

INSPECTION REPORT

GUIDE POST RINGWAY FIRST SCHOOL

Choppington, Morpeth

LEA area: Northumberland

Unique reference number: 122247

Head teacher: Mrs J Rule

Reporting inspector: Mr A Margerison
21666

Dates of inspection: 25th – 28th February 2002

Inspection number: 196469

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | First |
| School category: | County |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 - 9 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Ringway Guide Post Choppington Northumberland NE62 5YP |
| Telephone number: | 01670 813463 |
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| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr N Bell |
| Date of previous inspection: | July 1997 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 21666 | Mr A Margerison | Registered inspector | The Foundation Stage | What sort of school is it? |
| | | | English | The school's results and pupils' achievements |
| | | | Information and communication technology | How well are pupils taught? |
| | | | Geography | How well is the school led and managed? |
| | | | History | What should the school do to improve further? |
| | | | Special educational needs | |
| 19741 | Mr T Smith | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development |
| | | | | How well the school cares for its pupils? |
| | | | | How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| 30834 | Mrs A Lowson | Team inspector | Equal opportunities | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |
| | | | Mathematics | |
| | | | Science | |
| | | | Art and design | |
| | | | Design and technology | |
| | | | Music | |
| | | | Physical education | |
| | | | Religious education | |

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Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Guide Post Ringway First School is situated in the village of Guide Post to the east of Morpeth in the county of Northumberland. The majority of pupils live in the surrounding area, which is mainly privately owned housing, but about a third of parents live in neighbouring areas and choose to bring their children to the school. With 122 pupils on roll, it is smaller than most First schools. The school roll has fallen slightly since the last inspection with all classes as single year groups. The majority of pupils are of white heritage and there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. A total of 8.2 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below the national average. The proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is 13.9 per cent which is below the national average and there are no pupils with statements of special educational needs. Socio-economic circumstances vary considerably and in many households both parents are working, but overall they are below average. All children in the current reception class went to nursery school before transferring to Guide Post Ringway. Although attainment on entry varies from child to child, overall it is below that typical for their age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Guide Post Ringway First School is a very welcoming school that fully values the contributions and achievements of pupils. It provides a very good education for its pupils and has many strengths. These include the good quality of teaching, a very broad and balanced curriculum enriched by an excellent range of activities out of lessons, very good provision for moral, social and cultural education and very good leadership by the head teacher. Standards at age seven in reading, writing and mathematics have been consistently above the national average. At the time of the inspection, attainment in English, mathematics, science, art and design, physical education and music are good at seven with pupils achieving well in these subjects and geography and history in Years 3 and 4. Attainment in all other subjects at seven and at the end of Year 4, with the exception of information and communication technology, is in line with national expectations. The school is an effective school and gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Most teaching is good and in a high proportion of lessons seen during the inspection it was very good. The improved quality of teaching is leading to the high standards that pupils achieve, particularly in learning basic skills of English, mathematics and science. Pupils make very good progress in their reading and writing; and good progress in mathematics and science.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are very good and are enriched by an excellent range of activities outside lesson times. These allow pupils to pursue their interests and develop their social, physical and creative talents further.
- There is very good provision for pupils' personal education that results in very good attitudes to learning, very high standards of behaviour and excellent relationships between pupils and adults.
- The head teacher provides very good leadership. Very good teamwork and consistency of approach ensures that the aims and values of the school are fully realised.

What could be improved

- Standards pupils achieve in aspects of information and communication technology.
- Information provided for parents about the work of the school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997. The progress made towards addressing the 'key issues' identified is good overall. All teaching staff now have job descriptions and the recently introduced national procedures for performance management have been implemented effectively. New subject planning has been developed that successfully covers all the programmes of study for the Foundation Stage, National Curriculum and religious education. The school caters very well for pupils of different ages and abilities. This ensures they achieve well as they move through the school. Although the resources for teaching information and communication technology have improved, there is still room for improvement in planning to make sure pupils have sufficient opportunities to practise and develop their skills. Procedures for assessing pupils' achievements have been developed satisfactorily, but the information is not yet used effectively to set specific targets for individual pupils so they know what they do well and how they could improve their work. Due to the very good leadership of the head teacher the school has implemented the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy very effectively. This has been supported by the arrangements made to release the head teacher from teaching for three afternoons each week. The school has devised good plans to allow other subject leaders to monitor the work of pupils in their subjects.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

| Performance in: | compared with | | | | <i>Key</i> |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|---|
| | all schools | | | similar schools | |
| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2001 | |
| Reading | A | A | A | B | well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E |
| Writing | A | A | B | D | |
| Mathematics | A | C | A | C | |

Care should be taken when evaluating the above results due to the size of the school. The results of the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds show that since the last inspection, high standards have been maintained against a background of variable class sizes and pupil ability. In 2001, when compared to all schools, attainment in reading and mathematics was well above the national average and above average in writing. Compared to similar schools, as judged by the proportion of pupils on free school meals, Guide Post Ringway achieved above average results in reading and ones close to the average in mathematics. In writing, the school's results were below similar schools. However, in 2001 nearly one-fifth of the pupils in this year group had special educational needs. Most of these pupils did not reach the expected standards in reading, writing or mathematics, although they achieved well against their previous attainment. Inspection findings indicate that pupils are making good gains in learning. Those who are not on the register of special educational needs are on target to attain at least national standards by the age of seven in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Those capable of higher attainment are already working at advanced levels in reading, writing and mathematics and are fully challenged. Pupils with special educational needs continue to make good progress in their learning due to teachers using individual learning plans well to plan activities and deploy support staff. In information and communication technology, pupils' attainment is below the national expectations at

the age of seven and by the end of Year 4. This is because not all the aspects of this subject are taught fully and opportunities for pupils to use their skills are not sufficiently planned for in other subjects. In other subjects, pupils' attainment is above expectations at ages seven and by the end of Year 4 in art and design, music and physical education. In addition, attainment in history and geography is better than expected by the end of Year 4. The school has set itself targets for the current pupils and is on course to achieve them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have very positive attitudes to learning. They are well motivated and work very hard. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Behaviour throughout the school is very good. Pupils understand and follow the established routines and meet the very high expectations set for them. |
| Personal development and relationships | Relationships are excellent and enable the school to function as a very well ordered community. Personal development is excellent with pupils taking responsibility for aspects of their work. |
| Attendance | Very good. Pupils' attendance at school is well above the national average. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils: | aged up to 5 Years | aged 5-7 Years | aged 7-9 Years |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Lessons seen overall | Good | Good | Good |

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

Teaching at the school is good with a high proportion of lessons being very good or excellent. This is a good improvement since the last inspection and one of the reasons why attainment has continued to be good in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers throughout the school place a strong emphasis on teaching basic skills in literacy, numeracy and science to pupils of all abilities. Activities in other subjects provide very good opportunities for pupils, particularly in Years 3 and 4 to use and practise these skills. Throughout the school, good links are made between subjects so all activities have a clear purpose. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' performance and behaviour in lessons and around the school so pupils concentrate very well in lessons and are keen to do well. Lessons are very well organised by teachers and pupils are well managed. Instructions are clear, lessons are brisk and pupils behave very well. Teachers use questions well in class work to challenge pupils and to check their understanding of what they have done before.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | The school provides a very good curriculum. Strategies for developing pupils' literacy and numeracy are very good. The range of extra-curricular activities gives pupils excellent opportunities to develop their social, physical and creative skills. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. Pupils who have special educational needs are well catered for. They have individual education plans that ensure good rates of learning. Teachers use these well to plan activities in lessons to help them achieve their targets. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good overall. Provision for social and moral development is very good. Teachers provide many opportunities in and out of lessons for pupils to work together. The range of visits, including a residential visit to Ford Castle, and visitors to school enhance the opportunities pupils have to develop their personal skills. Provision for pupils' cultural development, particularly through art and design and music activities is very good. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Assessment procedures are good across the school and the information is used well to set new targets for learning and to identify school priorities. |

The quality and range of opportunities provided for pupils is very good. The school puts a strong emphasis on making sure all pupils have very good access to the excellent range of activities outside of lessons. The very good provision for developing their personal skills and the good procedures for assessing and supporting their academic and personal progress ensure pupils develop very positive attitudes to school and learning. The good curriculum is broad and balanced although some aspects of information and communication technology are not fully covered so pupils do not develop the full range of skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject sufficiently. The school has sound links with parents who make a good contribution to the work of the school. However, the information they receive about the curriculum and their children's progress is unsatisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff | Very good. The head teacher provides very good leadership and is the main driving force in maintaining a clear direction to the work of the school. The deputy headteacher and other subject leaders provide good support and leadership in their areas. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Satisfactory. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school, but the annual report to parents does not meet statutory requirements. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Very good. School self-evaluation is used very effectively to identify priorities for development. Priorities are carefully devised using the information from national tests and a system of self-evaluation to which all staff contribute. |
| The strategic use of resources | Good. Resources are used well in lessons. Spending is linked appropriately to identified priorities. Best value is sought routinely. |

The head teacher leads the school very well. Very appropriate priorities for development are identified by a process that involves all teaching staff. Consequently, the school has very clear direction and fully meets its aims set out in the school prospectus. Best value is sought where possible. The school is adequately staffed by teachers and support staff. The accommodation and learning resources are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school.• Parents feel comfortable approaching the school.• The teaching is good.• The school expects their child to work hard. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality of information about how their child is getting on.• The school's links with parents. |

The great majority of parents have positive views of the school. The inspection team partially support parents' concerns. The school has sound links with parents, but the school could improve the quality of information given to parents throughout the year.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1 The results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds show that high standards have been maintained since the last inspection against a background of variable class sizes and pupil ability. Since 1999, pupils have performed better than the national average, although standards in reading and writing have been more consistent than mathematics, which have alternated between being in line with national averages and well above. In 2001, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level 2 in reading was above the national average and close to that expected when compared to similar schools. In writing the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level for their age, was close to the national average, but well below that expected for similar schools. In mathematics the proportion of pupils attaining the expected levels was below the national average and well below average compared to similar schools. However, these results should be viewed in the context of a small group that included a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs who, although they achieved well, did not attain the expected levels for their age. Overall, pupils benefit from consistently good teaching so they achieve well and the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels in reading and mathematics is very good. For example, in 2001 it was well above the national average. When this group entered school, their attainment was below average and overall, the results represent very good progress in reading, and good progress in writing and mathematics and science.

2 Inspection findings indicate that all pupils, irrespective of ability or gender, are making good gains in learning and those who are not on the register of special educational needs are on target to at least attain national standards by the age of seven. Many pupils have already achieved the expected levels in reading, writing, mathematics and science and are on course to exceed expectations by the end of the year. Those capable of higher attainment are already working at advanced levels and are fully challenged. The school has set itself targets securely based on assessing pupils' achievements. These targets are wholly appropriate and reflect the schools' high expectations for its pupils.

3 In Years 3 and 4, pupils continue to make good progress and achieve well. Pupils use their skills in reading, writing and research well as they study other subjects. The effective links created by teachers between subjects is a significant reason for the good standards of writing. Opportunities for writing in different styles and for different reasons are broad, especially in subjects such as history and science where standards by the end of Year 4 are above those expected for their pupils' age. For example, in Year 4, pupils explore the physical phenomena of the Earth in Space. Pupils make individual booklets about what they know and understand from their research and good opportunities are made for pupils to write imaginatively as they compile a *Captain's log*. These links are not so effective for extending pupils' numeracy and information and communication technology skills because teachers do not systematically plan additional opportunities within topics for pupils to practise and reinforce their skills. This contributes to the more variable standards pupils attain in mathematics and standards in information and communication technology are below national expectations by the age of seven and at the end of Year 4. However, resources for this subject have been developed well recently and staff are about to start specific training so teachers' confidence and standards are well set to improve.

4 In other subjects, by the age of seven and the end of Year 4, standards reached by pupils in science, art and design, design and technology, and music exceed national expectations and pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Teacher assessments in science indicate that

the proportion of pupils attaining the expected levels was close to national averages in 2001, but the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 3 was above national average and close to that expected for similar schools. This represents good achievement from when they first enter school. In art and design and design and technology, standards are good and have remained good since the last inspection because basic skills and techniques are taught very well and pupils are given good opportunities to work in a wide range of media within a clear framework. In history and geography, standards by the end of Year 4 are above national expectations because of the good opportunities teachers give pupils to practise and use their research skills in the topics. In music, the school makes good use of visitors to widen the pupils' experience of multicultural music and the school's excellent provision for extra-curricular activities provides pupils with an opportunity to take part in high quality music and drama performances to use their skills.

5 In physical education, by the age of seven and the end of Year 4, pupils reach standards that are above those expected nationally for their age. Pupils make good progress in their lessons and achieve well from when they first enter school. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be satisfactory, but pupils' progress was unsatisfactory. Both standards and the progress pupils make is now better and this is because the quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers now have high expectations of what pupils are expected to do, offer pupils experiences that are more challenging and teach skills in a more consistent way. The school makes very good provision for swimming and consequently, the majority of pupils achieve well and have already attained their 25-metre certificate by the age of nine.

6 Children enter the reception class with a range of prior attainment. However, local authority baseline tests indicate their general level of attainment is below the levels expected for typical four year olds in language, literacy and communication skills and mathematics. The well planned curriculum in the reception class means that children achieve well and make good gains in knowledge, skills and understanding in all the expected areas of learning. By the time they are ready to move into Year 1, the majority of children achieve the early learning goals in all the areas and in personal development they exceed the expectations.

7 Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. This is because the school has good procedures for identification and the good individual education plans are used effectively by teachers to focus activities and support on meeting their needs. Most are on target to achieve what their teachers expect. Those who have behavioural difficulties achieve less well in some lessons because teachers do not have consistent strategies to manage their behaviour. The relative achievements of boys and girls have differed little over recent years and inspection evidence identifies no significant differences in their attainment. This is testimony to the efforts that the school has made to ensure topics, books and activities appeal equally to both sexes.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8 Pupils' attitudes to learning remain very positive. They thoroughly enjoy school and are highly motivated, enthusiastic learners who take a very keen interest in all areas of school life, especially the extensive range of extra-curricular activities that are organised for them. In lessons pupils listen carefully when their teacher, or others are speaking, answer questions sensibly and contribute confidently in discussions. They settle very quickly to each new task and pursue their work with purpose, determination and very good levels of concentration.

9 Behaviour continues to be very good, both in and out of class. Pupils are a credit to their school. They display high levels of self-discipline, clearly understand what is expected of them and usually react accordingly. Incidents of bullying are rare. There have been no exclusions. Pupils

genuinely care for their school and each other. They treat its fabric, fittings and resources with due care and respect.

10 Pupils' personal development has improved since the last inspection, and is now excellent. This makes a major contribution to the standards they achieve. Pupils are confident learners, who work very well independently and show excellent levels of initiative in many different ways. The annual Year 4 fund-raising 'economic project' is a very good example of this. Pupils are considerate, and fully understand the impact of their actions upon others. There is a relaxed and harmonious atmosphere throughout school which helps pupils feel supported and valued. This particularly helps children in the reception class to feel comfortable so they quickly settle well into school life. They quickly develop very good work habits. In lessons, they share and take turns sensibly and are able to sustain interest and involvement in activities without constant direction from their teacher. Pupils willingly take on responsibility and carry out their tasks diligently. Year 4 pupils, for example, in addition to undertaking a variety of routine jobs around school, help to supervise younger children during wet playtimes and also look after them when they go out on local visits. The quality of relationships throughout the school has also improved, and is now excellent. Pupils are polite, open and friendly. They work well together, and are always ready to help each other and their teachers.

11 Attendance has been consistently well above national averages for several years. Unauthorised absence is extremely low. Punctuality is generally good, although during the inspection a few pupils did arrive late. Lessons generally start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12 The quality of teaching throughout the school is good. Teaching is a strength of the school and is directly responsible for pupils' standards of attainment, their excellent personal development, very positive attitudes and very good behaviour. During the inspection four out of ten lessons were very good. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. English is taught very well and is rewarded by the consistently high standards pupils achieve in national tests for seven year olds. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.

13 Teaching in the reception class is good and often very good. This is because there are very high expectations of children's performance and behaviour and the very good teaching of basic skills in literacy and mathematics. An interesting range of activities makes sure children develop their learning in all the recommended areas of learning. Lessons are well planned to consolidate and extend children's skills, knowledge and understanding, especially in language and literacy and mathematical work. The teacher pays great attention to developing children's understanding of routines and independence. The teacher places great emphasis on developing children's speaking and listening skills through class discussions and on their personal and social education by small group activities and games. Consequently, in construction activities they share equipment and ideas and take turns when they are playing simple games such as 'pairs'. The teacher allows children some free choice of activities and balances this well with directed work where she focuses on developing particular skills. The teacher deploys other adults, including some parents, well to work with groups or individuals. This has a particularly positive effect on how quickly children learn to read. Each child reads aloud to an adult individually at least twice a week and their progress is clearly recorded on individual record sheets so the books they are given are well matched to their needs and their skills develop well.

14 The majority of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. Teachers' subject knowledge in most subjects is very good and great emphasis is placed on developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy lessons. This is rewarded by the good standards pupils consistently achieve in the national tests for seven year olds, particularly in reading and writing. Good planning in all subjects gives pupils

many opportunities to practise their reading, writing and research skills. This approach helps to alleviate the variation in ability of classes from year to year. However, similarly carefully planned opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy and information and communication technology skills are less extensive which means pupils' standards are more variable. The teaching of reading is good. Teachers choose interesting books to share with pupils that motivate them to learn a broad range of reading strategies. One of the aims of the school is to stimulate pupils' interest in reading and writing. It very successfully achieves this through lessons and additional sessions, such as the free choice reading sessions held every day. In discussion with pupils, they are very enthusiastic about books in general.

15 In Years 3 and 4, overall teaching is good although during the inspection a significant proportion of the lessons seen were very good or excellent. Teachers set challenging learning targets for pupils, ensuring good levels of progress. Planning is good with clear learning objectives identified. This clarity of intention to lessons enables teachers to explain clearly what they want pupils to do so pupils' interest and concentration in lessons is very good. As seen in the infants, a major strength of teaching is the emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills. The intention is that every activity has a purpose. For example, writing activities in literacy lessons and other subjects are planned carefully to give pupils interesting opportunities to use and develop their skills in a particular style of writing. Consequently, pupils learn to write well in a range of styles and genre such as poetry or creative stories. However, information and communication technology activities are not an integral part of the lesson planning which means pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to practise or develop their skills in all aspects of the subject, particularly handling data and control technology. Teachers respond positively to pupils' efforts in lessons giving them clear ideas on how they could develop their work, which encourages them to try hard. However, marking of pupils' work is less effective in giving pupils pointers on how they could improve their work further and what they need to learn next.

16 Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Pupils' personal skills develop very well due to teachers' high expectations of and the excellent relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils learn academic skills well because individual pupils' plans give class teachers good guidance on how their learning needs can be met, planning in all subjects reflects these plans and pupils receive good support in lessons and withdrawal sessions. Designated teaching and support staff provide targeted support to meet individual and group needs. This is one of the main contributory factors that helps them achieve. However, the plans for the few pupils with behavioural difficulties are less specific and consequently teachers do not always have a broad enough range of approaches to manage their behaviour effectively. All pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in activities in and out of lessons. The school has not identified pupils who are gifted or show a particular aptitude for a subject, but more able pupils are well planned for in lessons so additional activities are provided to challenge and extend their understanding.

17 Teachers make good use of the local environment and the community, especially in science, geography, history, art and design and music. Parents recognise and value the good teaching in the school and the positive effect it has on their children's learning.

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

18 The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are good in the reception class and very good in the infants and juniors. Overall, the school provides a very good range of valuable and worthwhile learning opportunities for all pupils that cover the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. All subjects have written policies. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy form the basis for

planning English and mathematics with the nationally recommended schemes of work for all other subjects, except art and design and gymnastics, where the school has separate schemes of work. Consequently, the school ensures that pupils' learning is continuous and that, from Year 1 to Year 4, they progressively acquire an increasing range of knowledge, skills and understanding in each subject. The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection and now the schemes of work in design and technology and information and communication technology meet National Curriculum requirements. The school teaches most of the science, history and geography through a two-year topic cycle. This is very well planned with very clear links made between the different subjects. Teachers' weekly planning of lessons is now good overall, although specific planning to include opportunities to teach skills in information and communication technology are not yet developed well enough. The school ensures equality of opportunity for all pupils by ensuring all pupils can be involved if they wish in all learning activities in lessons, at lunchtime and after school. The school complies with statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship.

19 No clear judgement was made at the last inspection of the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The provision is now good. Pupils are identified early and the individual plans produced by teachers with the advice of the special needs co-ordinator are good. Clear, crisp targets indicate that they have a good understanding of what specific skills and understanding pupils need to learn next and planning of lessons make good use of these approaches. There is good support for pupils and great care is taken by the school to make sure that the pupils with special educational needs are included in all aspects of the school's work. Support in lessons is supplemented by a good range of specialist programmes, such as to help specific pupils acquire the skills they need to take a full part in range of experiences on offer to them in lessons and outside.

20 Since the last inspection, the school has developed very effective strategies to teach literacy and numeracy. Literacy skills have been very well integrated into all subject areas and as a result, this is helping the school to achieve standards in English that are well above national expectations. Strategies to teach numeracy skills in lessons are very good so pupils achieve good standards, but not as many planned opportunities exist to integrate numeracy into other subject lessons.

21 The school provides an excellent range of extra-curricular activities that extends the pupils' learning beyond the school day. All staff are involved and a large percentage of pupils take part in activities which include drama, music, art, sport, dance, science, computer and games activities. The impressive range of opportunities offered to pupils not only further extends their skills and knowledge in particular areas, but also gives them very good opportunities to develop their personal and social skills. The school also provides the opportunity for older pupils in Year 4 to attend a residential week, where challenging outdoor and adventurous activities develop their independence, initiative and social skills even further. The school uses visits and visitors very well to enrich the curriculum and provide first-hand learning experiences. A recent initiative on Africa, involving visiting local music and dance teachers, is having a very positive effect on the social, moral and cultural development of the pupils.

22 The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. All classes have lessons in personal, social and health education. These lessons are taught well and give pupils many opportunities to reflect on how to live a healthy life and make positive decisions. Other aspects of health education are taught through science and physical education. Sex education is taught through the science curriculum at appropriate times. There is a relevant and up to date policy on drugs education. The school encourages pupils to develop awareness of living in a community and how they may act as good citizens within that community. Older pupils are aware that rules, whether class rules, school rules or the wider rules of society, are there to make life better for all.

23 Good links have been maintained with the community. Visits and visitors to school effectively broaden the curriculum and give pupils valuable first-hand experiences. The annual residential trip to Ford Castle makes a significant contribution to their personal development as well as their understanding of history and geography. Pupils attend the local church to commemorate festivals, such as Easter and Christmas, and the vicar is a regular visitor to the school. There are also regular links with local elderly residents. This raises pupils' social awareness. Sporting links with other schools are well established. The school does not have any educational business links but has good contacts with several local firms through which it obtains various materials and resources.

24 The provision for pupils' personal development is very good. The provision for developing their moral, social and cultural education is very good and makes a very positive contribution to the pupils' very good attitudes to school and their overall very good behaviour. These strengths underpin their learning. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection, although the provision for spiritual development is now satisfactory rather than good.

25 Provision for spiritual education is satisfactory. Although assemblies and acts of collective worship are well planned and characterised by a warm "family" atmosphere, they do not make a strong contribution to the spiritual development of the pupils, with few opportunities given for thoughtful reflection. Teachers give sound opportunities for pupils to reflect on the beliefs and values of others in some subjects of the curriculum, particularly in religious education lessons. For example, in their studies of major world faiths, pupils have the opportunity to learn about and to understand the spiritual dimension of peoples' lives in a multicultural society. In some lessons, particularly in music and art and design, pupils are encouraged to make thoughtful and reflective responses to questions.

26 The provision for moral development is very good. The promotion of moral values permeates all aspects of the school. High standards of behaviour are expected and, as pupils move about the school, a high degree of self-discipline is evident in their ability to undertake jobs and activities without constant supervision. Most pupils are very polite in their response to all adults in the school and their helpful attitude to visitors is commendable. All adults set a very good example of how to work together and relationships in school are excellent. In many classes, such as in their lessons in personal and social education, pupils are involved in considering "fair" rules for a society and older pupils are taught that having rights also involves taking responsibility for your actions. Children in the reception class and older pupils have a very good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Teachers actively create opportunities for boys and girls to work together in the classroom or during sporting activities, thereby encouraging mixed gender friendships. The school's excellent provision for extra-curricular activities and the opportunity for older pupils to experience a residential visit, gives pupils a rich source of opportunities to make friends across year groups.

27 The provision for cultural development is very good. The school has improved the pupils' experience of music, art and dance from other cultures, and in religious education lessons pupils now develop a good understanding of the traditions and beliefs of the major world religions. The school makes very effective use of visitors to provide first-hand learning experiences. For example, during the inspection a visiting dance teacher introduced Year 4 pupils to the music and dance of Africa. Before this visit, pupils had worked with a local artist to make "African" clothes using traditional African tie-dye and batik techniques. They wore these clothes when they took part in activities exploring the music and dance from the African sub-continent. The school ensures that pupils are taught to appreciate their own cultural traditions and pupils are encouraged to take part in local community events such as the Harvest Festival, Christmas carol service and Easter service. The school has identified the need to introduce more opportunities for pupils to develop their cultural and spiritual awareness by visits to other places of worship within the wider community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28 The school continues to have proper concern for the welfare of its pupils. In general, they are supervised well throughout the day and the working practices adopted by the staff are good. Suitable health and safety arrangements are in place and regular checks are carried out around the site. During the inspection, however, a number of concerns were identified and brought to the head teacher's attention. Of particular note was the log of fire drills, which has not been completed for nearly two years, although assurances were given that practices are held on a regular basis.

29 Child protection arrangements remain satisfactory, although members of staff with designated responsibility for liaison with outside agencies have not have not updated their training for several years.

30 Attendance is monitored well. Registers are marked properly and suitable arrangements are in place to follow up any unexplained absence. These procedures contribute effectively to the fact that attendance has been consistently well above national averages for several years.

31 Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. The school has made good progress in this area since the previous inspection. Trends are analysed over the years and good use is made of the information gathered to help the setting of whole school targets. The school looks closely at the results achieved by boys and girls, although the analysis is less effective at comparing the achievements of different groups of pupils such as higher attaining pupils or those with special educational needs. Where there is an identified difference, teachers take action to address the issue. For example, in an effort to motivate boys to take a greater interest in books, the library stock was audited by the local library service and now pupils are allowed a free choice of reading material in the daily silent reading sessions. When pupils start school in the reception class, they are assessed using the local education authority's initial scheme for assessing children's attainment. Pupils are assessed in English, mathematics and science against National Curriculum expectations when they are aged seven. The school also uses a broad range of other tests, including the optional national tests in English and mathematics in Years 3 and 4 to monitor the progress pupils make as they move through the school.

32 There are now effective procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress. In some subjects, practical strategies for monitoring the academic performance of pupils at the end of each unit of work, or at the end of the year, are in place or are in preparation. However, these procedures are recent and have not had time to have an effect on pupils' achievement, teachers' planning, or as the basis for setting individual pupils specific targets so they know what they need to do to improve their work. The standard of marking pupils' work could be improved. Pupils' work is usually marked regularly and pupils are often praised for good work, but not enough clear guidance is given to pupils to help them improve their work. For example, in mathematics, much of the work in books is undated, making it difficult to judge progress over time, and work is often marked with a tick, with no comment to challenge or further extend the pupils' thinking.

33 The school is a calm and caring learning environment so pupils feel supported and valued. This feeling of community makes a significant contribution to the welfare of pupils. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are now effective. The procedures and policies to promote good behaviour and to deal with any incidents of bullying and other oppressive behaviour are good. Teachers know their pupils very well, have excellent relationships with them and successfully promote very high standards of behaviour throughout the school. They are good role models and place strong emphasis on encouraging each child to take full responsibility for their actions and through this encourage independence and initiative. The annual Year 4 residential visit to Ford

also makes a significant contribution to their personal and social development. Significant achievements, both in and out of school, are celebrated each week at the Friday assembly.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

34 Parents have a good, positive view of the school, although a few concerns were raised through the questionnaire.

35 The great majority of parents continue to express strong support for the school and are happy with most areas of its work. However, one in five of parents who returned the questionnaire felt that the school did not work closely with them and a similar proportion felt that they did not have enough information about how their child was getting on. The inspection team disagrees with parents about how closely the school works with them, but agrees that the information they get about their children's progress needs improvement.

36 Links with parents are satisfactory. In the reception class, parents have good opportunities to talk with staff and to work with their children. Every morning they are welcome in school to sit with their children, read or play games. A good number of parents, grandparents and carers take this opportunity. Throughout, the school, parents have good informal opportunities to talk to teachers and a large proportion of parents agree that they feel comfortable about approaching the school about any problems or concerns. However, inspectors feel that the second consultation evening, which occurs towards the end of the summer term, is held too late in the academic year to provide any real practical help for pupils.

37 The information given to parents about pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory, homework is set regularly and each pupil has a home school diary which is used in some cases for basic correspondence between school and parents. However, this is inconsistent and general correspondence about life in school is limited, although curriculum newsletters are now being produced and will be issued on a regular basis in the near future. Parents have a good impact on the work of the school. A few parents work regularly in class and a Thursday Club is in the process of being set up with a view to getting more parents into school. There is also an active Friends Association which raises significant amounts of money each year, which is used entirely for the benefit of pupils. However, the lack of regular information about what pupils are learning limits parents understanding of what they are doing and how they can help at home.

38 The prospectus meets requirements but the governors' annual report lacks several items of necessary information, and is unsatisfactory in its present form. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are properly involved from the time the teacher has an initial concern and are kept fully informed about all subsequent developments.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

39 The head teacher provides very good leadership and is responsible for maintaining a supportive atmosphere in which pupils feel secure and valued whilst being the main driving force behind the good improvement the school has made since the last inspection. She is well supported by the deputy head teacher and other teachers in the school. Together, they are very successful in promoting an atmosphere where pupils work hard, enjoy excellent relationships and show great respect for their peers and the staff. All staff and governors are committed to the school's aims that include an emphasis on personal as well as academic development. Consequently, the school fully realises its aims. Parents strongly agree that the school is well led and managed.

40 The delegation of responsibilities to key staff is effective and efficient. Wherever possible subject co-ordinators are given an area in which they have some expertise, which ensures they have a good understanding of the strengths of their subjects and what needs to be done to develop them further. The management team of the head teacher and deputy head teacher has a thorough view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is due to the arrangements in place for the head teacher to observe lessons and the very effective use of self-evaluation to identify areas for development and to track progress towards achieving development priorities.

41 Governors are supportive and have great confidence in the head teacher. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, although they are less clear about how high the academic standards achieved by the school are. They learn about the school through detailed reports from the head teacher and other staff. In addition, some governors are linked to particular classes and follow these pupils as they move through the school spending time in classes working alongside pupils. There is an effective committee structure that provides appropriate forums for discussion of issues so the main governing body is well placed to make decisions on future developments. Governors know about the priorities in the school development plan and play a sound role in monitoring and evaluating progress.

42 School development planning is very good. There is a very effective process using a thorough self-evaluation package that involves all staff in identifying the priorities for development. The plan identifies appropriate areas for development, is detailed, thorough and illustrates clear educational purpose. The effectiveness of this process is reflected in that the areas of improvement identified by the inspection have already been identified by the school. The action taken by the school towards achieving its priorities in recent years has been good, hence the good progress made by the school since the last inspection. Funding and in-service training is linked to priorities with implementation strategies, timescales and success criteria specified. Subject managers are frequently included appropriately in monitoring and evaluating the progress of the initiatives that affect their area.

43 The finances of the school are soundly managed. Spending is closely linked to priorities identified in the school development plan. Governors receive regular financial updates and the finance committee discusses financial matters before the main meeting to give sound advice to colleagues. There are systematic procedures in place for the ordering, receipt and payment of goods and services. Specific grant funding is appropriately allocated and money for pupils with special educational needs is used well. When consideration is given to high standards of pupils' attainment, the good teaching and range of curriculum opportunities balanced with children's low attainment on entry to school and the low level of funding per pupil, the school provides good value for money.

44 The school is staffed by an appropriate number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff who are effectively deployed to meet the demands of the curriculum and to support pupils with special educational needs. The school's commitment to ensure staff are valued and well trained is a strong feature. All teaching and support staff work as a well motivated, effective team to deliver the curriculum and ensure that the aims of the school are fully realised. They have very high levels of professionalism and dedication. The excellent range of extra-curricular activities provided after school is a testimony to their shared commitment to the school and its pupils. The school has adequate support staff to meet the needs of those pupils who have special educational needs. One member of the support staff is very well trained and provides additional literacy and booster study support which helps the school to achieve higher standards overall. In the reception class the teacher has support from a student and several other occasional assistants, but does not have an experienced classroom assistant to help plan activities and work proactively with groups. This limits her personal capacity to work with individual children on specific teaching programmes. A sound system of monitoring teachers' work with a suitable system of review is in place, and is linked to the

established arrangements for staff development which are also guided by the school development plan that also includes the non-teaching staff. Teachers are soon to receive further training in the use of information and communication technology and this should see an improvement in the standards being achieved over time. There are good procedures in place for the induction of teachers new to the school and a useful staff booklet gives effective guidance and support to all staff.

45 The school is very well served by appropriately skilled non-teaching staff who also have access to additional training all of whom are totally committed to its aims and values. Lunchtime supervisors provide a high standard of care at midday and know pupils well. The caretaker is meticulous in his work, ensuring that the buildings and resources are well maintained, although in some classrooms the decorative state does have a slightly worn appearance, and high standards of cleanliness are maintained at all times. As a member of the governor body he is able to keep the rest of the governors well informed in these matters.

46 The school has ample accommodation to deliver the planned curriculum for the number of pupils on roll. Classrooms are generally spacious and are suitably furnished. Displays of pupils' work throughout the school are good and include many examples of high quality artwork. Outside, the grounds are also spacious and attractively maintained.

47 Overall, resources are good for teaching and learning. The recent improvements in the equipment and software available for teaching information and communication technology are not yet fully utilised, but the planned training of teachers will develop their understanding of how it can be used more effectively. Resources for teaching children in the reception class are generally good, although the range of large play equipment for children to use outside is limited. This restricts the range of activities the teacher can plan and the experiences children have in using such equipment.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48 In order to improve further the school should now:

(a) Raise attainment in information and communication technology by:

- making sure that pupils are taught how to plan and give instructions to make things happen, to try things out and explore what happens in real and imaginary situations and to present information in a variety of forms such as graphs and tables.
- identifying in each topic and in other subjects, opportunities for systematically developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of all of the aspects of the subject.
- developing and implementing a procedure for assessing the progress pupils are making and using the information to plan further work.

(Paragraphs 3, 14, 15, 18, 47)

(b) Improve the information given to parents about the activities of the school by: -

- ensuring parents know what it is their children will be learning in each topic or term.
- making sure parents know how they can help their children learn at home.
- ensuring documentation published for parents meets statutory requirements.

(Paragraphs 34, 35, 36, 37, 38)

N.B. Both areas have been identified by the school in current development planning.

OTHER ISSUES THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

In addition, when drawing up their action plan, the governors should consider the following:

- develop and implement a whole school marking policy so that marking of pupils' work is consistent and pupils know what they have achieved and how they could improve their work.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 31 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 23 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 3 | 35 | 39 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

| | YR – Y4 |
|--|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 122 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | 10 |

Special educational needs

| | YR– Y4 |
|---|--------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 0 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 17 |

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 | 4 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 1 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.1 |
| National comparative data | 5.6 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.0 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final Year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting Year | 2001 | 17 | 13 | 30 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 15 | 14 | 15 |
| | Girls | 12 | 12 | 12 |
| | Total | 27 | 26 | 27 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 90% (91%) | 87% (91%) | 90% (83%) |
| | National | 84% (83%) | 86% (84%) | 91% (90%) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 15 | 15 | 15 |
| | Girls | 12 | 12 | 12 |
| | Total | 27 | 27 | 27 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 90% (91%) | 90% (83%) | 90% (91%) |
| | National | 85% (84%) | 89% (88%) | 89% (88%) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 |
| Indian | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 122 |
| 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 | 0 | 0 |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 0 | 0 |

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

| | |
|--|-----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 5.3 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 23 |
| Average class size | 25 |

Education support staff: YR – Y4

| | |
|---|------|
| Total number of education support staff | 1 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 32.5 |

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|---------|
| Financial Year | 2000-01 |
|----------------|---------|

| | |
|--|---------|
| | £ |
| Total income | 244,098 |
| Total expenditure | 238,043 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1,817 |
| Balance brought forward from previous Year | 10,697 |
| Balance carried forward to next Year | 16,752 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

127

Number of questionnaires returned

74

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 70 | 22 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 62 | 31 | 4 | 3 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 38 | 55 | 6 | 0 | 1 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 41 | 43 | 15 | 0 | 1 |
| The teaching is good. | 64 | 32 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 35 | 42 | 20 | 3 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 70 | 22 | 7 | 1 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 64 | 33 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 42 | 35 | 22 | 1 | 0 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 60 | 32 | 5 | 0 | 3 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 58 | 40 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 62 | 24 | 11 | 3 | 0 |

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

49 At the last inspection, children generally made good progress in all areas of learning and developed good attitudes to learning. This was due to good teaching by teachers and support staff who set high standards for children's behaviour and provided an interesting range of activities. These strengths have been maintained and, in some areas such as the curriculum, developed since the last inspection so children of all abilities continue to achieve well. The recent national guidance for the Foundation Stage has been introduced well with the teacher planning a wide range of activities that allow children to experience activities from across all the areas of learning. The majority of children come to school after attending nursery school, however, local education authority baseline tests show many children begin with skills in language and literacy, mathematics and personal development that are lower than would be seen in most schools. However, by the time they are ready to start in Year 1, the majority of children attain the early learning goals in all areas of learning except in personal, social and emotional development where they exceed the expectations.

Personal, social and emotional development.

50 Many children enter the reception class with immature skills in personal and social development. However, by the end of their reception year, the majority of children meet the early learning goals in this area and many exceed them and are very well prepared for their next year. The very good progress children make as they move through the reception class in this area of learning reflects very skilful teaching so that all of the children develop very positive attitudes to their work. They are interested and enthusiastic in their lessons and show well developed levels of concentration and attention. Teachers and support staff provide very positive role models to the children, always treating each other and the children with respect, so they very effectively learn school routines and how to work with others. All adults are very consistent in their expectations of behaviour so children fully understand how they should behave whatever the situation. The emphasis placed on this area of learning in reception sets the foundation for the very high standards of behaviour, attitudes and relationships seen during the inspection throughout the whole school.

Communication, language and literacy

51 By the time children end the reception year they are nearly all achieving the early learning goals in this area of learning. Speaking and listening skills develop particularly well. Children are given many opportunities to speak in more extended sentences. The speaking skills of many children when they enter school are still quite immature, with some evidence of a restricted vocabulary, but improvements are clear and good progress is made. Listening skills are developed well through a variety of activities including story time, listening tapes and many incidental discussions throughout the sessions. Children achieve well because the adults ensure that all children listen carefully to a story or instructions. They encourage children to give extended answers to questions and make sure that all children join in discussions by targeting questions to specific children. The teacher has a very good understanding of the importance of providing different learning experiences for children involving aural, visual and practical activities aimed to develop and reinforce the same skill or understanding. Role-play activities are used effectively to develop clear speech and extend vocabulary.

52 Children are taught early reading skills well. They have many opportunities to look at books and to listen to stories so they quickly learn the correct way to hold a book and turn the pages. They enjoy looking at books and are eager to share stories with others. They begin to learn some common

letter sounds and higher attaining children learn to read simple books. Support staff are used very well to work with groups of children and to listen to individual children read. Each child is heard to read at least twice each week and due to the good support the school gets from many parents at home, most children make good progress. When reading independently, the older, higher attaining children in reception are fluent, competent readers. They read the title of the book, know that an author writes a book and an illustrator draws the pictures. Early skills at using a variety of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words are already well established and are used successfully. Average attaining children read simple texts and talk enthusiastically about the book they have read or are reading. Below average attaining children are developing good attitudes to their reading. They enjoy talking about their favourite stories and rhymes and are eager to take books home to share with their families. They know a more limited range of words, but use those they know and the pictures to help 'read' the story. The previous inspection recognised the importance of the first 10 minutes of the day where parents, grandparents and carers are able to sit with their child and read stories or look at books. This creates an informal and very positive start to the day that sets the tone for the children's experience of school in the reception class.

53 The teaching of writing is good. Teachers provide children with many opportunities to write for a range of purposes. Children are encouraged to learn the shape of letters and to write letters and invitations at a writing table. A good variety of interesting resources are made available so that most children can write their own names. The older and higher attaining children are competent writers. They write simple sentences, often correctly using capital letters and full stops, in a neat, legible style. All children use a pencil correctly and form clear, recognisable letters.

Mathematical development

54 This area of learning is taught well. The teacher concentrates on developing correct concepts and in particular, developing correct mathematical vocabulary. In the reception class, children are taught following guidance from the National Strategy for Numeracy, thus ensuring children are well placed to begin their National Curriculum work in Year 1. By the end of the reception year, nearly all children attain the early learning goals in mathematics. The teacher ensures children have good opportunities to use mathematical skills and knowledge in many activities so that progress over time is good and children achieve well. The priority is to teach mathematics in a practical way. Activities are well planned. Most children can count forwards and backwards to 10 and higher attaining children know numbers to 20 securely. They are beginning to do simple addition activities. The majority of children recognise different coins and give correct names. Some children are beginning to appreciate 'sharing' as simple halving by sharing biscuits equally between two plates. Early concepts of shape are developed as children make boxes and look at how different boxes are used with the teacher ensuring that children understand the correct names for shape and use correct vocabulary to describe the properties of the shape. The teacher uses resources well to provide children with interesting and enjoyable activities and consequently, very good attitudes to learning are well established. Other adults are used effectively to give good support to small groups, ensuring that the children are kept busy and make good progress in their focus activity.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

55 Children enter the Foundation Stage with a basic general knowledge, but make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of their local area and of themselves. Due to the good learning experiences provided by the teacher most children achieve the early learning goals by the end of their year in reception. The curriculum provided is broad and enriched by many practical and interesting activities. For example, children were investigating different toys by handling them and listening to the different sounds they made. Many of these toys were brought from home and children took great care with each other's toys. They have good opportunities to play with water and sand, investigating and

experimenting with different containers. Children have regular opportunities to work on the computers. This has very positive effect upon the pace at which children learn computer skills and gives them confidence. They can use the mouse to move the cursor on the screen to use a good range of programs designed to develop their knowledge and understanding in language, mathematical and drawing skills. When using a 'My World' program, two children showed others how to select different objects on the screen and move them around the screen. A strength of the teaching is the constant use of correct vocabulary to develop good language skills. Teachers and support staff encourage children to speak about their experiences and explain to others what they have found out.

Physical development

56 Teaching in this area is good and most children will achieve the early learning goals in this area by the end of reception. All children have a well developed sense of space. They respond well to new challenges and are aware of their own safety and that of others. Most children can control a ball with their hands and feet. Higher attaining children have good co-ordination and can 'trap' a ball with their feet. Using a bat and a ball they can play simple games, striking the ball to a friend. In other activities, children use scissors and other simple tools to cut paper and play dough. The outside play area is spacious and marked out for simple games. However, the limited range of large play equipment, wheeled toys and the lack of other climbing or exploration equipment restricts the use the teacher can make of this area to give children challenging physical activities or experiences.

Creative development

57 The teaching of creative development is good. Activities are well planned, resources are used effectively and support staff work with children in small groups so that knowledge and skills are developed thoroughly. Consequently, all children make good progress and most achieve the early learning goals in this area by the end of their reception year. Children are provided with an interesting curriculum and in particular have the opportunity to experience a good variety of materials, tools and equipment. Basic skills are taught well, for example nearly all children mix paint independently to make shades and tones of other colours. Language skills are constantly being developed alongside these activities, as children are encouraged to describe what the materials feel like, or to explain what they are doing. In music, the teachers in many different situations, such as opening and closing sessions or to reinforce number or language skills, use songs well. Consequently, children sing familiar songs with enthusiasm and securely develop early skills in rhythm and beat.

ENGLISH

58 Standards are well above national average at the age of seven in speaking and listening and reading, and above average in writing. Pupils achieve well as they move through the school so that a high proportion of pupils achieve or exceed the nationally expected levels. This reflects the position at the time of the last inspection and mirrors the school's results over recent years. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 and 4, maintaining the good standards they achieved in their respective national tests at the age of seven.

59 The majority of pupils in Year 2 and by the end of Year 4 exceed the expected level in their speaking and listening. They are very good listeners who follow their teachers' explanations closely, responding eagerly to questions with full and thoughtful answers. They readily engage in conversation about their work and higher attaining pupils are very confident in expressing their opinions. They express their ideas clearly and fluently. During presentations, other pupils concentrate well and sustain attentive listening.

60 Standards pupils attain in reading are very high. By the time pupils are seven, they read a broad range of texts, both fiction and non-fiction with good understanding and fluency. Most take reading books home regularly and are well supported by parents. Pupils have good opportunities in lessons, through class-reading sessions at the start of the day and throughout the week to look at different sorts of books. This approach makes a positive contribution to the development of their reading. Higher attaining pupils talk about the plot in the story and say what they think will happen next. The majority of pupils are familiar with the use of non-fiction books. They use the contents page and the index confidently as well as dictionaries to find out what they want to know. By the end of Year 4, the majority of pupils have achieved the nationally expected level. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their reading relative to their attainment on entry to school due to good teaching. Pupils are heard to read individually by teachers and support staff at least once a week as well as in literacy lessons. There are many opportunities in other lessons where pupils are expected to read out loud or to find out about topics for projects. Consequently, the oldest pupils have well developed research skills and can use the Internet, encyclopaedias, dictionaries and other sources of information effectively. Many pupils read fluently and with good expression. When asked about their choice of reading they clearly state their preferences for favourite books and authors. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to develop skills of inference and deduction. In their reading, pupils reflect the very positive attitudes fostered by the school.

61 Pupils' attainment in writing at the age of seven is good. Pupils write in logical sentences and apply their knowledge of letter sounds when spelling words. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 write confidently in sentences using full stops and capital letters. By the end of Year 2, pupils' presentation of work is good because teachers have high expectations of presentation and make sure in most of their work that pupils use headings and dates. The emphasis placed on developing writing style, presentation and basic skills of spelling and grammar in Years 1 and 2 is built on effectively as pupils move through the school. By the end of Year 4, pupils' writing is generally neat and legible with many pupils developing their own style. Pupils have a good understanding of how to vary the style and organisation of written work depending on the purpose of the work. For example, in their topic books they present research they have undertaken in different ways such as tables, bullet points or narrative. Pupils are provided with a broad range of different texts to read and this contributes to their writing. Higher attaining pupils write entertaining and imaginative stories using a broad range of vocabulary that captures the reader. In addition, the majority of pupils construct their work logically, developing ideas carefully and use descriptive language well to describe settings or characters. Throughout the school, teachers encourage pupils to consider carefully the language they use and this has a significant effect on the standards pupils achieve.

62 The overall quality of teaching of English is very good. At the basis of this is teachers' very good subject knowledge, particularly on how to teach the basic skills of reading, grammar and punctuation. Consequently, lesson plans have very clear objectives and these are discussed and revisited to ensure pupils are acquiring new knowledge and skills. Lessons are well structured giving appropriate time to each part of the lesson. This helps maintain pupils' concentration and attentiveness so they behave very well in most lessons. The few instances of inattentiveness seen in lessons were mainly a few pupils who have difficulties with their behaviour and lost their concentration. Although management of pupils and organisation of lessons is generally very good, in these instances the teachers were not assertive enough and did not have specific planned methods to manage these pupils. Expectations are very clear and instructions explicit so pupils understand what they have to do. In whole class parts of lessons, particularly in Years 3 and 4, teachers use questions well to check pupils' understanding and make the most of any opportunity to reinforce pupils' basic skills and knowledge such as spelling and grammar. Activities provided for pupils of different abilities in group work parts of lessons are very well matched to their ability, which contributes to their very positive response in lessons. Where information and communication technology is included in a lesson, the tasks are

appropriate to the lesson, but not enough attention is paid to planning carefully how these resources can be used systematically in lessons.

63 Teachers' response to pupils in lessons is very good. They give positive comments to pupils on what they are doing that helps them develop their ideas, but marking of work does not consistently reinforce this. Comments do not always remind or help pupils to understand how they could improve their work further and does not help teachers note how well each pupil is doing. Individual education plans are used carefully to provide work for pupils with special educational needs and specialist programmes such as Additional Literacy Support are taught well by support staff. They give sensitive and effective support to these pupils, which contributes well to the progress they make in learning and reinforcing their knowledge. However, support staff do not always have a clear role in whole class teaching parts of lessons and the opportunities their presence presents for assessing pupils or working with different groups of pupils are not used effectively.

64 The subject co-ordinator has taken a very active and enthusiastic role in developing the subject and has given very good direction to the subject since the last inspection. The planning structure has been refined so those lesson objectives are clearly identified and daily lessons work towards those objectives. Demonstration lessons have been taught for other staff, some team teaching has been done and the co-ordinator has observed other staff teaching. Consequently, the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection reflected in the high standards pupils achieve against a national picture of gradually improving standards. However, the very effective analysis of assessment information ensures that she has clear vision of what needs to be improved further and these priorities are reflected in the school development plan. Resources for teaching English are good.

MATHEMATICS

65 Standards in mathematics in Year 2 exceed national expectations and pupils achieve well, maintaining standards seen at the last inspection. This good achievement continues throughout Years 3 and 4 and the attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 4 is above the expectation for their age. Although, over time, girls have consistently achieved better than boys, no significant differences were seen in the current Year 2 and Year 4 classes. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and the majority of pupils behave very well in lessons. The school offers a very good range of learning opportunities and this, added to the consistently good quality of teaching, ensures all pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make good progress from when they first enter school in the reception class.

66 The quality of teaching is good overall and often very good. A major strength of mathematics teaching is the very good teaching of basic skills. This ensures pupils have a firm grounding to their learning and can build upon their knowledge and understanding, particularly when extending their oral and mental skills to calculate number and money quickly and accurately. A good example of this was seen in Year 2 when the teacher used resources to good effect to give the pupils further practise in mentally calculating amounts of money. Pupils halved and doubled the amounts speedily, with the majority of pupils getting their calculations correct. Teachers have very secure subject knowledge and give pupils a good level of challenge. Tasks and activities are well matched to the abilities of different groups of pupils. In Year 2, a group of higher attaining pupils were given the task of designing a menu of mixed fruits, using their ability to calculate halves to ensure the correct amount of money was placed on the menus. During this lesson, the teacher gave very effective support to a group of lower attaining pupils to complete a money game where they practised calculating change and recognising coins. The teacher made effective use of information and communication technology in this lesson as a group of pupils were given a choice of activities to reinforce their skills within the addition and subtraction of number. However, throughout the school,

regular opportunities to use information and communication technology to support learning in mathematics are not planned consistently. Most mathematics planning does not contain specific opportunities to extend and develop skills using new technology. Consequently, opportunities are missed to extend computer skills linked to numeracy such as handling data to create graphs and charts.

67 In Year 3, the teacher demonstrates very good subject knowledge in her very clear explanations of how to interpret multiplication facts. Tasks and activities are planned well for the different ability groups within the class and good use is made of resources, particularly to support those pupils who have special educational needs. Consequently, pupils of all ability levels make very good progress in their understanding of multiplication and can use a variety of strategies to work out problems. In a Year 4 lesson, the teacher's thorough planning and her secure knowledge of what pupils already knew and understood about two-dimensional shapes and angles, enabled challenging work to further extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding. Very good relationships and the teacher's very secure pupil management skills kept the pace of the lesson lively, but within the abilities of all groups of pupils.

68 The National Numeracy Strategy has been very well implemented. Numeracy skills are used effectively throughout the school, but planned opportunities to use these skills in other subjects are not as effective as they are for literacy. The quality of marking is inconsistent throughout the school and is a weaker element of teaching. For example, not all work is marked regularly and although work is generally presented well, much of it is undated. The teachers' comments do not always give enough guidance as to what pupils need to do to improve the quality of their work. No individual learning targets are given, so in discussion, pupils are not able to say what they need to do to improve their work. Homework is given regularly however and is related well to on-going work in the classroom. The quality and quantity of homework given to pupils is similar to that found in most schools.

69 The subject co-ordinator manages the subject well. A good range of assessment tests gives her a secure view of standards throughout the school. The results of tests are analysed and particular areas of weakness are then targeted in planning. The use of on-going teacher assessment to set individual learning targets, so pupils have a secure view of what they need to do to improve their performance, could be improved. The co-ordinator has had the opportunity to monitor all teaching throughout the school and gives written responses to teachers on the results of her monitoring. Resources for the subject are at least satisfactory, are well organised and used effectively in class.

SCIENCE

70 Standards in science have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils achieve well and the attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 4 are above the national expectation for their age. Teachers' assessments of attainment for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2001 were broadly in line with the national average, but the percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was above the national average. Pupils make good progress in science and this represents a similar picture to the previous inspection.

71 Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, so judgements on the quality of teaching and learning have been made by the scrutiny of work in pupils' books and on display throughout the school, the examination of teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good and this is a major factor in the good achievement of pupils. A very good range of learning opportunities is offered to pupils, including the opportunity for pupils in Years 3 and 4 to attend an extra-curricular *Young Investigators* club. This is well attended by both boys and girls and offers pupils the opportunity to undertake challenging investigative activities.

72 One of the main strengths of science teaching is the way pupils are encouraged to ask questions, to make predictions of what may happen in an investigation and then use their practical skills to test them out. A good example of this was seen in Year 2 as the teacher's good use of questioning not only extended the pupils' ability to ask relevant questions about the properties of waterproof materials and containers but also further extended their speaking and listening skills. Pupils posed questions such as: "*What is the container made of?*", "*Could it hold liquids?*", "*Will the container crumple?*". Pupils were then given the opportunity to examine the containers with a partner and begin to answer the questions raised. The teacher used an interesting range of resources well in this lesson, which not only increased the pupils' enthusiasm for the task, but also extended their knowledge and understanding of the properties of materials and containers. Good opportunities were given for personal and social development as the pupils worked with a partner to make predictions, observe the containers and to record the results of their investigations. This was effective and the pupils worked well together. In this lesson, very effective use was made of a microscope and the computer as pupils worked individually with a learning support assistant to closely examine material under magnification, then drew what they saw using a computer graphics program.

73 The school's topic-based approach to teaching science ensures that pupils' science knowledge develops well due to teachers' good subject knowledge and planning. However, their understanding of science ideas is very effectively reinforced by links made to other subjects. In addition, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in these subjects are also developed. For example, in Year 4, pupils explore the physical phenomena of the Earth in Space. The activities prepared for pupils give them good opportunities to work independently or with a partner and to use their literacy skills. For example, they write their own booklets about what they know and understand from their research about the planets making up the solar system. These booklets include factual reporting, but also some opportunities to write imaginatively as they compile a *Captain's log* in the style of *Star Trek*. Links with numeracy and design and technology are also effective. Pupils are required to work with very large numbers, comparative sizes and place value as the individual details of the planets are noted and they design and make a space buggy. Some effective use of information and communication technology is used in science lessons, but teachers do not plan its use consistently. The quality of marking in pupils' books is a weakness in teaching and could be improved. Work is often just marked with a tick and pupils are not given enough information about how they could extend and further develop their work.

74 Pupils who have special educational needs are given good support during independent or group activities. Teachers' plan work matched to their needs to help pupils achieve the targets set for them in individual education plans if appropriate. Learning support assistants are used effectively during activities, but are sometimes left unoccupied for long periods during the initial part of the lesson.

75 As found in the previous inspection, the science curriculum makes a positive contribution to the personal, spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils. Older pupils have the opportunity to appreciate the beauty and wonder of the natural world in their studies about the Earth in Space. Younger pupils in Year 2 are encouraged, at the very beginning of their topic on mini-beasts, to be aware that they will be examining living creatures which must be cared for properly and treated with respect.

76 The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Following the introduction of new national guidance, assessment is developing well. Teachers are now using assessments at the end of each unit of work linked to a new scheme of work. This new development will enable teachers to track the performance of individual pupils so progress from year to year can be analysed, but the system is not yet fully effective. The co-ordinator does not have planned opportunities to monitor either the quality of teaching or pupils' work throughout the school. This means that she does not have

a secure view of standards in each year group, but the school has devised a process to address this issue. Resources for the subject are good, effectively organised and used well in lessons.

ART AND DESIGN

77 By the age of seven and the end of Years 2 and 4, standards reached by pupils exceed national expectations and pupils make good progress as they move through the school. This represents good achievement from when they first enter school. Good standards seen in art and design throughout the school have been maintained since the previous inspection, but pupils are now given more opportunities to reflect on and to evaluate their work. Standards have remained good because basic skills and techniques are taught very well and pupils have good opportunities to work in a wide range of media.

78 The quality of teaching is good overall and some excellent teaching was seen. Throughout the school, teachers' very good subject knowledge ensures they plan lessons well. Consequently, the basic skills and techniques of art and design are taught very well. A particular strength is the way learning opportunities are planned into many subject areas, so art and design experiences are also encountered in science, history, design and technology and geography. A good example of this was seen in Year 2 as pupils were looking at materials as part of their work in science. The teacher gave a small group of pupils the opportunity to use watercolours and fine paintbrushes to observe, then represent in paint, the texture of the various materials. Pupils used their sense of touch to feel the texture of the material and then used a microscope to observe the fibres of the material. An excellent lesson in Year 4 reflected the pupils' work in geography on the rain forest. Excellent resources were used to enable pupils to explore blending colours, particularly shades and tones of green, to create leaves casting a shadow in the canopy of the rainforest. All pupils used very good skills to create different tones of colour, carefully adding black to create the desired effect.

79 The art work displayed around the school is very impressive and makes the school environment very attractive. For example, some work showing how light is used by artists to add interest to their work, is of very good quality. Charcoal has been used to sketch faces, showing how light can be used to light up the face and eyes from the side or from below. Examples of the work of famous artists are used to very good effect to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of different techniques and media. Teachers use literacy skills well in art and design lessons, for example by the correct use of technical vocabulary and asking pupils to read short biographies of the famous artists whose work they are looking at. Effective use of computers to explore colour, line and tone is seen in some lessons, but there are not enough planned opportunities to use information and communication technology to support learning.

80 The curriculum is good and enriched by excellent extra-curricular art activities in which three-dimensional art and design activities using wire are currently being explored. Visitors into school add an extra dimension to the curriculum, for example, artists have worked with pupils of all ages to enable pupils to experience many techniques and use a wide range of media. A current project on Africa has enabled older pupils to explore the techniques of tie-dye and batik, whilst at the same time increasing their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of multicultural art.

81 The leadership and management of the subject are good. The good scheme of work clearly outlines the gradual progression of specific skills and techniques. The co-ordinator has had the opportunity to monitor the work of some pupils, but there are no planned opportunities to observe lessons and often the monitoring of work involves just the observation of work on display throughout the school. Resources for art are good and are used well by teachers.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82 By the end of Years 2 and Year 4, pupils achieve standards expected for their age and they make sound progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding of the design and making processes. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. There were some elements of unsatisfactory teaching seen in the previous inspection, when the match of task to pupils' abilities was weak, but all teaching is now at least satisfactory. Pupils enjoy their lessons and show very good attitudes to the tasks and activities given to them.

83 Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, so judgements are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work in books, on-going work on display in classrooms around the school, by talking to pupils about their work and by looking at the teachers' planning. This indicates that the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and in the lesson observed, teaching was good. What teachers do well is to plan topic work to integrate meaningful learning experiences from many subject areas. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, pupils were making a space-buggy to reflect the work they were studying in science on the Earth and Space. This increased the pupils' enthusiasm and attitude to the task, because they could link the activity well to what they already knew about space from their science work. The teacher's good subject knowledge and clear instructions of what pupils were expected to do ensured that during the lesson, pupils made good progress in learning how to plan a diagram of a space-buggy so it included specific features. A good range of materials was made available to the pupils and this enabled them to plan their task with a secure knowledge of what materials would be suitable to the task. Some effective links were made with numeracy skills as pupils measured wood in centimetres. Pupils are encouraged to plan their work thoughtfully, but the scrutiny of work in books indicates that not all pupils are competent at clearly labelling their designs. A weaker element in the teaching of the subject is in the evaluation process. Few examples are evident of thorough evaluations of the finished product and what pupils felt they could have done to make improvements in either the design, use of materials or within the making process.

84 The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Planning for the subject is good. The scheme of work provides teachers with good guidance and makes effective links with other subjects. A weaker element is in the planned opportunities to use information and communication technology skills to support learning and this needs to develop further. Assessments of what pupils know, understand and can do take place at the end of each unit of study. The information enables teachers to plan more challenging activities if needed or to revisit weaker elements to reinforce pupils' knowledge and skills. However, there is a lack of opportunity for the co-ordinator to look at pupils' work throughout the school or to monitor the quality of teaching. This does mean that she does not have a firm grasp of the strengths of the subject, standards pupils achieve or what aspects could be improved.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

85 Standards of attainment in geography and history by the end of Year 2 are close to national expectations. By the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment in both subjects is above national expectations. These two subjects are taught as part of the topic cycle, which also includes science-based topics. Over the two-year cycle pupils study all three subjects appropriately, but during the inspection due to these arrangements two history lessons were seen and one of geography. Judgements are based upon discussions with pupils and by looking at their work.

86 By the end of Year 2 pupils have a secure understanding of time. They use words such as 'today' and 'yesterday', 'old' and 'new' correctly. They know that places change over time and that people's lives change too. They can draw a family tree of their own family and appreciate the relationships between the different generations. In geography, pupils draw detailed maps as part of the

'Katie Morag' topic. The maps are mainly pictorial, but detailed with important places shown and a key to help identify specific places or features. Maps of more able pupils show they are beginning to understand that maps are a 'birdseye view' of the landscape. Pupils understand that different parts of the world have different climates and this affects what people wear, what food they eat and how they live. Higher attaining pupils show in their writing that they can empathise with the lives of other people in different countries. The lower attaining pupils have a secure understanding of how people's lives are different, but are less able to express their empathy through their writing.

87 By the end of Year 4 pupils continue to reach good standards in geography. They know the difference between countries and continents. Most pupils can name the continents and higher attaining pupils can correctly point to them on a map of the world. They have a secure understanding of what life is like in specific parts of the world such as the rainforest or Chembakolli in India. Pupils can compare life in these places with their own. In history, standards are above national expectations. Pupils in Year 3 have a secure understanding of what life was like in Victorian times. By studying aspects of Victorian life, they learn about schools and factories and how life was very different for the rich and poor. They have a good understanding of the contributions some famous Victorians made to their time such as William Morris, Grace Darling and Florence Nightingale and their legacy for the modern world. Pupils are beginning to pose and answer questions about the past as part of projects that develop pupils' independence and research skills in the subject well.

88 Teaching in both subjects is satisfactory overall. The above average standards pupils achieve by the end of Year 4 are mainly due to teachers giving pupils many opportunities to use their basic literacy skills. They are given tasks that require them to think for themselves and write in a range of styles and from different viewpoints. Consequently, pupils develop good research skills and learn to empathise with other people. These activities also make a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development resulting in their very positive attitudes and behaviour in lessons. Planning is good with activities for higher attaining pupils and the additional support organised for those pupils with special educational needs or of lower ability. However, whilst both history and geography lessons contribute very well to the development of pupils' literacy skills, there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to practise their information and communication technology skills. When planning lessons, teachers do not link specific parts or activities in topics to compliment computer-based tasks, for example, creating a database and graphs of rainfall. However, when information and communication technology is planned for it is used well. For example, pupils in Year 4, as part of the topic on the rainforest, take it in turns to download information about the weather in Brazil each day.

89 The subject co-ordinator gives sound leadership to the subjects as part of her responsibilities across the school as deputy head teacher. She has a secure understanding of the strengths of the subject by looking at pupils' topic folders. Progress since the last inspection in developing the planning procedures, resources and procedures for monitoring pupils' progress has been satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

90 Standards in information and communication technology are below those expected by the end of Year 2 because pupils have not studied all the required areas of this subject. The school has now purchased appropriate resources and plans are in place to introduce this in the near future. However, in the areas pupils have studied, their skills are appropriate for their age and they understand how to use computers to present their work. Pupils can open a program by finding and clicking onto an icon on a display and retrieve work they have previously saved. They have good mouse control. For example, as part of a topic on light pupils drew pictures of objects and scenes such as a lighted candle. Pupils use a simple word processor, editing their writing at an appropriate level, combining text and pictures well. However, due to a lack of opportunity, pupils do not fully understand how computers

can be used to control objects or to record information in simple tables or databases. Lower attaining pupils need some help from a classroom assistant to do this, but higher attaining pupils can work effectively on their own or in pairs.

91 By the end of Year 4, pupils have developed their skills and understanding satisfactorily in the areas they have studied. For example, they can research using the Internet and present their work with little guidance. Poems and other examples of writing are reprinted using word processing programs, combining different skills such as editing and changing the letter shape and size. They can use games and simulation software to explore imaginary situations and have a secure understanding of how to use the mouse, keyboard and basic function keys. However, their ability to use databases and graphs and to control functions by entering commands into the computer is under developed.

92 The quality of teaching of information and communication technology is satisfactory. Teachers give pupils sufficient opportunities to use the computers during lessons and keep informal records to make sure all pupils have access to each activity. However, there is little direct teaching of information and communication technology so pupils learn new skills as they need them rather than as part of a planned programme of development. In the one lesson seen the teacher had secure subject knowledge, explaining and demonstrating clearly to pupils how to use the program. However, pupils were not fully involved in the session. Some pupils were familiar with the program and their experiences were not used enough to show other members of the class. In most classes, activities form part of another subject, for example, literacy or topic, and the tasks are closely linked to what pupils are learning in that lesson. For example, in a Year 4 literacy lesson, some pupils were asked to complete a task on computers whilst the rest of the class did the same task on paper. In these lessons, tasks set are appropriate to the lesson or topic and teachers have a secure understanding of the purpose of the task. Instructions are clear so pupils get on with their work well in pairs or on their own. They are interested and enthusiastic in computer work, with many of the older pupils choosing to use them at lunchtime for recreation or to continue some classwork in their own time. However, when teachers are planning topics or a series of lessons, insufficient attention is paid to making sure that pupils have opportunities to learn and practise skills drawn from the full range of the scheme of work. Teachers are due to be involved in the national training for the subject soon which will help them plan more effectively for the subject. The lack of a whole school approach to assessing what pupils can do in the subject also affects the capacity of teachers to consistently plan appropriate and challenging activities.

93 The co-ordinator leads the subject well. She has a clear understanding of what the school does well and how the provision for teaching the subject needs to be developed. For example, control technology was identified by the co-ordinator as a weakness due to the lack of resources. These have been ordered and are due to be introduced soon. However, she does not have a very clear view on the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment. This is due to insufficient opportunities to monitor the standards pupils achieve and the quality of teaching by looking at planning, pupils' work and lessons. This limits her capacity to help and advise colleagues.

MUSIC

94 Standards in music by the end of Years 2 and 4 exceed national expectations and pupils make good progress. Good standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. There have been improvements in the planning of the curriculum. The school now has a whole school scheme of work, which gives good guidance to all staff and units of work are now assessed regularly, so teachers have a clearer picture of what pupils know and understand. Pupils benefit from a good range of learning opportunities in music. The school makes good use of visitors into school to widen the pupils'

experience of multicultural music, and the school's excellent provision for extra-curricular activities provides pupils with an opportunity to take part in high quality performances.

95 The quality of teaching is good and as found in the previous inspection, teachers have very good subject knowledge. As a result of this, pupils make good progress in their ability to play instruments, sing tunefully and listen to and appraise music as they move through the school. The quality of singing is very good overall. Assemblies and hymn practises are used well to extend the pupils' singing skills. All teachers take part in these activities and sing enthusiastically with the pupils and as such, provide good models for learning. Both boys and girls are eager to be chosen to sing in the choir and other pupils listen carefully and respond well to their efforts. All pupils, even the youngest, know the words of many hymns and songs by heart. In most assemblies however, opportunities are lost to increase the pupils' knowledge and understanding of famous composers and to help them learn to appreciate how music creates an atmosphere or a mood. For example, music is not used effectively enough to set a thoughtful atmosphere as pupils enter and leave the hall for assembly. In a lesson seen in Year 1, lively singing gave a very prompt start to the lesson. The teacher gave the pupils the experience of using a wide range of percussion instruments as they attempted to represent the sounds of farm machinery. This encouraged pupils to listen very carefully to each other, begin to make simple evaluations of each others' performance and then perform together to produce a simple composition. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in lessons, particularly when using musical instruments, to ensure that they make good progress in the development of skills. In lessons and hymn practises, some opportunities are lost to introduce and use correct musical terminology and therefore, pupils do not have secure knowledge of *pitch, timbre, texture and dynamics*.

96 The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There is clear guidance for planning lessons for those teachers who are not as confident teaching music, and resources for the subject are good. However, whilst the co-ordinator has the opportunity to monitor the quality of singing throughout the school during hymn practises, no formal opportunities are in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. This represents a similar picture to that found in the previous inspection. The curriculum is enriched with very effective links with art and dance. For example, when a visiting dance teacher enabled older pupils in Year 4 to explore the art, dance and music of Africa. Pupils worked very well together to make drumming sounds and explore African beat and rhythm. As pupils became more confident, some uninhibited singing of African chants made a very good contribution to their awareness and appreciation of other cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

97 By the end of Years 2 and 4, pupils reach standards that are above those expected nationally for their age. Pupils make good progress in their lessons and achieve well from when they first enter school. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be satisfactory and the progress pupils made over time was unsatisfactory. Both standards and the progress pupils make is now better and this is because the quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers now have high expectations of what pupils are expected to do, offer pupils more challenging experiences and teach skills in a more consistent way. The school makes very good provision for swimming and as a result, the majority of pupils have already attained their 25-metre certificate by the age of nine. This represents very good achievement and reflects a similar picture to that found in the previous inspection. Pupils who have special educational needs are supported well in lessons and when receiving swimming instruction make similar very good progress to the rest of their class.

98 The quality of teaching is consistently good and, during the inspection, examples of very good lessons were seen in both the infants and juniors. One clear strength of the teaching is the very good

teaching of basic skills. Teachers plan lessons well, taking into account what pupils already know, understand and can do. More challenging skills are then taught and because of this, pupils make progress quickly. A good example of this was seen in a Year 1 class when the teacher encouraged pupils to recall what they had learnt in last week's lesson on ball skills. Pupils quickly recalled what they had done, then responded very well to the new skills being taught. In a Year 2 class, the teacher's very good management skills and lively pace to the lesson led to very good behaviour. Pupils worked very hard in this lesson to extend their gymnastic skills of balancing on different part of the body. Again, a strong feature of the lesson was the very good teaching of basic skills and therefore, pupils were able to build upon what they already knew and could do. In lessons, the majority of pupils listen carefully to instructions, show very good attitudes to the new challenges given to them and behave very well. Relationships are very good and this increases the enjoyment pupils show when working with others.

99 The physical education curriculum pupils receive is good. The school makes excellent provision for extra-curricular activities, particularly in games, sport and dance. The school also provides Year 4 pupils with a residential visit where outdoor and adventurous pursuits are enjoyed. For example, pupils particularly look forward to taking part in horse riding and hill walking activities. The physical education curriculum gives pupils many first-hand learning experiences to help their personal and social development. Visitors into school are used well to increase pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding and a very good example of this was seen when African dance was enjoyed by the Year 4 class. This not only increased their knowledge and appreciation of dance from other cultures, but also increased their enthusiasm for the subject and gave very good opportunities for the pupils to work together.

100 The leadership and management of the subject are very good. A thorough scheme of work gives clear direction to the curriculum. Recent training has effectively increased the co-ordinator's knowledge of the subject, particularly within dance, and evaluating the teaching of physical education enables the co-ordinator to identify appropriate targets for developing the curriculum. For example, one current aim is to increase the opportunities for pupils to develop outdoors and adventurous activities in school so they can gradually develop and practise these skills as they move through the school. Currently, most of this work takes place on the residential visit in Year 4.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

101 Pupils reach standards by the end of Years 2 and 4 which match those expected by the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Throughout the school, the progress that pupils make in their understanding of other world faiths is good. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection when pupils made little progress in the understanding of the beliefs, traditions, symbols and vocabulary of other religions. The school has successfully addressed this weakness in the curriculum. In discussion, pupils in Year 4 can confidently talk about the major world religions and make comparisons with the beliefs of Christians. Most pupils express secure knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and symbols of Hinduism, which they study in more detail in the juniors. Pupils are aware of and respect other religious beliefs and cultures in British society.

102 The school has addressed the weaknesses in resources found in the previous inspection and there is now a whole school scheme of work, which follows the Locally Agreed Syllabus and national guidance. The school very successfully links personal, moral, social and cultural education in the curriculum to improve the pupils' ability to reflect on wider issues in relation to their understanding of major world faiths. Whilst pupils have the opportunity to visit local Christian churches and take part in major Christian celebrations, there are no opportunities for pupils to visit different places of worship. This is a similar picture to that found in the previous inspection.

103 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers make very effective links with other subjects of the curriculum. For example, many opportunities are given to extend literacy skills and this is apparent in the work of Year 4 pupils in their written accounts of Bible stories. Pupils write their accounts for different audiences, for example the story of the first nativity was written in the form of an illustrated booklet for the reception children. Good links are also made with art and design and design and technology as pupils make a stable scene for the younger pupils. Planned curriculum links with information and communication technology are not as good however and therefore, these skills are not used well enough to support and extend learning.

104 Religious education lessons provide good opportunities for reflection. For example, younger pupils in Year 2 are encouraged to reflect on human emotions and the effect this has on others in the story of *The Jealous Brothers*. Pupils have a secure understanding of what being jealous is and can empathise with the feelings of the brothers in the Bible story. The scrutiny of work in pupils' books shows teachers provide pupils with many opportunities in lessons to consider how to make and keep friends by being supportive and helpful to others. Bible stories are used well to enable the pupils to reflect on times in their own lives when they have been greedy, unhelpful or jealous. This contributes very effectively to the very good teaching of moral and social education. Older pupils have studied the beliefs of the major world religions and in their work on Hinduism, have learnt about the signs, symbols and forms of worship that are important to Hindus. Teachers use personal, social, moral and cultural education very well to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the importance of signs and symbols in everyday life, for example how we all use signs to guide and help us in everyday life. Pupils then reflect that symbols are an important part of belonging to a group or society.

105 The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. All issues arising from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and are used well to support learning.