pupils to think carefully about the work in hand. Review of work shows sound use of ICT, with pupils making effective use of art programs to illustrate scenes from the 'Fire of London' and the 'Gunpowder Plot'. As part of their work on 'Remembrance Day', pupils accessed further information from the Internet.

129. Both subjects are soundly managed by the same co-ordinator who monitors the quality of teaching and learning, and has completed portfolios of evidence relating to pupils' work in both subjects. Clear and helpful policies are in place, together with schemes of work that take into account most recent National Curriculum guidance. A good programme of visits supports pupils' learning in each subject. Both geography and history play an important part in the provision of pupils' cultural development.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

130. Limited direct teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) was observable during the inspection. However, observation of pupils at work, review of teachers' planning and records, together with scrutiny of work, confirms the subject has maintained its position since the last inspection. By the end of Year 2, attainment meets national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Thorough planning ensures all requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Since the previous inspection, the school has continued to renew and improve resources, and staff are now undertaking nationally funded training for ICT. A start is about to be made on the building of a computer suite which, when complete, will support pupils' learning further.

131. Pupils have experience of both keyboard and mouse operated control systems. Across the school, pupils operate tape recorders to listen to pre-recorded stories and music, and to record items themselves. Pupils in Year 1 understand the use and importance of switches, buttons and keys in operating functions of household items. Those in Year 2 show a growing awareness of computer technology, and our increasing reliance on it for many aspects of everyday life.

132. Computers are in operation for much of the day, providing pupils with opportunities to develop their skills in ICT. They use interactive programs, allowing them to enjoy stories, elicit information, and use the 'click and drag' procedure to move items on screen. By the end of Year 2, pupils write words and short sentences to screen, using the 'shift' key to obtain upper case letters. They use the 'return' key to move to a new line, and know how to delete and space words correctly. With help, pupils save and print work. Pupils use their developing skills of ICT to support learning in other subjects. For example, when pupils design and make seasonal greetings cards, they use computers to incorporate short texts with graphics. When learning about their immediate locality, pupils use a computer program to help them draw a road layout to which they add a range of features that include houses and churches. In an observed lesson, pupils in Year 2 were given a clear, step-by-step demonstration of how to access an approved Internet site to gain information on hermit crabs and their rock pool habitats. However, this aspect of electronic interchange of information is at an early stage of development. In addition to the use of computers as word processors for communicating information, or to practise basic skills in literacy and numeracy, pupils make appropriate use of them for data collection, handling and presentation. Work reviewed included pictograms and bar graphs illustrating information pupils had collected from their classmates. The graphs were subsequently used to talk about, and answer questions regarding the information shown on them.

133. Pupils have good opportunities to investigate control technology. They use programmable toys to enter instructions for them to follow. Such activities reinforce pupils' understanding of direction and distance, as well as developing skills in preparing and entering sequenced commands. Across the school, good use is made of commercial art programs that enable pupils to design, draw and paint on screen. Noteworthy examples include pictures of owls for work in literacy on 'The owl who was afraid of the dark' and night scenes for work associated with 'The Fire of London'.

134. Pupils clearly enjoy ICT activities, and are eager to apply their developing skills. They behave very well, and work sensibly, either by themselves or in pairs, and treat resources with care. The quality of teaching was judged to be good. Explanations and demonstrations are clear and effective. Praise is used well to encourage and motivate pupils. At times when pupils required additional support, teachers showed confidence and good subject knowledge.

135. The subject is well managed by a co-ordinator who is allocated time to work alongside and support colleagues. A thorough and useful policy, together with a scheme of work supports teachers' planning. Although staff record skills pupils experience, they do not yet evaluate or assess what individual pupils know and can do. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of further action to be taken to raise pupils' attainment further. The main components being to:

- Continue the programme of in-service training, extending it to support assistants;
- Increase the number of computers to improve the ratio of computers to pupils;
- Develop the use of electronic interchange of information;
- Implement a 'whole school' approach to assessing pupils' knowledge and skills in ICT.

## **MUSIC**

136. Although only two music lessons were observed, information from teachers' planning and evidence of pupils' singing in assemblies confirms the planned programme for music meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. As at the time of the last inspection, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress, and, by the end of Year 2, attain nationally expected levels.

137. Comparatively recent in-service training from the local authority's music adviser has given much needed confidence to class teachers. The adviser spent time in all classes working with teachers, providing exemplar lessons and making useful suggestions specific to their classes. As a result, planning for music by individual teachers is satisfactory and equips them to teach within a framework, building systematically on what has been previously taught.

138. Singing in assemblies was enthusiastic. All pupils sang 'Stand up, clap hands' with great gusto and clear diction. In an observed assembly, the teacher spent time discussing the music played at the start of the assembly, around the theme of 'Nature'. Pupils listened carefully to the music with interest. Lists of assemblies confirm a good number are accompanied by music from the wider world, supporting pupils' cultural development.

139. In a choir lesson, involving all members of Year 2, pupils sang 'Windmill in old Amsterdam'. Although the tune is not an easy one, they sang it well and remembered all the words. Pupils enjoyed singing and carrying out the actions for 'The water cycle', taken from their recent work based on a water topic. Not quite so successful was the learning of a new song, 'Waltzing Matilda'. For although many knew the tune, the teacher did not make use of an overhead projector to ensure that pupils might see the words. As a result, progress was slow and a small group of boys went off-task. A well taught music lesson in Year 2 contained a good mixture of aspects of music. Pupils sang, played percussion instruments, followed and made rhythmic patterns and wrote them down in symbolic form.

140. Pupils' good singing of 'I have a dog and his name is Rover' and 'I can sing high, I can sing low' benefitted from a brief but useful five minutes of warming up for singing, during which time pupils carried out fun activities designed to maximise their breathing capabilities. Pupils were aware of the pitch of notes and were able to make recognised signals with their hands as they sang high and low notes. The good progress pupils made was largely due to the class teacher's good subject knowledge, confident approach to music and her desire to make it fun. As a result, pupils behaved well, enjoyed the activities and gave of their best when working as a class or in pairs. Whilst in a whole class group they beat out different rhythms using claves before breaking into pairs in order to experiment with rhythms and note them using symbols.

141. Evidence in the planning of previously completed lessons, shows that Year 2 pupils have had appropriate opportunities to listen to music such as 'Peter and the Wolf', in which they were able to link the instruments and melodies to particular characters in the story. Pupils have good opportunities to perform in assemblies and in larger gatherings at Christmas, Harvest and Easter services.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

142. Although only games activities were observed during inspection, evidence from these lessons, together with a review of teachers' planning, confirms the planned programme of activities meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. As at the time of the last inspection, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress, and levels of performance at the end of Year 2 are broadly in line with national expectations.

143. In an outdoor activity lesson, pupils in Year 1 were observed experimenting with quoits. They used them as steering wheels to 'drive' in different directions around the playground. Pupils followed instructions well. They used the quoits for practices in balancing while moving. Although some found this difficult they had good support and tried hard to carry out the challenging tasks. Pupils made good use of their listening skills to follow the number of instructions given during the lesson. Pupils made good progress in their learning.

144. In a Year 2 lesson, which endeavoured to improve pupils' ball control skills, pupils completed a brief warm up, but moved a little too quickly into stretching exercises before their bodies were completely warm. Although the coaching of basic passing skills with the feet was well taught, with the class teacher giving clear demonstrations of techniques, the lesson moved too quickly from activity to activity. Rather more time and less changes in the activities was needed, as many pupils made slow progress in gaining the passing skills.

145. In an indoor games lesson for a mixed Year 1 and 2 class, the emphasis was on co-ordinating actions for throwing and catching. Once again, not enough emphasis was placed on preparing pupils' bodies for exercise; they moved rather too quickly to practising catching and throwing techniques. The level of these skills was in line with that expected of pupils of this age. The class teacher had assigned one year group to her support assistant, sharing the tasks well. As a result, pupils made satisfactory progress in their learning, in a lesson in which organisation, control and management of pupils were good.

146. Teaching was satisfactory in two out of the three lessons observed, and good in one. The reason for one lesson being more successful was that the teacher had a higher level of personal skills and a greater understanding of the development of physical skills in young children. As a result her teaching of basic skills was good, in a lesson which moved from one activity to another with pace. In all lessons, pupils behaved well, shared equipment with their friends and showed good social skills, whilst at work. The effective use of extra adults meant

all pupils had the opportunity to learn at an appropriate pace, supporting the school's inclusive planning.

147. The co-ordinator for the subject has good experience and knowledge, gained from attending a number of courses and improving her own subject understanding, and she gives sound advice to her colleagues. A clear and helpful policy, together with a scheme of work is in place to support teachers' planning for each element of the curriculum. Appropriate emphasis is placed on aspects of safety, particularly regarding the movement of equipment. To this end, clear photographs and instructions are placed alongside apparatus in the hall. At the same time, further photographs and displays give the subject a strong status in the school. In addition to satisfactory resources, the support of a football coach not only benefits pupils' learning, but provides teachers with opportunities to gain further understanding and ideas for their own teaching.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

148. There has been a marked improvement in the subject since the last inspection when standards at the end of Year 2 were judged to be unsatisfactory. No religious education lessons were observable during the current inspection. However, review of pupils' work and teachers' planning, together with discussions with teachers and pupils, confirm that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 2, attainment meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils show an interest in the stories they hear and this helps them to acquire a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity and other religions. They learn about the God who made and calmed the storm when Jesus was on the lake. The visiting minister told them that the same God makes beautiful, delicate plants. This helps pupils to develop some understanding of what religious belief means to people in their daily lives.

149. Pupils in Year 2 are aware that Jesus is a very important person in the story of Christianity. They recall many of the parables and know that these stories help people understand how they should behave. Pupils know that rules are necessary and that there are times when people have to make choices. Pupils understand the Bible is a special book and that a church is full of 'special things', such as an altar, a font and often, stained glass windows. Pupils' understanding of the story of Easter, and the emphasis placed on 'new beginnings' and 'new life' helps them to appreciate the beauty of the world around them. Pupils write their own version of the story of Rama and Sita in the books they make. They enjoy their work on Hinduism and the whole school celebrates Diwali so that everyone shares in the experience of tasting Indian food and learning Indian songs. Pupils in Year 1 learn about the importance of a baby's christening by acting out the ceremony and look carefully at the changes as babies grow into toddlers and then children at school.

150. Teacher's planning is good and ensures that pupils learn from the teachings of Christianity and other religions. Assembly themes support the teaching in religious education well due to the stimulating and purposeful presentation of stories, which encourages pupils to listen carefully. Sensitive questioning encourages pupils to ask and answer questions with confidence. Music in assemblies is carefully chosen to complement the theme and the singing is tuneful, with clear diction as pupils think about the words.

151. The subject is led and managed well by the co-ordinator. With their strong moral and social emphasis, the carefully planned assemblies contribute well to the religious education curriculum. Visits to the church for special festivals and the regular visits from the minister are valued by pupils and contribute much to their learning. Resources, considered unsatisfactory at the last inspection, are now good and are used well to support pupils' learning.