

# INSPECTION REPORT

## WILLOW BANK INFANT SCHOOL

Woodley, Reading

LEA area: Wokingham

Unique reference number: 109889

Headteacher: Mrs A J Stephens

Reporting inspector: Mrs C Skinner  
23160

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> May 2002

Inspection number: 196793

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Duffield Road Woodley Reading Berkshire
Postcode:	RG5 4RW
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, Willow Bank Infant School
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Wallis
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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23160	Carole Skinner	Registered inspector	English, music, religious education, foundation stage curriculum, English as an additional language.	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9588	Tony West	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
15917	Bob Cross	Team inspector	Science, geography, information and communication technology, physical education, equal opportunities.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
16492	Bob Lever	Team inspector	Mathematics, art, design and technology, history, special educational needs.	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Willow Bank Infant School educates boys and girls aged between four and seven. The school is average in size compared to other infant schools, as it has 202 pupils on roll. Of these, 28 children attend full-time in one Reception class, and 30 attend part-time in another. There are significantly more boys than girls, especially in Year 1. Approximately five per cent of the pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds, which is higher than average. Six pupils (three per cent) speak English as an additional language, which is also above average for most schools. All of these pupils speak English fluently. Twenty pupils (ten per cent) are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is well below the national average. Most have minor learning difficulties. Four pupils have statements of special educational need, which is broadly average. Less than one per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well below average. Children start school at the beginning of the term in which their fifth birthday falls. Their attainment on entry to the school is broadly average for their age. A high proportion of the pupils spend only one term in Reception. The school has had a high turnover of teachers in the past two years and has experienced difficulties with recruitment. At the time of this inspection, three teachers were on temporary contracts.

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

This is a good school, with some very good features. Pupils achieve well, especially in English and mathematics, as a result of good teaching and high expectations. The good leadership and management of the school promote high standards and are committed to improving the quality of education provided for the pupils. The school gives good value for money.

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

- Pupils in Year 2 attain well above average standards in reading and mathematics, and above average standards in speaking and listening, design and technology and art.
- Good leadership and management ensure that there is a clear focus on improvement and a shared vision for the future development of the school.
- The quality of teaching is good and enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good and make a positive contribution to the quality of their learning.
- Curricular provision is good, including that for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school provides high levels of care for all pupils, and makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in writing, although improving, are average, and those in handwriting and presentation of work are not high enough.
- Curricular provision for children in the Foundation Stage is limited by the constraints of the accommodation and there are insufficient resources to support some aspects of learning.
- The role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring standards, the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning is not sufficiently developed.

*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 June 1997, and, since, then, it has made a good improvement. The main issue for the school to address at that time was the efficiency and effectiveness of staff deployment in mixed age classes, in order to raise attainment and increase the percentage of higher attaining pupils. This has been addressed very effectively by reorganising the school into single age group classes, with the additional advantage of smaller teaching groups in literacy. The proportion of higher attaining pupils has increased, as has the provision for more able pupils generally, who are now given suitably demanding work. The other issue for the school was to review the role of subject co-ordinators to enable them to monitor the curriculum more effectively. Although this has been done successfully in English, mathematics and science, it has been less effective in other subjects which have been adversely affected by the high turnover of teaching staff. Overall, standards are higher in reading and mathematics, but lower in science, geography and history. The quality of teaching has improved, as have assessment procedures. The school has a good capacity to continue to improve.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
reading	A	A	B	D
writing	C	A	D	E
mathematics	A*	A	A	B

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

The school has maintained consistently high standards in mathematics and above average standards in reading over a five year period. In writing, standards have fluctuated significantly during that time. Some of these variations can be directly linked to pupils' attainment on entry to the school, which is higher than average in mathematics and lower in writing. The length of time spent in Reception is another contributory factor. However, the school has identified the need to raise standards in writing as its main priority, and is implementing strategies to achieve this. As a result, the inspection's findings show that standards in the present Year 2 are average in writing. They are well above average in reading and mathematics and average in science. Standards are average in science because there is insufficient emphasis on experimental and investigative science. The school has set challenging targets in English and mathematics for the pupils to achieve in the 2002 tests and is on course to achieve them. Standards are also above average in design and technology and art, and average in all other subjects.

In Reception year, pupils achieve average standards in communication, language and literacy, personal social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. Standards in mathematical development are above average. A significant proportion of children who only have one term in Reception do not achieve the Early Learning Goals in writing by the end of the year. Overall, pupils achieve well because of the good teaching they receive as they move through the school.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils listen attentively to adults, follow instructions well and settle quickly to the tasks set for them. They are generally eager to be involved, to contribute and to learn. They concentrate and work hard, both independently and when working with a partner or in a group.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and assemblies, around the school and at playtime. They are polite and friendly, and willing to help others. There are good levels of racial harmony.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils willingly accept opportunities to take responsibility for jobs in the classroom and around the school. When pupils work in groups, they share views and opinions well and value each other's work. Pupils form constructive relationships with each other and with adults.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is above average and there is no unauthorised absence. Few pupils are late for morning registration and all settle quickly to work.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good and enables pupils to achieve well. The teaching meets the needs of all pupils very well in English and mathematics, because pupils with special educational needs receive additional support and more able pupils are given suitably demanding work. However, these pupils' needs are not always met effectively in some other subjects because they are sometimes given the same task to do regardless of their capabilities. The strongest features of the teaching are high expectations and good management of pupils' behaviour. As a result, pupils put considerable effort into their work and acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. They concentrate well, show interest in all they do and grow in independence as they progress through the school. The teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, is good and builds effectively on pupils' previous learning. The marking of pupils' work is variable in quality. Some shows pupils clearly how well they have done and what they need to do to improve, whilst other examples are purely congratulatory or consist simply of ticks. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is affected by the limitations of the accommodation, which is inadequate for the large numbers of children in the summer term. The small outdoor area does not allow for the full range of activities usually seen in the Foundation Stage and there is a shortage of equipment and resources to support pupils' physical development. There is a good emphasis on

developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and their knowledge and awareness of letters and sounds. The teaching of mathematical development is good in Reception.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum provides pupils in Years 1 and 2 with a range of very broad and relevant experiences which help them to make good progress in their learning. There is a very good range of educational visits and visitors to the school, which enrich the pupils' educational experiences. The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory overall, but provision for pupils' physical development is unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall, with very good provision for pupils with statements of special educational need. Pupils receive good support in lessons and work is well planned to meet their needs in English and mathematics. Support is less focused in some other subjects such as science and geography. Arrangements for using individual education plans are effective in ensuring pupils' needs are met whilst still enabling them to have access to the whole curriculum.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	All six pupils who speak English as an additional language are fluent in English and do not require specific provision. The school has appropriate strategies in place to make provision for pupils as required.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils' spiritual growth is fostered well through carefully planned and sensitively led acts of worship. The very good provision for moral development helps pupils to develop responsibility for themselves, each other and the world in a spirit of tolerance and understanding. There is a strong sense of purpose and community within the school and the open and friendly attitudes of staff also help pupils to develop good social behaviour and awareness. Cultural development is promoted soundly through the curriculum but there are few opportunities for pupils to appreciate fully the ethnic and cultural diversity of British society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school has very good procedures for child protection, health and safety and first aid. Teachers know the pupils very well and take great care to ensure their welfare. Assessment and procedures for tracking pupils' progress and personal development are good and are used well to guide teachers in their planning. The monitoring of attendance and behaviour is very good.

The school works very well in partnership with parents and this makes a very good contribution to pupils' achievements.



### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher, deputy head, key staff and governors provide the school with good leadership and very clear direction for its continuing development. As a result of high staff turnover, the role of some subject co-ordinators is not fully developed. The school development plan provides a very concise and effective programme for future improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors play an effective role in shaping the future direction of the school. They have a good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are very supportive of the headteacher and staff. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities efficiently in most areas, but there are a few minor omissions from their Annual Report to parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher, deputy head and governors carry out a detailed analysis of the pupils' results in national and internal tests, and use this to identify areas for improvement. Rigorous debate and consideration of assessment information lead to clear programmes for action. Governors' monitoring of the school's provision is rigorous and well-informed.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Systematic budgeting for all expenditure and careful financial management ensure that the priorities in the school development plan are fully supported. There is efficient financial control and administration. However, the school has a very high budget surplus, amounting to approximately 20 per cent of its income, and there are no firm plans to show how this will be reduced to within more acceptable limits. Satisfactory systems are in place to ensure the school obtains best value when purchasing goods or services.

There is an adequate number of teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum and a generous number of teaching assistants. The accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall, but there are shortcomings in both in the Foundation Stage.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some parents would like to be better informed about their children's progress.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is well managed and led.</li> <li>• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some are dissatisfied with the range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>
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The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed by parents. In addition, the inspection findings show that parents are kept well informed about their children's progress and the range of activities outside lessons, although somewhat limited, is satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children reach average standards by the end of the Foundation Stage, taking all six areas of learning into account. They enter the school at average levels of attainment in most areas of learning, although their knowledge of sounds and writing skills are below average. Until recently, children did not enter the school until the term after their fifth birthday, which meant that they had little or no Reception experience. Since September 2001, they have started school at the beginning of the term in which their fifth birthday falls. This means that some children have three terms in Reception, some have two and some only one. At the time of this inspection, half of the children in the Foundation Stage had been in school for only four weeks and were due to move into Year 1 in September 2002. Overall, children make satisfactory progress, but many are not in Reception long enough to enable them to reach the Early Learning Goals in writing by the end of the year. Attainment on entry is above average in mathematical development, and children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning. Children reach average standards in personal, social and emotional development, creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development.

2. In the national tests for seven year olds in 2001, the school's results were above the national average in reading, below average in writing and well above average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, they were below average in reading, well below average in writing and above average in mathematics. Teachers' assessments in science were close to the national average. There were no significant differences between boys' and girls' attainment. In reading, mathematics and science, the proportion of pupils who reached Level 3 (above average) was much higher than that seen nationally, whilst in writing it was lower than that seen in most schools. Although standards have fluctuated from year to year, which is not unusual, they have been consistently higher than average in reading and mathematics over five years, and generally average or higher in writing. The school has identified writing as its main priority for improvement and has introduced some good initiatives, which are already having a positive effect on pupils' progress.

3. The findings of the inspection are that pupils in Year 2 attain well above average standards in reading and mathematics. This is because most pupils are on course to achieve Level 2 and a high proportion is achieving Level 3. Standards in writing and science are average, as the proportion of pupils at both Level 2 and Level 3 are similar to those seen nationally. Pupils reach above average standards in speaking and listening, design and technology and art, and average standards in all other subjects. Compared with the findings of the previous inspection, standards are higher in mathematics and lower in science, geography and history. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has helped to raise standards in mathematics, whilst standards in science are lower because the school now spends approximately half the time it did teaching science in 1997 due

to its concentration on the teaching of literacy and numeracy. There is also insufficient emphasis on investigative and experimental science, and significant changes of staff have also adversely affected progress in the subject.

4. In geography and history, standards have fallen because the pupils' literacy skills are not fully developed and applied in the subject. Standards are higher in reading because the school has introduced focused teaching of reading comprehension skills, which is helping pupils to reach higher levels of attainment. Compared with the results of the 2001 national tests, standards in reading and writing have improved because of the school's focus on developing pupils' skills to higher levels. Standards in mathematics and science are similar to the results of the 2001 tests. Pupils' achievement is good in Years 1 and 2. This is because the quality of teaching is good and enables pupils to progress at a good rate, which, in turn, helps to compensate for the short time spent by many in Reception. More able pupils generally make good progress, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. They are provided with suitably challenging work in English and mathematics, but this is not the case in experimental and investigative science.

5. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans. These contain clear objectives, which are revised regularly, and allow pupils to achieve success as they move through a series of well-planned steps. Individual education plans are sufficiently specific to allow accurate assessments of pupils' progress to be made. Pupils receive good support in the classroom and work is tailored to their needs in English and mathematics. However, this is not always the case in other subjects, where their progress is satisfactory. Pupils who have statements of special educational need receive very good support and make very good progress against their targets.

6. The six pupils who speak English as an additional language do so fluently. They achieve well and make good progress in their learning.

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

7. The pupils' attitudes towards school are good. Parents confirm that their children want to come to school and, as noted in the previous inspection, they have good attitudes towards learning. Personal development and relationships within the school are also good. There is a small minority of children who sometimes behave inappropriately, but the impact of this on learning is limited by effective teaching and support. The great majority of pupils listen attentively to adults, follow instructions well and settle quickly to the tasks set for them. They are generally eager to be involved, to contribute and to learn. They concentrate and work hard, both independently and in group situations. As in the previous inspection, the pupils' behaviour in lessons during the inspection was good. In a few instances, a minority of pupils lost concentration, were disobedient or did not contribute to classroom activities. In a literacy lesson for Year 2 pupils on non-fiction writing, the pupils listened attentively to the teacher and then successfully searched for information on ladybirds to complete their work. Much of this was done independently. There have been no exclusions during the past year.

8. The great majority of pupils are well behaved in assemblies, when they move around the school and in the playground at break-times and at lunchtime. Meals are pleasant social events for the pupils. When pupils work in groups, they share their views and opinions well and value each other's work. In lessons observed during the inspection, pupils worked well in a variety of different group situations. In a Year 2 music lesson, pupils chose their own group leaders who were asked to conduct other pupils' compositions, which they did very well, responsibly and independently. Children in the Reception classes settle quickly into the routines of school and behave well. They show interest in all activities and relate well to each other and to adults.

9. Pupils are trusted: they are aware of right and wrong and comply with school and class rules. If any disruption does arise, members of staff handle it very well and limit any effects. The pupils follow the excellent role models provided by all members of staff by being polite and courteous and having good relationships with everyone. They form orderly queues, wait their turn and open doors for others. No examples of any oppressive behaviour, bullying, sexism or racism were seen during the inspection and the majority of pupils understand the impact of their behaviour on others. There is very good racial harmony within the school. Pupils handle resources such as musical instruments, computer equipment and books with care and there were no instances of damage or graffiti seen during the inspection.

10. The opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take personal responsibility are good for an infant school. Although members of staff often assign tasks to monitors, the pupils willingly accept opportunities to help others, taking on the role of 'VIP', assisting with preparations for lessons or tidying up afterwards. Pupils raise funds for a wide range of charities and take part in many activities that involve visitors and visits to the local community.

11. Attendance and punctuality are good and have improved since the last inspection. Attendance of 95.1 per cent for the period 2000 to 2001 puts the school's performance above the national average. Unauthorised absence of zero per cent for the same period is below the national average. Few pupils are late for morning registration and all pupils settle quickly to work. The registration of pupils at the start of sessions is handled efficiently and the smooth start to the day contributes to the calm and positive learning atmosphere in school.

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

12. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and good in Years 1 and 2. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when teaching was satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. There was no provision for the Foundation Stage at the time of the last inspection. Of the 45 lessons observed during this inspection, two were very good, 29 were good and 14 were satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The teaching meets the needs of all pupils very well in English and mathematics, because pupils with special educational needs receive additional support and more able pupils are given suitably demanding work. This is an improvement since the last inspection. However, these pupils' needs are not always met so effectively in some other subjects because they are sometimes given the same task to do regardless of their capabilities.

13. Throughout the school, the strongest features of the teaching are the expectations that teachers have of pupils' academic and personal development and the way they manage pupils' behaviour and motivate them to do well. As a result, pupils put considerable effort into their work and acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. They concentrate well, show interest in all they do and grow in independence as they progress through the school. The teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics is good and builds effectively on pupils' previous learning. The quality of teachers' planning is variable. It does not always show clearly how work is matched to pupils' differing levels of attainment. The marking of pupils' work is also variable in quality. Some shows pupils clearly how well they have done and what they need to do to improve, whilst other examples are purely congratulatory or consist simply of ticks.

14. The quality of teaching and learning for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, overall. Of the nine lessons observed, five were good and four were satisfactory. The quality of

teaching and learning is satisfactory in communication, language and literacy, personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. It is good in mathematical development and unsatisfactory in physical development. The quality of teaching and learning is affected by the limitations of the accommodation, which is inadequate for the large numbers of children in the summer term. The small outdoor area does not allow for the full range of activities usually seen in the Foundation Stage and there is a shortage of equipment and resources to support pupils' physical development. Freedom of movement and opportunities to develop children's independence in selecting activities are also constrained by the lack of space, especially for the part-time children in the morning. There are insufficient activities for children to develop social skills and imagination through role-play. There is a good emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and their knowledge and awareness of letters and sounds. The teachers and assistants work well together to plan work according to the national guidance for the Foundation Stage and provide well for the teaching of basic skills. They have very good relationships with the children and help them to settle quickly and happily into school routines. Good assessment procedures are in place which enable teachers to track children's progress effectively in each area of learning.

15. Some of the best features of the teaching were observed in a lesson for full-time Reception children, where pupils were learning about maps. The teacher had prepared a large-scale map of the area around the school and began by finding out what the children knew about maps and what they noticed by studying the one on the wall. Through skilful questioning, the teacher prompted children to identify features on the map, such as the church, the post office and the school. She then showed photographs of the same features, which the children recognised, and placed these around the map, joining them to their equivalent symbol on the map with string. Before this lesson, the children had visited the post office and posted letters to their own home, which they now added to the display, finding their street on the map and joining their envelope to the map by string. This helped the children to relate actual places to a point on a map and to understand the uses and features of maps. The teacher's high expectations were evident in the level of questioning and the vocabulary used to explain things to the children. The rest of the lesson consisted of an interesting range of activities, designed to develop children's creativity, their understanding of floating and sinking and their mathematical knowledge. There was very good provision for children with special educational needs and high levels of challenge for the more able. This lesson also took place in the afternoon, when there was plenty of space for children to spread out and engage in a wide range of activities.

16. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good and enables pupils to make good progress and achieve well. During the inspection, 36 lessons were observed. Of these, two were very good, 24 were good and ten were satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is good in English, mathematics, design and technology and art, and satisfactory overall in other subjects, with examples of good teaching in most. There are a number of strong features in the teaching in English. Good amounts of time are given to developing reading comprehension and writing skills, which pupils need in many cases to make up for the short time spent in Reception. The school employs an additional teacher to allow pupils to be taught in smaller groups formed on the basis of their previous attainment. In this way, teachers provide very well for all pupils. Those with special educational needs receive focused support, which helps them to overcome difficulties with learning sounds, spelling and punctuation. More able pupils are given work which extends and challenges them. However, there is insufficient emphasis on the quality of pupils' handwriting, with the result that work is not presented neatly enough.

17. A writing lesson for a more able group of pupils exemplified the good teaching. In a briskly paced introduction to the lesson, the teacher challenged the pupils to turn "The bird sang in the tree" into a 'super sentence' by adding adjectives and adverbs to make it more interesting. Pupils offered many good ideas as a result of the teacher's skilful questioning, and, together, they produced "The

brightly coloured bird sang merrily in the evening in the beautiful flowering tree". As the lesson progressed, the teacher provided pupils with interesting examples of informal letters, which they read and discussed before attempting to write their own. There was a good focus on planning the letter: "How will it start? What happened? How will it end?" This gave pupils a clear structure to work within, which helped them to clarify their ideas.

18. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good, overall, although there are variations between subjects. It is particularly effective in English and mathematics. Teachers use an appropriate range of methods, which enable pupils to learn effectively. Teachers take full account of the targets set out in pupils' individual education plans. These contain clear targets and are sufficiently practical for class teachers to implement when support staff are not present. Teaching assistants offer good support and keep accurate records of the progress of pupils with statements of special educational need. Limited use is made of information and communication technology to support the learning of basic skills.

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

19. The school's curricular provision for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good. All statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally Agreed Syllabus are well met. The school's curriculum provides pupils in Years 1 and 2 with a range of very broad and relevant experiences. This provision assists them to make good progress in their learning. These judgements are very similar to those made by the school's last OFSTED inspection. The school's strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills are good and are having a positive effect on the standards achieved by the pupils. The range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school is satisfactory. Curricular provision is very well supported by the range of educational visits undertaken by the school and by people who come to the school to broaden the pupils' educational experiences. Visits include a farm, local churches and a bookshop where the pupils met an author. Visitors to the school include a printer, theatre groups and a wind quintet. The school does not provide its pupils with any extra-curricular clubs. However, private clubs, for example, gymnastics and French, are organised and operated in the school for a fee. These clubs are well attended by pupils and there is a waiting list to join some of the activities.

20. The Foundation Stage curriculum was introduced in September 2001 when the school began to admit children in the term before their fifth birthday. This is developing well in most areas of learning, and follows national guidelines. There is an appropriate emphasis on personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy and mathematics. Children learn through talk, enquiry and play and the curriculum prepares them appropriately for transition into Year 1. However, a significant proportion of the children have only one term's part-time experience in the Reception class before entering Year 1, whilst others have one term part-time and two terms full-time in school. The school makes allowance for this when pupils move into Year 1, but it nevertheless makes it more difficult for teachers to enable pupils to reach the required levels by the end of each year. The cramped accommodation also places constraints on the effective implementation of the Foundation Stage curriculum, particularly for the children who attend part-time in the morning. In addition, the planning and resourcing of opportunities for pupils' physical development are unsatisfactory.

21. The school provides good equality of opportunity for its pupils. This finding is similar to the judgement made by the school's 1997 inspection. The school has a good equality of opportunity policy and the staff are all aware of its contents and apply them well. The progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is monitored carefully and the achievement of boys and girls is kept under careful scrutiny. The results of this monitoring are discussed with the governors.

22. The school's provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education is good. The planned curriculum is under review and is to be modified to include changes in the new Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's syllabus and the Healthy Schools Initiative. The school has good resources, including library books, to help pupils learn about different cultures and issues such as bereavement, health and impairment. Although no lessons on personal, social, health and citizenship were seen during the inspection, it was covered well in circle time, assemblies, science and religious education. Visitors are used well to promote this aspect of learning. The school has a suitable policy on sex education and a policy and procedures on substance misuse.

23. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs overall. It is very good for pupils with statements of special educational need and is proving effective for those with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Provision is good in English and mathematics, both in terms of classroom support and planned work, which is well matched to pupils' needs. It is less well developed in some other subjects such as science and geography, where work is not always well matched to needs and is often not completed. Arrangements for using individual education plans are effective in ensuring pupils' needs are met while still enabling them to have access to the whole curriculum.

24. The contribution made to pupils' learning by the local community is good. Local museums have given support to curricular events in the school, and pupils have participated in a wide range of visits in the local area. For example, they have visited local churches and the ministers have visited the school. Pupils have been taken to the library, a book shop, and the post office, as well as places further afield. Local representatives of the emergency and health services have visited the school, as well as theatre groups, musicians, a circus workshop, speakers talking about their work and a farm. Many visitors have been invited to school to support the pupils' personal, social and citizenship curriculum. Local organisations have supported the school by constructing and maintaining garden and play structures.

25. There are good relationships with partner schools and playgroups. Effective links with the junior school on the same site make for smooth transfer arrangements at the end of Year 2. The infant and junior school staff have worked together on joint training days, and to produce policies and home-school agreements. The computerised transfer of information to the junior school also works well. The schools share the playing field and certain aspects of building maintenance. Junior school pupils come into school to see school productions and infants go to see their performances. They help in the infants with making books and reading materials. There are strong links with local pre-school groups and other local junior and primary schools. Neighbouring secondary school students have also performed musical items for the pupils. The school provides places for students from secondary schools on work experience schemes and students from teacher training colleges and the local university.

26. Overall, there is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is an improvement from the previous inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. The school's current provision has created a welcoming, caring environment where every child is valued as part of the 'Willow Bank Family'. This, in turn, effectively promotes a sense of self worth in pupils and develops skills and confidence in the classroom.

27. The school makes good provision for spiritual development. Pupils' spiritual growth is fostered well through carefully planned and sensitively led acts of worship in the school. In assemblies, there is a good balance between music, speech and silence, and times of stillness and prayer are used well to develop pupils' spiritual awareness and personal responses. Assemblies have a Christian focus but major religious and cultural events like Divali and Chinese New Year are also celebrated. In a whole school assembly, the theme of how it is possible to change was developed thoughtfully and pupils

listened with rapt attention to the story of Zacchaeus and the dramatic effect that a meeting with Jesus had upon him. In a birthday assembly, pupils contemplated the idea of wearing 'challenge crowns' and how they would help to change their behaviour. Teachers also realise the importance of seizing opportunities across the curriculum to direct pupils' natural enthusiasm for, and curiosity about, the world around them into a spiritual response. Pupils visit nature reserves and farms and also marvel at butterflies emerging, snails, mini beasts and pond life.

28. The very good provision for moral development stems from the school's high expectations of behaviour, which encourage self motivation and discipline among pupils. It is also founded upon the warm, supportive relationships between pupils and all adults. These enable pupils to develop responsibility for themselves, each other and the world in a spirit of tolerance and understanding. Pupils are very familiar with the school rules; they have a well-established sense of right and wrong and are expected to consider the effects of their actions on others. Moral issues are very well taught and discussed. In a Year 1 class assembly, pupils listened carefully when the teacher read poems about anger. They related it to their own experiences and talked sensibly about how they coped with their own feelings. Positive behaviour and good work are encouraged through the use of stickers and stamps and weekly awards which are given during sharing assembly where pupils' achievements, both in and out of school, are recognised and celebrated.

29. There is good provision for pupils' social development and parents agree that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. The 'Willow Tree' in the hall highlights that every member of the school community is vital to the school's success. There is a strong sense of purpose and community within the school and the open and friendly attitudes of staff also help pupils to develop positive attitudes towards good social behaviour. 'Circle time' allows pupils to share their experiences and concerns in a supportive atmosphere and the personal, social and health education curriculum enables them to discuss important social issues. In lessons such as science, literacy and information and communication technology, pupils work together happily and share resources and equipment fairly. They are given responsibility appropriate to their age and development such as taking registers to the office, setting out small equipment in physical education and being VIP of the class. Good links with the local community also widen pupils' perspective when they visit the day care centre and learn together in less familiar surroundings when they visit the post office and different churches. They also assist with tea parties for parents who have helped the school during the year. Pupils also develop a good sense of responsibility for the poor and disadvantaged when they raise money for charities such as Camp Mohawk, Helen House, Daisy's Dream and Guide Dog puppies.

30. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. Through visits and visitors like authors, a puppeteer, theatre groups, a printer, Art and Music and Circus days, pupils gain a sound awareness of the traditions of their own culture and the life of the local community. Western culture is promoted appropriately through subjects such as art, literacy, music and history. Pupils perform a Victorian music hall, watch a recording of the Coronation ceremony, paint in the style of Paul Klee and listen to the music of Grieg. They also study Rangoli patterns, the work of Chinese, Aboriginal and African artists, play a range of ethnic instruments and look at Sri Lankan dress and dancing. Pupils are also introduced in religious education to some of the major world faiths such as Judaism, Islam, Christianity and Hinduism and celebrate Harvest and Divali. Such activities successfully broaden pupils' horizons but there are few opportunities in the curriculum to enable pupils to understand and appreciate fully the ethnic and cultural diversity of British society.

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

31. As in the previous inspection, the care of pupils is a strength of the school. All members of staff show very high levels of concern for the well-being of pupils. The information that is kept on



each pupil is detailed and comprehensive and members of staff know pupils and their medical and personal needs very well. The school is very well supported by health professionals and other agencies. The school identifies and deals very well with any hazards found on site, and health and safety checks, risk assessments and inspections are regularly undertaken. The school's health and safety policy is detailed and members of staff take their responsibilities seriously. There are appropriate routines for safety checks, including a range of risk assessments. The headteacher is especially committed to, and knowledgeable about, this aspect of the school.

32. Three members of staff are trained to administer first aid and the school's procedures for the care and treatment of pupils are very good. Very thorough precautions are in place for dealing with emergencies arising from pupils' medical conditions or ailments and for dealing with accidents and injuries. The school's arrangements for child protection are very good. The policy and procedures follow the guidelines of the local committee for the protection of children. The headteacher is the designated person responsible for child protection and other members of staff understand well the school's arrangements and procedures. The school monitors pupils very well, especially if there is any concern about their welfare.

33. The school's ethos, the quality of teaching and the consistent use of positive behaviour strategies promote and support the good behaviour seen throughout the school. Pupils' behaviour is monitored consistently well and this results in the absence of oppressive behaviour. The school has very good procedures in place for encouraging good behaviour, based on a comprehensive range of rewards and sanctions. Assemblies, class activities and 'circle time' are used very well to support this aspect. The school is very good at monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour and parents and pupils confirm that the pupils feel safe in the school. Parents also confirm that there are few incidents of bullying or racism and that the school deals with any issues speedily and sensitively.

34. There are effective arrangements for the induction of new children into the Foundation Stage. These include visits by the Reception teacher to feeder playgroups and nurseries and several occasions for children to visit the school before they start to familiarise them with the staff and daily routines. The school is good at looking after and supporting pupils with hearing impairment. This is based on a thorough knowledge of the pupils and a sensitive understanding of their needs. Their safety and welfare are very well managed.

35. The school has very good procedures in place for monitoring attendance and punctuality and these robust procedures are positively influencing learning and progress. For day-to-day recording of attendance, the school uses manual registers that comply fully with all legal requirements. Individual pupil records are then transferred into the school's computerised analysis and monitoring system for research and follow up of any absences and lateness that may be causing concern.

36. There are good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. A wide range of rewards and sanctions, and effective personal and social assessment and target setting systems support this aspect well. The personal, social, health and citizenship education curriculum makes a good contribution to this provision. Pupils join in a range of events in the school that contribute to their personal development, including raising money for a wide range of charities, and taking part in visits and extra-curricular activities. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop independence and to use their initiative.

37. Assessment procedures are good overall and have improved since the previous inspection. They are very good in mathematics and English. There are weekly assessments in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Other subjects are assessed half-termly. Work is sampled termly in English, mathematics and science, and teachers assess

samples of work and agree on levels of attainment. In addition to the statutory assessments in Year 2, the school uses initial assessments when pupils enter the school. The information is used appropriately to identify pupils who are experiencing difficulties and to set targets for them. The school uses assessment data from teachers, from assessments when children enter the school and the results of internal tests to inform target-setting procedures in individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. Detailed analysis of assessment data from national tests helps teachers to identify strengths and weaknesses in learning and determine the action needed. There is effective use of record books and folders to monitor and track pupils' progress and to plan the next steps in learning in English, mathematics and science.

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

38. Parents' views of the school are very good and the school's partnership with parents is one of its greatest strengths. This effective partnership has been maintained since the previous inspection. Parents have raised a substantial amount of money for the school by organising a range of social events. They are invited to help and support the school, attend assemblies, performances, curricular and training events, briefing meetings and parents' consultation evenings. Parents are able to communicate with the school on a daily basis by seeing members of staff, or by using the pupils' home-school reading books.

39. The information provided for parents is very good. They receive information about work that can be done at home, topics, the curriculum, newsletters and day-to-day class and school information as well as information on pupils' progress. Although a minority of parents in their replies to the inspection questionnaire felt they were not well informed about pupils' progress, the inspectors found that the information provided, and the opportunities for parents to discuss concerns, are very good. Pupils' annual reports are detailed, and show that teachers know their pupils very well. The reports include all appropriate information, including details of attendance, pupils' achievements and information on how pupils could make further progress. In addition, teachers make themselves available to parents on a daily basis to discuss concerns about their children or to check on their progress. Other documentation for parents is informative, and the prospectus satisfies all the legal requirements. The governors' Annual Report to parents has some minor omissions.

40. Parents confirm and appreciate the way the school helps their children to settle when they start school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed of their children's progress and are properly involved in identifying their needs. Parents are pleased with the support their children receive. The school communicates with parents on attendance and timekeeping in writing and by telephone, and will follow up unannounced absences on the first day. Parents confirm that the school is welcoming and that it operates an "open door" policy. Parents are very pleased with the opportunity to join their children at the start of the day in the classrooms, when they look at their work or share books with them. They also appreciate the fact that the headteacher visits all classrooms each morning, and feel that she and all staff are very approachable.

41. Parents' contribution to pupils' learning at home and school is very good. During the inspection, there were parents helping in classrooms and members of staff confirm that parents are very much involved in the work of the school. Parents and members of the community come in to hear pupils read and to help with trips and visits. They are confident that the school will respond positively to any suggestions or complaints they may have. Parents are happy with the school's arrangements for homework and give good support.

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

42. The school's leadership and management are good and promote high standards in all aspects of its work. The headteacher provides very clear direction for the school, leading by example and creating a strong team spirit amongst the staff. This has been valuable in maintaining stability during the past few years when the school has experienced a high turnover of staff. The headteacher receives good support from the deputy head, other staff with management responsibilities and governors, who all share a common vision for the school's continuing improvement. Under their guidance, the school has made a good improvement since the previous inspection and there continues to be a clear focus on maintaining high standards and raising those that are not yet high enough. Parents feel that the school has managed the high turnover of staff well and has not allowed it to affect adversely their children's education. This view was confirmed by the findings of this inspection.

43. Staffing and recruitment difficulties have, however, hindered the development of the role of subject co-ordinators, which was a key issue for improvement in the previous inspection. At the time of this inspection, most of the responsibilities for subjects were held, in some cases temporarily, by the headteacher and two senior staff. Although there are appropriate arrangements for monitoring pupils' work and teachers' planning, in most cases co-ordinators have not been able to observe lessons in their subjects. This has, however, been done effectively in English and mathematics and has contributed well to the school's efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy. The school has identified the development of the co-ordinator's role as a priority in the school development plan.

44. The headteacher co-ordinates the school's provision for special educational needs very well. She is experienced, has attended a number of relevant courses, keeps the required documentation in good order and regularly monitors pupils' progress. The full-time Reception teacher is new to the role and, together with the headteacher, has overseen the recent introduction and implementation of the Foundation Stage curriculum. She has a sound grasp of the issues facing the school and has attended a number of training courses in various aspects of the Foundation Stage.

45. There is a strong commitment to monitoring and evaluating the school's performance. The headteacher, deputy head and governors carry out a detailed analysis of the pupils' results in national and internal assessments, and use this to pinpoint areas for improvement and identify reasons why some pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Rigorous discussion and consideration of assessment information lead to clear programmes for action. The school development plan is a concise, working document, which sets very clear priorities for improvement and shows how they will be achieved. There are very specific criteria by which the school can judge whether it has been successful in meeting its objectives. The main focus for the school in the coming year is continuing to raise standards in writing and spelling. This is reflected in the performance objectives set by the governors for the headteacher and in those set for individual teachers. This means that all are working together towards a common aim and have a good understanding of what needs to be done to achieve it.

46. The governors play an effective role in shaping the future direction of the school. They have a good awareness of what the school does well and what needs to be improved, and they work closely and supportively with the headteacher and staff. For example, the governor with responsibility for overseeing literacy in the school meets regularly with the co-ordinator and reports back to governors the outcome of discussions. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities efficiently in most areas, but there are a few minor omissions from the governors' Annual Report to parents. Their monitoring of the school's provision is rigorous and well-informed. The School Improvement Committee looks at termly assessments of pupils' attainment and forecasts of expected performance, and governors ask critical questions and take steps to ensure that they understand fully the issues facing the school. For

instance, governors have looked closely at examples of pupils' writing in order to gain a clearer understanding of the standard required in order to achieve Level 3.

47. The school's policy for equality of opportunity states that it aims to: "Establish and maintain a happy and caring environment in which everybody is able to work, learn and achieve their full potential together regardless of gender, race, social background and ability". This aim is generally reflected well in the work of the school, including teaching, where teachers make sure that all pupils are able to take part fully in lessons and to benefit equally from them. The only shortcoming is that, in some subjects, less able pupils and those with special educational needs are not always given work that matches their capabilities.

48. The school makes appropriate strategic use of its resources. Most of the priorities in the school development plan are carefully costed, and spending supports the school's educational priorities. There is systematic budgeting for all expenditure, and careful financial management over the past few years has enabled the governors to undertake major improvements to the fabric of the school, including new windows and toilets, the latter having been identified as a health hazard. Money that the school receives for pupils with special educational needs is spent well, and enables the school to make good provision for these pupils. For example, there is generous provision of teaching assistants. Money is also spent effectively on providing additional teachers to allow pupils in Year 2 to be taught in smaller groups for literacy, which benefits pupils at all levels of attainment and helps to ensure that more able pupils are challenged sufficiently. There is efficient and effective financial control and administration. The administrative officer works closely with the headteacher and chair of the governors' finance committee to monitor and regulate spending from month to month.

49. At the time of this inspection, the school had an exceedingly high budget surplus, amounting to approximately 20 per cent of its income. Governors believe strongly in prudent housekeeping, and are aware of the need to make contingency plans for an ailing boiler and potential problems with the school roof. They also have preliminary plans for creating more storage space and re-organising some interior working areas. Although money has been allocated for the introduction of the Foundation Stage curriculum, there has not been a full appraisal of the impact of admitting children under five into the existing Reception area, which is unsatisfactory in the summer term. Costed priorities for the coming year, include large sums for computers and software, outdoor play equipment and redecoration. However, this still leaves a considerable surplus, with no firm plans to show how it will be reduced to within more acceptable limits.

50. The match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory. The school has responded very well to the main key issue from the previous inspection by re-organising into single age group classes, which has resulted in more efficient and effective deployment of staff. The school has experienced a high turnover of staff in the past two years and difficulties with recruitment. Present staff have a suitable range of expertise and experience. Three teachers are employed on temporary contracts and three others are part-time and operate in job shares. One teacher was absent on long-term sick leave. Three of the nine teachers are newly qualified, and only three, including the headteacher, have been at the school for longer than two years. There are good procedures for supporting newly qualified teachers. The provision of teaching assistants is generous. They are experienced and receive training within school. They provide good support for pupils in lessons, especially those pupils with special educational needs, and make an important contribution to the life of the school. There is very good teamwork between teachers and assistants throughout the school.

51. The accommodation is satisfactory for the teaching of the curriculum. It is located in a single storey building on a pleasant site, which is shared with the adjacent junior school. There is a grassed games area and hard play areas that are equipped with play equipment and playground markings, both of which help to make pupils' recreation time more interesting as well as contributing to their social and academic development. At present, there are few opportunities for pupils to enjoy adventurous and

imaginative play, although the school has plans to provide an adventure play area. The school buildings are well maintained and include open plan teaching areas, which sometimes create noise interference problems for adjacent classes. The school is enriched by displays of artefacts, art and pupils' work. The classrooms and some of the carpeted rooms are small and cramped when full of children. The hall, which is of an adequate size, is used for assemblies, physical education and as a dining area. The library is bright and attractive and provides a stimulating environment for developing pupils' research skills and their love of reading. A classroom has been recently converted for future use solely as a computer suite in the next school year. The building easily enables disabled access and has disabled toilet facilities.

52. The accommodation and resources for children in the Foundation Stage are currently unsatisfactory, particularly for their physical development. In the summer term, when a second Reception class of 30 children is formed, the available space is unsatisfactory as there is then a significant lack of teaching space for these pupils. Also, the outside play area is small, and there are no wheeled toys or apparatus for climbing and clambering to develop children's physical skills.

53. The provision of resources to teach the curriculum overall is satisfactory. In literacy, mathematics, music, design and technology, art and information and communication technology there is a good range of resources. In other subjects, provision is satisfactory. Resources for special educational needs, in terms of books and materials, are satisfactory. Specific information and communication technology software for developing basic skills is limited but is being extended.

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

54. In order to continue to improve the quality of education provided by the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

### **1. Continue to raise standards of attainment in writing\*by:**

- ensuring that the pupils develop their writing skills more fully in all relevant subjects of the curriculum;
- improving the standard of pupils' handwriting and presentation of their work;
- being certain that the pupils' work is marked consistently in ways which help them to improve;
- ensuring that the written work expected of pupils with special educational needs is matched more closely to their capabilities.

(Paragraphs 2, 3, 12, 13, 16, 68, 71-73, 76, 85, 94, 99, 114)

### **2. Improve curricular provision for children in the Foundation Stage\* by:**

- Ensuring that they have access to the full range of experiences and resources normally found in most schools for their physical development;
- Reviewing the use of the accommodation to ensure equality of opportunity and experience for all children in the Reception classes.

(Paragraphs 14, 20, 52, 55, 57, 59, 63, 64, 67)

### **3. Continue to develop the role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring standards, the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.\***

(Paragraphs 43, 89, 93, 102, 110, 113)

### **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

1. Firming up plans for expenditure to reduce the very high budget surplus.

(Paragraph 49)

2. Increasing pupils' awareness of Britain as a multicultural society.

(Paragraph 30)

3. Ensuring that the governors' Annual Report to parents fully meets statutory requirements.

(Paragraphs 39, 46)

\*denotes priorities in the school development plan

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	29	14	0	0	0
Percentage	0	4	65	31	0	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	187
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	1
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	20
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
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 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	41	41	82

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	35	38	41
	Girls	37	39	40
	Total	72	77	81
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (95)	94 (100)	99 (98)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91(90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36	40	38
	Girls	38	39	37
	Total	74	79	75
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (97)	96 (98)	91 (98)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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



***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	5
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	134
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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

***Teachers and classes***

**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	31
Average class size	29

**Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	189

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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

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

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

***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	405080
Total expenditure	364658
Expenditure per pupil	1972
Balance brought forward from previous year	64012
Balance carried forward to next year	104434

***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	202
Number of questionnaires returned	70

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	36	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	57	37	3	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	43	6	3	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	59	29	11	0	1
The teaching is good.	66	30	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	36	14	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	20	7	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	31	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	60	27	13	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	70	26	0	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	43	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	42	16	1	7

## **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**

55. Children are admitted to school at the beginning of the term in which they become five. They attend part-time to begin with and older children progress to full-time attendance later in the year. At the time of this inspection, one class contained 28 full-time children with autumn and spring birthdays, and the other class 30 part-time children with summer birthdays. Overall, when the children enter the school, their attainment is average for their age, although it is higher in mathematical development and lower in knowledge of sounds and writing skills. Children make satisfactory progress, but a significant proportion are not in Reception long enough to enable them to reach the Early Learning Goals in writing by the end of the year. Attainment in other aspects of language, literacy and communication is average. Children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. They achieve above average standards in mathematical development. At the time of the last inspection, the school did not admit children into school before their fifth birthday; consequently, no judgements were made about this stage of learning. The school began to admit children under five in September 2001. Since that time, the school has made great strides in setting up and resourcing the Foundation Stage curriculum, which features appropriately as a main priority in the school development plan. Its principal shortcomings are lack of space indoors in the summer term, when the number of children doubles, and limited space and resources for outdoor learning.

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

56. Pupils achieve soundly in this area of learning as a result of satisfactory teaching. Children are interested and motivated to learn. They show confidence when trying out new activities and most maintain concentration well and sit quietly when listening to the teacher. Some younger children, who have only been in school for a few weeks, are still becoming used to the demands of school routines and find it hard to remain quiet when the teacher or other pupils are talking. Children form constructive relationships with each other and with adults, and they work well together as part of a group. Most dress and undress independently and take responsibility for their own personal hygiene.

57. The quality of teaching and learning is constrained by the limitations of the accommodation. When the part-time children attend each morning, there is not enough space for them to move around freely and develop independence by selecting activities and resources, with the result that most activities have to be tightly structured. The enclosed outdoor area is also too small to allow more than a few children to participate in activities such as sand and water play, which develop social skills and teach children to take turns and share resources. Nevertheless, teachers make the best use of the space available to encourage independent choice, albeit within certain limitations, and to provide opportunities for children to interact with each other and with adults. Adults provide children with activities that stimulate their interest and encourage them to concentrate and sit quietly when appropriate. There is particularly good support for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, which enables them to play a full part in class activities. Teachers make good use of stories, such as *Hansel and Gretel* as a starting point for discussing feelings and how to keep safe.

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

58. Overall, children achieve satisfactorily in this area of learning. They take turns in conversation and enjoy listening to stories, rhymes and the teacher's explanations. Children are able to communicate their ideas clearly and audibly for the most part, although a few still have immature speech and limited vocabulary. They use words and phrases with increasing clarity and can retell a story they have 'written' to an adult, turning the pages and explaining what is happening in the pictures they have drawn. Children hear and say initial and final sounds in some words, and some older children use their knowledge of sounds to make attempts at writing simple words and sentences. Younger children, who have only been in school for four weeks, draw pictures to represent a story, but few are able to attempt writing. Older children write their own names, holding a pencil effectively to form recognisable letters. They attempt to make up a story with a beginning, middle and end and retell the events from Edward Lear's *The Owl and the Pussycat* in the right sequence.

59. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, although there are some good features. Teachers provide many opportunities for children to communicate their thoughts, feelings and ideas to an adult and to each other. Speaking and listening activities are well planned and of high priority. Teachers demonstrate reading and writing skills frequently and encourage children to participate in and enjoy these activities. In a lesson for the youngest children, the teacher read *Little Teddy Left Behind* to the class and discussed it with them, explaining that the story had a beginning, a middle and an end. She then showed them how to make their own bear book. Children visited the library to look for non-fiction books about transport and story books about bears. There was a good emphasis on developing children's knowledge of sounds in a lesson where they played a phonics game, sorting objects according to their initial sound. All adults engage children in conversation throughout the day, developing their spoken language and extending their vocabulary. There are, however, insufficient opportunities for children to use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences through play. Although each class has a role play area, these are not used as fully as is generally the case in Reception classes, with opportunities for adults to participate in the play and develop children's language still further.

### **Mathematical development**

60. Children's achievement is good in this area of learning as a result of good teaching. They count accurately up to ten objects, and in many cases beyond. Some children count reliably beyond 20. They recognise, write and say the names of numerals, and older children recognise coins up to 20p. The more able pupils use a number line to add two numbers together totalling up to ten, and work out one more or one less than a number between one and ten. Children recognise and recreate simple patterns, often combined with work in creative development where they use printing blocks and different coloured paint to make repeating patterns. Children join in with number rhymes and songs, and use language such as 'bigger' and 'smaller', 'more' and 'less' when comparing objects. They recognise shapes and use words such as 'circle', 'triangle' and 'square' correctly. Children follow directions to place objects under, behind or in front of other objects.

61. Mathematical activities are varied and interesting and are very carefully planned to relate to the children's everyday experiences and environment. The youngest children learned about the number two in the context of the story of Noah's Ark. They played a 'Two by Two' matching game, lined up objects in twos and sang *The animals went in two by two*. All of the children took part in a survey of how they travelled to school. Each class counted how many children travelled by car, bicycle, bus or on foot, and helped to produce a graph of their findings. Children took turns to walk round the school's Maths Trail with an adult asking them questions along the way. They looked for shapes around the school buildings and grounds. "What shape is the octopus' mouth?", counted the cars in the car park and identified numerals on the registration plates. There are imaginative playground markings, which also help to develop mathematical skills, including snakes and ladders and a target.

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

62. Children attain sound standards in all aspects of this area of learning. They investigate objects and materials by using all of their senses. In one lesson, children explored smells and identified their likes and dislikes. They watch with wonder as butterflies emerge from a chrysalis and are able to explain that the butterflies started as caterpillars. Children investigate floating and sinking and begin to understand what makes this happen. They compare objects made of different materials and start to predict whether they will float or sink before testing them. Older children identify features such as the park and the post office on a large-scale local map and search for the road where they live. Younger children explore the map of an imaginary town called Pizzaville and identify features such as a bridge and a park. Older children look at pictures of old and new vehicles and identify the similarities and differences between them. Children use computers competently and control what happens on the screen with a mouse.

63. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall but has some good features. Activities are based on first-hand experience, which encourages children to explore, investigate and observe the world around them. For instance, pupils were recently taken on a walk to the local post office where they posted letters to themselves at home. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to investigate a wide range of objects and materials by using all of their senses. They encourage children to look for similarities, differences, patterns and change, as when children observed the life cycle of caterpillars. There are not enough opportunities for children to build and construct with a wide range of equipment, or to select tools and techniques for assembling and joining materials. The accommodation poses limitations on the range of activities, inside and outside, that are available for children to select from.

## **Physical development**

64. The older children, who were observed in a dance lesson, achieved average standards in their physical development. They moved with control and co-ordination and showed appropriate awareness of space, themselves and others as they moved around the hall representing the flight of a magic carpet. They handle pencils, crayons, printing blocks and small pieces of puzzles with appropriate dexterity. It was not possible to observe a physical development lesson for the youngest children as this only takes place once a week. The outside area for the Reception children is small and there is no equipment for climbing and clambering or wheeled toys. Add to this, the cramped conditions in the indoor area, and the overall provision for children's physical development is unsatisfactory. There are not enough opportunities for children to develop a range of skills and use a variety of equipment during the course of each day. Children are generally given sufficient practice in learning to hold and control pencils and paintbrushes, to mould with dough and use rolling pins and cutters. They glue, stick cut things out and handle puzzles with increasing control.

65. Although the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory, for the reasons given above, the lesson observed during the inspection was satisfactory. The teacher began by showing children a video recording of *Aladdin* and discussed with them how the magic carpet moved. Children were encouraged to create sequences of movements to represent a magic carpet in flight, which they did, expressing their ideas with confidence, imagination and safety. However, the activity was firmly directed by the teacher, and did not allow children enough freedom to move in ways of their own choosing.

## **Creative development**

66. Children achieve soundly in this area of learning and the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In painting, printing and pattern making, children explore colour and shape, making good links with their mathematical and physical development. They sing simple songs from memory and enjoy listening and responding to music. Children enjoy experimenting with percussion instruments and try to follow a rhythm. They use their imagination to create pictures to illustrate stories they have heard, such as *Aladdin*, and experiment with finger painting and rollerball painting. Children use modelling materials to create imaginary objects and make up stories using finger puppets. They become engaged in a story and empathise with the characters.

67. Teachers provide children with a satisfactory range of experiences to promote their creative development. There is a strong emphasis on story telling and encouraging children to use their imagination. Opportunities to express themselves through dance are well planned and linked effectively with other areas of learning, and songs are also chosen because of their relevance to topics being covered at the time. For example, children sang songs about travelling as part of their topic on journeys. Teachers provide children with opportunities to listen to and appreciate music from around the world, and children have benefited from a visiting art historian who showed them slides of famous works of art, including Egyptian sculptures and paintings from England and France, all on the theme of animals. There are not enough opportunities for children to use their imagination in role-play, and this tends to be planned by the teacher rather than spontaneous. Role-play areas are limited by space and not well-equipped.

## **ENGLISH**

68. Overall, standards in English are above average in Year 2. Standards in speaking and listening are above average, those in reading are well above average, and standards in writing are average. These judgements are the same as those made by the 1997 inspection in speaking and listening and writing, and higher in reading. Standards are higher in reading because the school has introduced focused teaching of reading comprehension skills, which is helping pupils to reach higher levels of attainment. The inspection's judgements also show an improvement on the school's national test results in 2001 in both reading and writing. In addition to the improvements in teaching reading, the school is currently focusing on writing and has allocated a whole lesson each week to developing pupils' skills and their ability to write in a variety of forms and genres. The school employs an additional teacher so that pupils can be taught in smaller groups on the basis of their attainment. This is helping to raise the standards achieved by all pupils in this aspect of English. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. However, the pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their written work are often untidy. This was judged to be good by the previous inspection. There are no significant variations in attainment between boys and girls.

69. Pupils demonstrate good speaking and listening skills in most lessons. For example, in a Year 2 religious education lesson, pupils listened intently to a story told by the teacher and to pupils who were showing artefacts and explaining aspects of their faith to the class. In a Year 2 writing lesson, pupils communicated their ideas with confidence as they suggested interesting words to expand sentences. Pupils listen attentively to the teachers' explanations and to stories, and this helps them to have a good understanding of what is expected of them and to retain information and use it at a later date. Pupils have many opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills across the curriculum, and these are further enhanced by opportunities to participate in drama productions and presentations to parents and friends of the school.

70. Standards in reading are high because almost all pupils are achieving Level 2 and more than two in five reach Level 3. Most pupils read simple passages of text accurately and show understanding of what they have read. They express opinions about the main events, information and characters in stories, poems and non-fiction writing. When reading unfamiliar words, pupils sometimes use their knowledge of sounds to work them out, or find clues in the illustrations to help them. They work out some words from the context of the passage or use their understanding of grammar to establish meaning. More able pupils read a variety of texts fluently and with appropriate expression. They are beginning to use inference and deduction, as when more able Year 2 pupils read a poem about the sea. The pupils quoted phrases from the poem in reply to the teacher's questions, "What season do you think it is?" and "What does the first verse tell us about the weather?" Pupils are able to use an index and contents page to locate information and have well developed library skills.

71. Standards in writing are lower than those in reading because fewer pupils reach both Level 2 and Level 3. Pupils write in a variety of forms and for different purposes, including informal letters, an account of a visit, retelling familiar stories and playscripts. Average attaining pupils combine ideas into a sequence of sentences, which are sometimes punctuated with capital letters and full stops. Simple words are spelt correctly. Less able pupils communicate their ideas through simple words and phrases, but these often run on without punctuation, and spelling is weak. The more able pupils write at length, using a variety of sentence structures and increasingly adventurous language. Their writing is often imaginative, and they use punctuation correctly. Pupils begin to use more complex sentences such as "It was nearly midnight before anyone heard her call" and more evocative language: "The train came by like a blur down the slope". A general weakness throughout the school is the quality of pupils' handwriting, which sometimes detracts from what is otherwise good work.

72. In all classes, standards in literacy are good. The development of literacy skills across the curriculum is variable. It is generally better in reading than in writing, as the texts chosen for pupils to read and evaluate are often related to history, geography or science. There is insufficient development of writing through other subjects, such as science, history and geography, although some good examples were seen in religious education. There was a good link with design and technology when pupils wrote instructions for making a puppet.

73. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2. This was evident both from the lessons observed and the analysis of pupils' work that has been completed throughout the year. Teaching clearly focuses on appropriate skills and knowledge, and work is well planned to meet the needs of pupils at differing levels of attainment. In Year 2, a generous amount of time is devoted to reading comprehension and writing, in addition to structured work on phonics, spelling, grammar and punctuation. Handwriting is taught in separate sessions, but the skills learned are not transferred into pupils' other work, much of which is untidy. Although pupils achieve sound standards when practising handwriting, their books show a lack of consistency and writing that is often ill-formed, uneven in size and rarely joined. In the writing lessons observed, pupils were not reminded about the quality of their writing, and teachers set no expectations about the standard of presentation pupils should aim for. In all other respects, teachers have high expectations of all pupils and set suitably challenging work for them. Teachers choose interesting texts, which hold pupils' attention and they give good consideration to selecting texts that interest both girls and boys. Ongoing assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is very good and helps teachers to plan work that matches pupils' particular needs.

74. The use of additional teachers to form smaller teaching groups for writing and reading comprehension in Year 2 is proving to be very effective. In a good writing lesson, the teacher who had the most able group extended their ability to write complex sentences using a range of adjectives and adverbs. The lesson was also long enough for pupils to develop their writing at length and to spend sufficient time on thinking through their ideas. Similarly, in a very good reading comprehension lesson



for a small group of able pupils, the teacher provided a high level of challenge as pupils read and discussed a poem. The teacher's skilful questioning developed pupils' inferential and deductive skills and directed them to the text to search for words and phrases to substantiate their views. The provision for more able pupils has improved since the last inspection, when there was insufficient challenge for them to make adequate progress. Pupils with special educational needs were supported well in a small group reading session, where activities were well matched to their level of attainment. This helped them to make good progress in improving their reading skills.

75. A very good literacy lesson in Year 1 incorporated many of the best features of teaching in English. In a very lively introduction, the teacher consolidated pupils' knowledge and recognition of key words using flashcards of varying difficulty, which were aimed at different groups of pupils. There was very effective reinforcement of how to spell some irregular words, followed by very good teaching of reading strategies as pupils shared a 'big book'. The teacher's skilful substitution of incorrect words in the text not only caused the pupils great amusement but also prompted them to use pictorial clues and the context of the story to point out the 'errors'. There was also very good teaching of the skills needed to rearrange jumbled up sentences. The teacher asked, "What are the two main clues we look for?" and pupils were able to explain that the word with a capital letter began the sentence whilst a full stop ended it. The lesson moved at a very brisk pace which kept the pupils on their toes throughout and they responded very well to the challenge. Thanks to the teacher's very clear explanations, the pupils knew exactly what was expected of them and were able to settle quickly to their group tasks, which varied in complexity.

76. The deputy headteacher has been overseeing the subject since the co-ordinator left earlier in the year and is providing good leadership. She has maintained the focus on improving standards in reading and writing and works closely with the headteacher to analyse pupils' performance in tests and identify priorities for improvement. Raising standards in writing is the main focus of the school development plan and an agreed performance objective for all teachers. Assessment procedures are very thorough and provide teachers with accurate information, which they use effectively to ensure that work is matched to pupils' levels of attainment. Teachers also set individual targets for pupils to achieve based on this information. There is comprehensive monitoring of pupils' work and regular observations of all teachers, which give a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The subject is well resourced with a varied range of books, including 'big books', group texts and class library books. The school library is bright and welcoming and its good supply of books is displayed attractively. Each class has a timetabled session to use the library which makes an effective contribution to developing pupils' research skills. Pupils make appropriate use of information and communication technology to support their learning. The subject is further enhanced by visiting theatre groups, a puppeteer and a poet, and opportunities to take part in drama productions. It also makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as pupils respond to a wide variety of literature from around the world, explore feelings and moral dilemmas and work together in pairs and groups to share ideas.

## **MATHEMATICS**

77. Pupils in Year 2 attain well above average standards in numeracy and all other areas of the mathematics curriculum. This finding is an improvement on the previous inspection when standards were above average. It shows that the well above average standards in the national end of key stage tests in 2001 have been maintained. Standards have improved since the previous inspection because of the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The trend over the last five years has fluctuated from 1997 to 2001 but has always been above the national average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. There are no significant variations in attainment between girls and boys.

78. The quality of teaching and learning is good. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. All teachers plan their work according to the National Numeracy Strategy, which is well established, and lessons are well structured. Lessons begin with a brisk mental warm-up where pupils are keen to answer. When pupils are engaged in activities, they concentrate and work well. In Year 1, pupils know the days of the week, add numbers up to 50, sort and classify data and make graphs to show the results. They know the basic two and three-dimensional shapes and describe their properties. In the lessons observed, pupils used appropriate mathematical vocabulary and looked for patterns in number sequences. In one lesson, the teacher gave pupils the opportunity to use their knowledge of doubling to work out the cost of providing two lunchboxes for their teacher and her daughter. They extended their skills in handling money as they chose meals from the café menu and calculated bills. The role-play work was well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils with special educational needs were given good support and those capable of higher attainment were well challenged. They were informed of a price increase and had to quickly recalculate their bills.

79. The Year 2 teachers ensured that all pupils were attentive and all pupils made good progress in extending their understanding of directions. The teachers ensured that pupils understood the angles of turn and the specific movement instructions required to control a programmable toy. Previous work shows an appropriate level of attainment, with extension work for those capable of higher attainment. Pupils have a good understanding of place value, and of halves and quarters. They show good skills when doubling and halving, extend their knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes and tell the time using both digital and analogue clocks. They collect a variety of data and represent this in the form of charts and graphs. There is good evidence of problem solving and opportunities for pupils to explain their workings. In a good link with science, pupils have investigated similarities and differences by seeking the correlation between height and foot size. They measured accurately in centimetres and used the resulting data to produce graphs both by hand and using the computer.

80. Previous work shows good teaching and learning across the range of the curriculum. Teachers understand the National Numeracy Strategy and they apply it effectively. Across the school, teachers show good management of the whole class and groups, and work is matched to pupils' needs. Pupils are confident in explaining their mathematical reasoning and are keen to answer mental mathematics questions. Teachers explain clearly what pupils are going to learn and pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils' books contain a good amount of work. Numeracy is appropriately used across the curriculum. Pupils measure accurately in design and technology, and carry out basic map work in geography. They work with simple time lines in history, and make accurate measurements in science.

81. The co-ordinator clearly understands what is required to improve standards and manages and monitors the subject well. Assessments of pupils' attainment and analysis of other assessment data are now well used to identify areas for development. There has been good training for teachers who feel confident and skilled in teaching the subject and high standards are being maintained. Resources are good. Pupils make appropriate use of information and communication technology to support their learning.

## **SCIENCE**

82. During the inspection, it was only possible to see two lessons of science. Judgements are based on these lessons, and on the analysis of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and teachers and on the school's planning and records. The findings of the inspection are that standards are average in Year 2 although significant numbers of pupils are reaching above average levels. These findings are

similar to the school's results in the most recent national end of key stage assessments. However, they are not as high as the findings of the school's last OFSTED inspection when standards were judged to be high. The difference is because investigative work in science was judged to be good in 1997 whereas it is now satisfactory. This is because the school now spends approximately half the time it did teaching science in 1997 due to its concentration on the teaching of literacy and numeracy. It is also because significant changes of staff have made progress in this aspect of the subject uneven. The school is well aware of this issue and has introduced appropriate steps to secure improvement. Pupils of all abilities achieve satisfactorily although work is not always well suited to the needs of pupils with special educational needs who sometimes fail to finish the task they have been set. No differences in the achievement of boys and girls were seen during the inspection.

83. In Year 2, pupils have undertaken suitable investigative work in all aspects of the subject, for example, finding out what seeds need to grow well. However, in some cases, the work is largely demonstration by the teacher and pupils do not actually benefit from carrying out the work themselves. The pupils have located and identified plants and animals found in the school grounds. The school is developing an environmental area although, currently, this makes a limited contribution to science. The pupils understand how changes in temperature affect some materials and make and describe electrical circuits.

84. Taking account of all of the evidence, particularly the analysis of the pupils' work, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, although the lessons observed during the inspection were good. This judgement is similar to that made by the school's last OFSTED inspection which found it to be always satisfactory and, sometimes, good. A good Year 2 lesson investigating the question "Does the tallest person run the fastest?" illustrated the quality of the teaching and learning actually observed during the inspection. The teacher's good control and relaxed manner resulted in the pupils behaving well and taking part in the lesson enthusiastically. The lesson built well on the pupils' previous understanding and extended their concept of the idea of a fair test with a discussion of why they all had to be timed running over the same distance. The pupils worked well with their peers and adults while timing runs, which made a good contribution to their social development, as did the full inclusion in the activity of a pupil with impaired hearing. The collation of results indicated that the tallest had not generally run the fastest in the test. The class then considered how the shortest had performed and found that these pupils had generally run fastest. However, in neither instance were the results considered firm enough to draw a general conclusion and pupils offered early reasons about why the results had been as they were. The pupils made good progress in this lesson in which the only significant weakness was some over direction and control of the activities by the teacher at the expense of the pupils' independent development, particularly the more able.

85. The analysis of pupils' work shows that the pupils' literacy skills are not fully developed in science as the quantity and variety of the work they produce are too limited. It also indicates that the school correctly plans further development of the use of information and communication technology in science, for example, the provision of software to increase the application of the pupils' numeracy skills in the subject. Furthermore, marking of pupils' work is generally correction and ticks rather than developmental and work is not always well matched to the needs of pupils with special educational needs and, in investigative science, the needs of more able pupils. Lack of challenge for more able pupils was also noted by the school's last inspection.

86. The subject is well managed by a well-established and well-qualified co-ordinator and has made a satisfactory improvement since the school's last inspection. The co-ordinator is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject, including the reasons why standards are not as high as they were in 1997, and has set in place suitable strategies to address these issues. She has also monitored and observed teaching – which had not happened at the time of the school's last inspection

– to ensure that the strategies are having the required effect. Assessment procedures have also been improved and the scheme of work has been revised. Resources satisfactorily support the pupils' learning in science.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

87. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection but evidence based on these lessons and sampling of pupils' previous work, shows that pupils reach above average standards in Year 2 and make good progress in developing their skills through the school. This shows that the good standards reported at the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and make good progress along with their peers.

88. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. This is similar to the findings at the previous inspection. In the Year 2 lessons, the teachers had planned well to introduce pupils to a range of techniques and materials for block printing. Both teachers made good use of other adults to work with groups and one assistant shared her own college work on printing with the pupils. All pupils concentrated well and took great care in producing their blocks. They developed ideas as they progressed and described what they felt was successful and why. They increased their understanding as the teachers and other adults skilfully encouraged them to explore pattern and shape and employ a variety of materials and processes. Previous work indicates above average standards. In Year 1 pupils have produced attractive work using three-dimensional pictures to demonstrate the effectiveness of camouflage. This is particularly evident in "Where is Elmer?" which illustrates the technique well. Pupils have been well taught to mix paints and they have successfully experimented with colour by changing shades. In Year 2, portraits of queens show that pupils have been introduced to a range of portrait techniques and have been given opportunities to look at the work of portrait painters. The quality of art on display around the school inspires pupils and provides an attractive environment.

89. Leadership in this subject is sound. The co-ordinator examines planning and displays but has had no opportunity to monitor teaching or work alongside colleagues. There is good use of art and design to support other subjects, particularly history, where pupils produced some very effective masks to support their study of the Egyptians. Art contributes well to pupils' overall personal, social and cultural development. Pupils have experience of work from a range of cultures, including African, aboriginal, Egyptian and Chinese. Pupils have recently looked at the work of Paul Klee and the natural sculptures of Andy Galsworthy. Information and communication technology is appropriately used for art packages and its use for research on the Internet is being developed. Displays are attractive but some miss the opportunity to identify techniques, explain how work was produced or elicit a response from the viewer.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

90. During the course of the inspection, it was only possible to observe one lesson. Evidence gained from this lesson, an analysis of pupils' previous work in designing and making, teachers' plans and discussions with teachers and pupils are sufficient to show that pupils in Year 2 attain above average standards. This is the same judgement as that made by the previous inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in developing their skills and understanding within the design and make process. Achievement is good and there are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls.

91. The previous inspection did not judge teaching and learning. Indications are that they are now good. In the Year 1 lesson seen, the quality of teaching and learning was good. The teacher planned a lesson to support pupils' work on healthy eating. They designed and made a fruit cocktail and were

excited by the task. They talked about their drinks and their evaluation clearly showed whether they liked them or not and why. They had previously looked at commercial packaging and had designed and made their own. They showed the product on the front and on the sides they showed the sell by date and a list of ingredients.

92. Previous work shows that Year 2 pupils understand that the making process begins with a plan. They use pictures to develop and communicate their designs. They select from a range of materials, tools and techniques and learn to join various materials. The good range of puppets shows that pupils have been given good opportunities to use a variety of techniques. Pupils have designed string puppets based on characters from well-known fairy tales. Their drawings are clearly labelled and identify the materials to be used. Other puppets, such as spoon puppets and those using a concertina construction, show careful making with good attention to detail and finish. As part of their work on the Golden Jubilee, pupils have looked at photographs of tiaras and have used their research to design and make their own. Teachers provided a good challenge for pupils to design and make a bag that is strong enough and big enough to carry Baa Baa Black Sheep's three balls of wool. The bags were well made and were tested for size and strength. Pupils were then required to evaluate them looking at the materials used and whether they met the challenge.

93. The new co-ordinator manages the subject efficiently. However, her role in monitoring the standards achieved by the pupils and the quality of teaching and learning in the subject is not fully developed. The quantity and range of resources are good and fully support the new guidelines. The school has introduced national guidelines, which ensure that skills are now systematically built on and assessment arrangements are now in place to record pupils' skills at the end of each unit. There is appropriate development of pupils' literacy skills when they write out instructions or describe how to make something. Pupils' numeracy skills are developed when they are encouraged to measure accurately but there is little use of information and communication technology in the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

94. During the inspection, it was only possible to observe one lesson of geography, although a literacy lesson with very effective links with the subject was also seen. Judgements are based on these lessons, and on the analysis of pupils' work throughout the school, discussions with pupils and teachers and on the school's planning and records. The evidence indicates that standards are average in Year 2. This is lower than the judgement made when the school was inspected in 1997 as standards were then found to be good. The difference is explained by the school's concentration on the development of literacy and numeracy since it was last inspected and because the pupils' literacy skills are not fully developed and applied in the subject. All pupils achieve satisfactorily in geography and there are no differences in the achievement of boys and girls.

95. In Year 2, pupils show good map work skills including an understanding of keys and simple grid references. They are aware of the services available in their local area and how it has altered. For example, their study of the changes to Woodley Airport enhances their moral and social development through a consideration of environmental issues. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support the pupils' work in geography. For example, they have programmed robotic toys to follow a particular route in support of their map work and have used the Internet to gain information about Australia. However, few pupils show evidence of above average attainment such as comparing, contrasting and explaining differences in the human and physical geography of different locations.

96. The analysis of pupils' work indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, although good teaching and learning were seen in the lessons actually observed during the

inspection, and there is some variation between different classes. The strengths of the teaching and learning were exemplified in a literacy lesson linked to map work. The lesson began with the pupils considering a picture map of an island. The teacher questioned the pupils well and they were able to define an island and to recognise some of the features such as a castle and a church. As the lesson progressed, the teacher made sure that the pupils knew the importance and use of grid references. Group work was set at three levels suitable to the ability of the pupils involved, including good provision for a pupil with a statement of special educational need who was well supported by the teaching assistant. The teacher worked well with the more able group and ensured that they could use the contents page and index of an atlas effectively to find information. The only significant weakness in this lesson was a degree of over direction of the group work by the teacher. For example, in order to answer the questions that they were set, pupils of average ability were required to copy the correct answer from a choice of two possibilities. This did not challenge them sufficiently or make enough use of their literacy skills.

97. The school's 1997 inspection judged the quality of teaching to be good. The difference is explained because the analysis of work in Years 1 and 2 showed suitable amounts of appropriately presented work of an average level of attainment. This indicated satisfactory expectations and knowledge of the subject by the teachers and a similar response from the pupils. The work produced by more able pupils is neat and ample although it does not always extend them fully. However, that of average and less able pupils is varied. In most instances, the work the pupils are given is the same whatever their ability and less able pupils sometimes fail to complete it, produce enough work or make satisfactory progress. Marking of pupils' work is largely correction or praise rather than helping them to improve.

98. The subject is satisfactorily managed by a recently designated co-ordinator and has made a sound improvement since the school was last inspected, given the school's concentration on the development of literacy and numeracy. The scheme of work has been revised well, a suitable policy is in place and good use is made of information and communication technology. The co-ordinator collects and monitors the teachers' planning and the short term action plan includes provision for monitoring to be extended to an analysis of the pupils' work. Assessment procedures and learning resources in geography are satisfactory.

## **HISTORY**

99. Standards in history are average by the end of Year 2. This judgement takes into account the lessons observed, an analysis of pupils' work and displays, scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. This judgement is lower than the previous inspection, when attainment was judged "good" although progress was sound as it is now. Standards are lower because pupils' literacy skills are not fully developed and applied in the subject. There are no significant variations in attainment between girls and boys.

100. In the lessons seen and from a scrutiny of pupils' previous work, the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers have given pupils opportunities to use photographs, pictures, television programmes, objects and artefacts to find out about the past. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher gave pupils pictures of houses and they were able to identify features that made them different. They then placed pictures of homes from the past and sequenced them on a simple time line. In Year 2, pupils watched a video to learn about the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II as part of their work on the Golden Jubilee. In another class, they made a pamphlet about different features of the Queen's life to share with Year 1 pupils.

101. Pupils' previous work shows average attainment in Year 2 in their study of Ancient Egypt. They looked at pictures of items found in the tombs and teachers had clearly explained that the Egyptians believed in the "after life". Pupils show a sound understanding and factual knowledge of the Egyptians and begin to perceive why people in the past behaved as they did. They show an increasing understanding of chronology by recognising that periods in the past have changes and they use relevant terms and dates. They are beginning to make use of information and communication technology to carry out research on their topics but little use is made of word processing to present their work. The analysis of pupils' work shows that the pupils' literacy skills are not fully developed in history as the quantity and variety of the work they produce are too limited.

102. The school has adapted national guidelines as a scheme of work to fit into its curricular plan. The recently appointed co-ordinator provides sound leadership in the subject. She examines colleagues' planning but has not yet had opportunities to observe teaching in the subject. Literacy skills are not well developed, particularly for extended writing for older and more able pupils. Numeracy skills are evident in time lines. Displays provide stimulating focal points, for example in the portraits of queens and Egyptian masks. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and cultural development as they learn about their cultural heritage and talk about the morality of actions carried out in the past.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

103. Standards in Year 2 are average and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily. There are no differences in the achievement of boys and girls. These judgements are similar to those made by the school's 1997 inspection. Pupils have basic word processing and keyboard skills and use a mouse controller well. For example, they can change the font and case of letters, save their work with help and know the function of keys such as 'delete'. They use a mouse to make repeating patterns which they are able to colour and undo if they make a mistake. The pupils are able to program a robotic toy to move in the way they wish it to. They are also able to drag directional arrows to make a route between given points in a map work program. Sound cross-curricular use of information and communication technology was seen, for example, in mathematics, geography, English, art and history and it makes a good contribution to the pupils' cultural development. However, few pupils reach above average levels. For example, their ability to exchange and present information in varied forms such as E-mail is limited.

104. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall but examples of good teaching were seen. The satisfactory nature of the teaching and learning was illustrated in a Year 1 lesson about sounds carrying information. The planning for the lesson was satisfactory and included a simplified task for pupils with special educational needs and provision for the teaching assistant to support these pupils. However, there was no specific provision for more able pupils. The pace of the lesson was steady and pupils' social development was enhanced as some were asked to distribute materials to the rest of the class. The pupils were interested in listening to the sounds the teacher played on a tape recorder and the noise of a playground drew an excited "children" from some of them. They identified the sounds they heard by writing or drawing on a whiteboard and, in a discussion at the end of the lesson, felt that they understood that sounds carried information – the lesson's objective. This was a satisfactory lesson in which pupils made adequate progress although the more able were insufficiently challenged and the objective was narrow.

105. The strengths of the teaching were exemplified in a good Year 2 lesson using information and communication technology skills to draw a specific route. This lesson was very well planned. The teacher's lively manner captured the pupils' interest and ensured that they were attentive and behaved well. Her good knowledge of the subject and clear explanation made sure that the pupils understood

the task and that they were able to set to work readily. Their geography and mathematics skills were developed along with their understanding of information and communication technology. The pupils' social skills were developed as they worked together in pairs on a computer to agree and set up the route they had been asked to complete with good support from the teacher. Pupils, who were well supported by the teaching assistant, were undertaking a related task on a map and also made good progress.

106. The subject is very well managed by the headteacher and a knowledgeable and enthusiastic "shadow" co-ordinator who will take full responsibility for it in the next academic year. There has been a good improvement in the school's provision of information and communication technology since it was last inspected. The school has a good policy for the subject, including responsible use of the Internet, and a good, progressive scheme of work. The subject is well monitored. For example, monitoring has shown that although pupils can operate programs once the computer is running, they were less sure about how to start the computer. This has been addressed. The 1997 inspection, identified weaknesses in the monitoring of the subject. All teachers have received appropriate training and the school has ensured that its teaching assistants are well trained. Resources have been improved and the school now has an information and communication technology suite, an above average ratio of computers to pupils, a digital camera and a website which is close to completion. A very useful self-assessment sheet for pupils is being developed and assessments are also made against the objectives of lessons. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils with special educational needs.

## MUSIC

107. Pupils in Year 2 attain average standards in music. This is the same judgement as that made by the previous inspection. During this inspection, it was not possible to observe much singing, which both parents and staff report to be of a good standard. Parents were particularly impressed by the pupils' Victorian Music Hall performance at Christmas 2001, in which some sang solos and all participated with enthusiasm and enjoyment. In the lessons seen and one assembly, pupils showed interest and enjoyment in making music. They sang a song from memory with a sound awareness of pitch and rhythm, and some played both tuned and untuned percussion instruments to create a fanfare. Others used symbols to represent sounds as they planned a short piece of music to tell the story of a journey. Pupils' achievement in music is satisfactory, including pupils with special educational needs. There are no variations in attainment between boys and girls.

108. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall, with examples of good teaching in both Year 1 and Year 2. Four lessons were observed, two of which were satisfactory and two good. Differences in quality are mostly linked to individual teachers' expertise in the subject and confidence in teaching it. In a good Year 2 lesson, there were effective links with the pupils' work on the forthcoming Golden Jubilee, as they watched a video of the Queen's Coronation and listened to and discussed a fanfare. Through skilful questioning, the teacher elicited from the pupils what they had noticed about the fanfare: "It was loud" and "They kept playing the same thing over and over". The teacher made helpful comparisons with a lullaby that the pupils had heard earlier and used appropriate musical terms to develop pupils' understanding, such as "short, sharp, staccato sounds". This introduction gave pupils a very clear idea about how to compose a fanfare and what it should consist of, which they then did with successful outcomes for most groups. The lesson made a very good contribution to pupils' social development as each group chose a leader to conduct the music and worked collaboratively to compose and perform a piece of music. It also enhanced pupils' cultural development as they learned about the importance of fanfares in ceremony and increased their knowledge of their own heritage.



109. In a satisfactory lesson in Year 2, the same composing topic was approached differently, using a story called *Jessie's Journey* as a starting point. Good questioning focused pupils' attention on the sounds they might hear during a journey and the teacher demonstrated how to record these as symbols, which pupils would later use when playing their compositions. However, the lesson was over directed by the teacher, and there was too little opportunity for pupils to explore and experiment with sounds.

110. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and it is appropriately resourced. The co-ordinator is experienced and confident in teaching the subject, but she has little opportunity to share her expertise with those who are less confident. There has been no opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school as other subjects have taken precedence over the past few years. Although teachers in each year group plan work together, there is still a considerable degree of freedom about how to interpret and implement the planning, which leads to inconsistencies between classes. The open-plan accommodation poses some problems for teachers when pupils are exploring instruments and composing as sound travels and affects other lessons. In addition to regular music lessons, pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder and visiting specialists offer tuition in guitar and cello. Pupils' cultural development is enhanced by a wide range of visiting musicians and performers, and all participate in the school's own performances to parents and friends of the school. Music also makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development, as they listen and respond to different types of music in assembly. There are no formal assessment procedures in music. The use of information and communication technology in music is underdeveloped.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

111. Based on the evidence of the three lessons seen during the inspection, pupils reach average standards in dance in Year 2 and in dance and games in Year 1. This represents satisfactory achievement. These judgements are the same as those made by the school's last inspection. In dance, the pupils showed good use of imagination when moving to illustrate images of Mexico such as the cactus and the snake. They performed with energy and enthusiasm but the quality of their movements often lacked refinement and showed insufficient awareness of the poise needed to present their performance to the best advantage. The pupils showed average accuracy and skill in throwing and dribbling around objects and a good awareness of the effects of exercise on the body. However, their skill at evaluating and improving their own and others' performance is underdeveloped. There are no differences in the achievement of boys and girls. In the lessons observed, pupils with special educational needs took a full part in the lessons and made the same progress as other pupils.

112. The quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory overall although one good lesson was observed. This is the same judgement as that made by the school's last inspection. The satisfactory nature of the teaching and learning was illustrated by a Year 1 lesson about throwing and balancing. Links with numeracy through the development of mathematical language related to position and with personal, social and health education were also highlighted in the teacher's lesson planning. A prompt start was made so that no lesson time was wasted because the teacher had good control and had established very effective working routines. The energetic bean game warm up was enjoyed by all pupils and resulted in a useful discussion of the need to warm up and of the effects of exercise on the body. The purpose of the lesson was carefully explained to the pupils who fully understood what they had to do. They listened carefully and followed instructions, for example, when told to change direction or to make the shape of the first letter of their name. There was a tendency for the pupils to bunch and not to make the best use of the space available although the teacher constantly drew their attention to this issue. The pupils were given the responsibility of putting out the apparatus, which was good social development but slowed down the pace of the lesson. The group activities were not

sufficiently well structured to challenge fully pupils of all abilities and some lost concentration because of this. However, most made adequate progress in the lesson which concluded with an appropriate cool down activity.

113. The leadership of the subject and its improvement since the school's last inspection are satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has recently taken on responsibility for the subject and has already produced an appropriate action plan for its development. The most important area identified for improvement is curricular provision for dance and plans to observe and monitor lessons from September are included. Additionally, the need to replace some large equipment which is heavy for the pupils to move has also been noted and included in the school development plan. Assessment procedures and learning resources in the subject are satisfactory. The teaching of physical education is well supported by a good-sized hall and hard surfaced area. The school's grassed area is limited but, for some lessons, it has access to the field of the junior school which shares the same site. No use of information and communication technology was observed in physical education during the inspection.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

114. It was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection. Other evidence was obtained from a discussion with Year 2 pupils and a careful examination of the work of pupils in each class that was completed throughout the year. Standards in Year 2 are appropriate to the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, overall. More able pupils achieve well, particularly in the written aspects of the subject, but less able pupils and those with special educational needs are not always given work that matches their level of attainment. For example, some are given the same writing task as the more able pupils, which they are unable to complete. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls.

115. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall, as at the time of the previous inspection, although it was good in the lesson seen. Teachers' planning effectively covers the work outlined in the school's scheme and the agreed syllabus. It takes good account of religious festivals throughout the year, including Harvest, Christmas, Easter, Divali, Eid-ul-Fitr and Hanukkah, and makes a good contribution to pupils' awareness of the cultural diversity of British society. Pupils are taught relevant Bible stories, such as Noah, the Prodigal Son, Jonah and the Whale, and the Jews flight from Egypt, which they are able to retell with varying degrees of detail. In a discussion with a group of pupils, they were able to talk in detail about Moses and the journey out of Egypt, and could remember the "pillar of fire by night and the pillar of cloud by day" which guided the Jews. They knew the reason for the journey.. "Pharaoh was going to kill them"... and that "God opened the sea to let them through". Pupils had recently visited St John's Church and could describe some of the differences between it and the Baptist Church: "St John's is in the form of a cross and the Baptist Church isn't".

116. An analysis of pupils' work shows that the main shortcoming in the teaching is the provision of suitable work for less able pupils and those with special educational needs, whose literacy skills limit their ability to write about what they have learned. There were few examples of pupils being given an alternative task and several attempts at recording what had been learned that were very short, unfinished and of little value to the pupil. In the lesson observed in Year 2, which was good, appropriate work was planned for all pupils. The main objective of the lesson was for pupils to learn the Islamic story of the prophet Mohammed's escape to Madinah, which the teacher recounted to them as an introduction. Skilful questioning checked and reinforced pupils' understanding: "Why did some people not want to hear Mohammed?" and "How did Allah protect them?" This part of the lesson also developed pupils' speaking and listening skills well. Two pupils had been asked to bring in

artefacts from home and to show them to the class and explain their significance, which made a very effective contribution to the lesson. This also developed pupils' spiritual awareness very well as they marvelled at the beautiful prayer mats and listened to the pupils talking about other aspects of their faith. The subsequent planned activities took good account of pupils' previous attainment, especially those with special educational needs, who were not expected to write unaided or attempt a task too difficult for them.

117. The leadership and management of the subject are good and there is a satisfactory range of resources to support teaching and learning. The scheme of work takes good account of the locally agreed syllabus and national guidelines in the subject. Religious education has an appropriately high profile in the school, and is supported by good links with local churches. Pupils from all faiths represented in the school are encouraged to share their experiences and beliefs with others, and sometimes parents come into school to talk to the pupils about different aspects of their own faith. Although assessment procedures are not in place, these are being devised using national guidelines. There is insufficient use of information and communication technology in the subject, although other cross-curricular links are good. For example, work on buildings in geography is linked with visits to local churches and finding out about a mosque, while a topic on journeys includes exploration of biblical journeys and those made by key characters from other faith stories.