

INSPECTION REPORT

CHANDAG INFANT SCHOOL

Keynsham

LEA area: Bath and North East Somerset

Unique reference number: 109079

Headteacher: Mrs J Toy

Reporting inspector: Mr C Parker
11897

Dates of inspection: 25th –28th June 2001

Inspection number: 197708

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chandag Road Keynsham Bristol
Postcode:	BS31 1PQ
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor L Sell
Date of previous inspection:	29 th September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1189 7	C Parker	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Equal opportunities	How high are standards? (the school's results and pupils' achievements) How well are pupils taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1408 3	A B Anderson	Lay inspector		How high are standards? (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?
1838 7	M Powell	Team inspector	English Art and design Music Religious education The Foundation Stage Curriculum	
4262	A Taylor	Team inspector	Mathematics History Geography Physical education Special educational needs	

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Inspection Quality Division
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PART A:

SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Chandag Infant School is smaller than average, having 170 pupils on roll aged between four and seven years of age. They are taught in six classes and there are more boys than girls in all year groups. All of the pupils speak English as their first language, and almost all are of white heritage. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is very small and well below the national average. Approximately seven per cent of the pupils are on the special educational needs register, which is again below the national average. There are no pupils with statements of special educational need. The children's attainment on entry is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is improving and recovering well from a period of uncertainty. The headteacher is leading the school effectively with the support of the teachers, parents and governors. Standards are now above average in the core subjects and the teaching is generally good. The headteacher is fully aware of the further improvements that are needed. The school is well managed and provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The results of the national tests have recovered this year and are now above average in writing and mathematics and well above average in reading.
- Standards in science and religious education are above average.
- A large proportion of the teaching is good.
- The procedures for ensuring the pupils' care and welfare are very good.
- The school's partnerships with the parents are good. They are kept well informed.
- The new headteacher has made a clear assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is beginning to make improvements in key areas. The school is well managed.

What could be improved

- The teachers' planning does not set out clearly enough what the pupils are expected to learn in each lesson. As a result, the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in some lessons.
- Expectations of behaviour are not high enough, and the management of behaviour is inconsistent.
- The marking of the pupils' work is ineffective. It does not help them to improve.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since it was last inspected in September 1997. During that time, the school has gone through a difficult period of considerable uncertainty, due to a number of changes in leadership. Satisfactory progress has been made in regard to the issues raised in the last report, although the challenge posed to more able pupils remains an area where further work is needed.

Standards have dipped and recovered. The teaching is better than reported at the last inspection, although some of the inconsistencies reported then still remain.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
reading	B	B	D	E
writing	A	B	C	E
mathematics	B	B	D	E

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

The period since the school was last inspected has been a time of considerable uncertainty. During this interval, the school was able to maintain standards that were generally above average, but in 2000 a combination of this unfortunate situation and a cohort containing a higher than usual proportion of pupils on the special needs register, led to the results of national tests falling significantly. Standards in writing were broadly average, but in reading and mathematics they were below the national average. When compared to the results of schools where the pupils come from similar backgrounds standards were well below average. The new headteacher and the teachers have acted promptly to restore standards to previous levels, and the unconfirmed results for this year show standards to be well above average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. Further analysis reveals that all of the pupils achieved the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics and that a high proportion reached the higher level in reading, but the proportion reaching the higher level in writing and mathematics was lower than expected.

In 2000, the teachers assessed standards in science to be broadly average compared to those of other schools nationally. Further analysis of these assessments shows that fewer pupils achieved higher levels than the national average. This year the teachers' assessments show standards to be above average overall and the proportion attaining the higher level to have doubled. Across the other subjects of the curriculum standards are generally in line with expectations, but in many areas the achievements of the more able pupils are not as high as they should be. Standards in religious education and physical education are above average.

In many lessons, the pupils are learning effectively and achieving well, although this is not always the case.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the	The pupils' enthusiasm for school is good. Most of the pupils

school	have positive attitudes to their work. However, a significant minority of the children does not respond well in some lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Overall, standards of behaviour are satisfactory. Most of the pupils behave well, but in some lessons they continue to call out repeatedly even when they have been asked to raise their hands to answer a question.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils' personal development and their relationships in the school are satisfactory overall. Most pupils relate well to their teachers and also to one another. However, a few have little understanding of the impact of their actions on others.
Attendance	The attendance rate at the school is above the national average.

Most of the pupils listen to their teachers, willingly ask and answer questions, and freely offer their own ideas and opinions. Although they are sometimes slow to settle down in class, they can maintain good levels of concentration. However, there are occasions when pupils are inattentive, restless and lack concentration.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Good	N/A

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

The quality of the teaching seen during the inspection was good overall. It has contributed significantly to the recovery of standards following the considerable dip in the results of national tests and assessments in 2000. One sixth of the lessons seen, mainly in Year 1, were very good; just under a half were good and a further third were satisfactory. Two lessons (6 per cent) were unsatisfactory.

The teaching of the youngest children in the foundation stage is satisfactory overall, but it is much stronger in one class than the other. Nevertheless, the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is effective. In Key Stage 1, the teaching of English and mathematics is generally good. The teachers are developing the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills effectively in most lessons. There is clear evidence in the reading results this year that the teaching of basic skills has improved. However, there remains variation in the quality of the teaching because the planning for the more able pupils is not precise enough, expectations of behaviour are inconsistent and the teachers' marking of the pupils' work is not helping them to improve. Despite these areas of weaknesses in some of the teaching, most of the pupils are learning effectively

although the more able pupils should progress at a greater pace. In most lessons the pupils apply themselves well and concentrate on the tasks they are set.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides an appropriate curriculum for its pupils, which fully meets the requirements. The time allocated to the teaching of literacy and numeracy reflects the importance placed on the development of the basic skills in English and mathematics.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The pupils with special educational needs are well supported and appropriately challenged with tasks matched to their abilities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The pupils' personal development is satisfactorily fostered through the curriculum. Opportunities for spiritual development are offered through acts of collective worship that are well planned and promote Christian values. The pupils' cultural development is extended through art and music.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school supports its pupils very effectively and the teachers strive hard to promote their welfare. The standard of care is very good.

Relationships between the school and parents are very good. The school enjoys the active support of many parents. The majority of parents expressed a very high level of satisfaction with most aspects of its work.

The disposition of time across the curriculum is entirely appropriate. The foundation stage curriculum forms the basis for the teaching in the reception class and is well planned.

The formal assessment arrangements, notably in the core subjects, are good, although the day-to-day marking is not making an effective contribution to the process.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The new headteacher has brought stability and clear direction following a period of considerable difficulty and uncertainty. She is leading the school effectively through a programme of review and improvement. She has a clear view of where and how improvements can be made.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors support the school well. They are instrumental in shaping the direction that the school is taking and ensuring that it fulfils its statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher undertakes a comprehensive analysis of the school's performance which is used effectively to inform the governors and the teachers of any weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its available resources.

The school has sufficient teachers, and two additional learning support assistants have recently been appointed. The accommodation is satisfactory overall although storage space is limited. The caretaker keeps the school very clean. The school has a good range of resources that are used effectively by the teachers and are accessible to the pupils.

The governors seek to gain the best value from their spending decisions and the school administrator provides efficient and responsive support for the headteacher.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The good progress made by the pupils. • The good links with the teachers. • The commitment of the teachers. • The good behaviour. • The positive encouragement given to each child. • Good leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More detailed information about the curriculum. • Arrangements for helping in classrooms. • Activities outside of lessons.

The inspectors agree with many of the parents' comments although they found behaviour to be disappointing in some lessons where some pupils found it difficult to settle and listen attentively to their teachers.

The inspectors also found that the information provided for parents is of good quality overall. The headteacher is steadily making more detailed information available and attempting to meet reasonable requests. A small number of parents were concerned about the school's policy to deploy those wishing to help in classes other than their own child's. This is a policy adopted by many schools. The headteacher has explained the decision to parents and is supported by the governors. The inspectors found the arrangements for parents to help in classes to be entirely appropriate.

The range of extra curricular activities is satisfactory. There are after school football, gymnastics and French clubs attended by a good number of pupils. Other pupils attend an 'after school club' held in another local school. Whilst there are few clubs, the opportunities provided for five to seven year olds compare favourably with many primary schools where most often the extra curricular activities are provided only for seven to eleven year olds.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The period since the school was last inspected has been a time of considerable uncertainty because of the number of changes in leadership. During this interval, the school was generally able to maintain above average standards, but in 2000 a combination of this unfortunate situation and a cohort containing a higher than usual proportion of pupils on the special needs register, led to the results of national tests falling significantly. Standards in writing were broadly average, but in reading and mathematics they were below the national average. When compared to the results of schools where the pupils come from similar backgrounds standards were well below average. The new headteacher and the teachers have acted promptly to restore standards to previous levels and the unconfirmed results for this year show standards to be above average in writing and mathematics and well above average in reading. Further analysis reveals that all of the pupils achieved the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics and that a high proportion reached the higher level in reading. However, the proportion reaching the higher level in writing and mathematics was lower than expected.
2. In 2000, the teachers assessed standards in science to be broadly average compared to those of other schools nationally. Further analysis of these assessments shows that fewer pupils achieved higher levels than the national average. These results did not compare favourably with similar schools, but reflected the higher than usual number of pupils on the special educational needs register. This year the teachers' assessments show standards to be above average overall and the proportion attaining the higher level to have doubled.
3. Most of the children begin school with above average skills in personal and social development, literacy and numeracy. They make very sound progress in the reception classes. In literacy, they make good gains in developing speaking, reading and writing skills. This above average attainment on entry, together with the sound teaching they receive, ensures that they exceed the early learning goals identified for end of the foundation stage.
4. Standards in the current Year 2 are above average in English. Many pupils are confident speakers, but not all listen well. Reading standards are currently well above average and the pupils are developing good fluency and expressiveness. Although standards in writing are above average, few of the more able pupils are writing at the higher level by the end of Year 2. Similarly, in mathematics, standards are generally above average, but the rate of progress made by the more able pupils is inconsistent. These pupils are, quite simply, capable of better achievement.
5. Standards in religious education are above average and reflect the curriculum development work of the teachers over the last year. Across the curriculum

standards are generally in line with expectations, but in many areas the achievements of the more able pupils are not as high as they should be, often because the teachers do not plan clearly enough what this group of pupils is expected to learn. Conversely, the pupils with special educational needs make good progress, due to the good level of support provided for them, and the careful attention that is given to identifying appropriate work for them.

6. In many lessons, the pupils are learning effectively and achieving well. They concentrate on the tasks set for them and in many cases work well on their own and show a good degree of self-sufficiency. However, in other lessons some pupils find it difficult to settle down and listen to their teacher, to work with care and pride and to complete the task set for them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are satisfactory. Most parents believe that behaviour in the school is good and that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. In many lessons this is the case, but there are occasions where relatively low expectations and inconsistent behaviour and management results in a poor response that impedes the pupils' progress and attainment.
8. The pupils' enthusiasm for school is good. The majority of pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their work; they are interested in their lessons and are fully involved in the classroom activities. They willingly ask and answer questions, and freely offer their own ideas and opinions. Although they are sometimes slow to settle down in class, they can maintain good levels of concentration. However, a minority of children do not respond well in some lessons and during other formal occasions, for example, during assemblies some pupils show little respect and spoil the assembly for others. At times, these pupils are inattentive, restless and lack concentration.
9. Most children behave well but there is a small number who display challenging or aggressive behaviour. In some lessons children calling out, making inappropriate noises, and generally behaving in an unsettled manner interrupts the teaching and learning. Outside of lessons, most of the pupils move around the school site in a quiet and orderly manner and their overall behaviour at breaks and lunchtime is good. There were no exclusions either in the year prior to the inspection or in the current academic year to date.
10. Relationships within the school are satisfactory. Most pupils relate well to their teachers, to other adults with whom they come into contact, and also to one another. Boys and girls of all ages mix and play well together at breaks and lunchtime. However, a few pupils have little understanding of the impact of their actions on others. The pupils respond well to the opportunities for taking responsibility for their own work in the classrooms, and when not subject to direct teaching, they were observed working independently with a minimum of supervision. The pupils support local and national charities and are learning to be aware of others less fortunate than themselves.

11. The attendance rate at the school is above the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence is well below the national average. There is a low level of recorded lateness and many children arrive at school early.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of the teaching seen during the inspection was good overall. It has contributed significantly to the recovery of standards following the considerable dip in the results of national tests and assessments in 2000. However, there is still a good deal of variation from class to class and lesson to lesson in the quality of the teaching, similar to that described at the time of the last inspection. One sixth of the lessons, mainly in Year 1, were very good, just under a half were good and a further third were satisfactory. Two lessons (6 per cent) were unsatisfactory.
13. The teaching of the youngest children in the foundation stage is satisfactory overall although it is much stronger in one class than the other. Nevertheless, the teaching of the basic skills is effective and as a result the pupils make secure progress. In literacy lessons, they make good learning gains in developing their speaking, reading and writing skills. The teachers are patient and show a high level of concern for the welfare and well being of the children in their care. When they perceive that children are becoming either inattentive or over exuberant, they mostly impose a quiet control, which restores the calm and good order necessary for effective learning to take place. However, there are differences in the expectations of the pupils' behaviour and the firmness with which the teachers manage these situations.
14. The pupils with special educational needs are appropriately challenged with tasks matched to their abilities. Care is taken to identify the pupils' needs early in their school life, and individual education plans are developed with targets for improvement for each pupil. The pupils' needs are assessed regularly, and the teaching and learning plans are regularly updated. Additional teaching support is provided on a twice-weekly basis, and this has a beneficial effect on the pupils' learning. In a lesson specifically aimed at pupils with special needs, the quality of the teaching was good and led to their making good progress.
15. The teaching of English and mathematics is generally good. The teachers have used the national literacy strategy effectively to plan an appropriate range of activities. They ensure that writing is a regular feature of work in many curriculum areas, such as religious education, history and geography. The teachers provide a broad range of opportunities across the curriculum for writing for different purposes such as labelling, recording personal experiences, narrative and descriptive writing. In mathematics lessons, the pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and to devise their own methods of calculation and ways of tackling problems. These methods are regularly assessed for their efficiency, and the pupils are encouraged to be independent. The teachers' knowledge of mathematics and their understanding of the needs of the pupils are good. They are making increased use of information technology in the teaching of English and

mathematics. The teachers are developing the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills effectively in most lessons. There is clear evidence in the reading results this year that the teaching of basic skills has improved. However, there remains variation in the quality of the teaching.

16. The lack of consistency emanates from the different approaches to planning. There are instances, notably in Year 1, where the teachers are very precise about what it is that they expect the pupils to learn in each lesson. From this secure basis, the teachers develop interesting and carefully focussed lessons that often have the right amount of challenge for pupils of different ability. In other years, the plans are not as precise. In some cases the teachers are not clear about the purpose of the lesson, planning only an outline of the content rather than the precise objectives for different groups. In these circumstances, experienced teachers are sometimes, but by no means always, successful in establishing a degree of challenge for the more able. Often the lessons are not as demanding as they should be for this group of pupils. At the present time, the marking of the pupils' work does not add sufficiently to the learning process. Many pieces of work are simply ticked, others have positive and encouraging comments, but the teachers do not use this opportunity to point out to the pupils how they can make improvements to either the presentation or the accuracy of the work.
17. Expectations of behaviour and the manner in which it is managed also lack consistency. Although the school has developed 'Golden Rules' and has a clear behaviour policy, they are not applied firmly in all classes. At this stage in the school year it is unusual to hear teachers having to repeatedly remind children to put up their hands when they wish to answer a question. Yet in a number of lessons the children called out answers and comments particularly during the introduction to lessons. This causes some disruption to the start of these lessons. Similarly, although 'Be polite' is a golden rule, some children were allowed to ask for books and to go to the toilet without being reminded to use "Please" and "Thank you". Agreed and rigorous whole school approaches to planning, marking and behaviour management are required. **These are key issues for action.**
18. Despite these areas of weaknesses in some of the teaching, most of the pupils are learning effectively although the more able pupils should progress at a greater pace. In most lessons, they apply themselves well and concentrate on the tasks they are set. Homework is an effective feature of the teaching and learning and is well supported by the parents.

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

19. The school provides its pupils with an appropriate curriculum that fully meets requirements. The time allocated to the teaching of literacy and numeracy reflects the importance placed on the development of the basic skills in English and mathematics. The disposition of time across the curriculum is entirely appropriate. The foundation stage curriculum forms the basis for the teaching in the reception class and is well planned. The teachers move the children onto the

Key Stage 1 curriculum towards the end of the year so that they well acquainted with, for example, the structure of the school's literacy and numeracy strategy.

20. Following the disappointing results in 2000, the teachers have concentrated their efforts very effectively to recover the standards being achieved. They have been most successful in establishing well above average standards in reading. In other areas of the curriculum, the co-ordinators are currently involved in reviewing the provision made in each subject. In some subjects, the nationally produced curriculum guidelines are providing the basis for the teachers' planning. In other subjects, changes from the school's own scheme of work to the national guidelines are quite recent and the co-ordinators are monitoring the impact of these changes and making modifications to the order in which units of work will be taught. This process is well under way and a coherent curriculum is emerging as a result.
21. The pupils with special needs have equality of access and opportunity alongside their peers. Good attention is paid to ensuring that they develop sound literacy and numeracy skills, and that they have worthwhile opportunities that foster their interests and aptitudes. However, the opportunities are not as successfully developed for those pupils whose attainment levels are higher than the norm.
22. The range of extra curricular activities is satisfactory. There are after school football, gymnastics and French clubs attended by a good number of pupils. Other pupils attend an 'after school club' held in another local school. A high proportion of the parents responding to the questionnaire disagreed that the school provided an interesting range of opportunities outside of lessons. Whilst there are few clubs, the opportunities for these five to seven year olds compare favourably with many primary schools where most extra of the extra curricular activities are only for seven to eleven year olds.
23. The provision for personal, social and health education is entirely satisfactory. The arrangements are appropriate for the needs and ages of the pupils. Sex education is not taught, but awareness of the misuse of drugs is dealt with in science and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle is a feature of the design and technology and the physical education curriculum. The school is now looking outward. It is seeking to involve the community in, for example, the setting of its core values in its mission statement. The headteacher has also fostered very good links with the adjacent junior school and there are now regular joint senior management team meetings.
24. The pupils' personal development is satisfactorily fostered through the curriculum. Opportunities for spiritual development are offered through acts of collective worship that are well planned and promote Christian values. Through religious education, the pupils are also learning about Judaism. The teachers are promoting the principles of right and wrong. For example, during a Year 2 games lesson, the teacher indicated to the pupils that they should congratulate a child who had completed a rounder. The 'Golden Rules' provide the pupils with a good moral code to follow and are reinforced particularly within class assemblies. The pupils are given responsibilities, to which they respond positively and many of

them rise to the challenge of working independently. The pupils' cultural development is extended through art activities where they use, for example, the work of Andy Goldsworthy and music from South America.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

25. The school supports its pupils very effectively and the teachers strive hard to promote their welfare. The headteacher places a very high priority on pastoral care and gives very good leadership in this respect. All members of the staff are very approachable and totally supportive. The members of the non-teaching staff are committed and often provide very good support for both teachers and pupils. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, have a very good understanding of the school's pastoral and welfare procedures, and implement them consistently and conscientiously. Good provision is made for medical and first aid requirements, and the arrangements for dealing with routine matters such as minor injuries are also good. The members of staff who supervise the pupils at breaks and lunchtimes are conscientious, alert and vigilant; their standard of care is high.
26. The school makes good use of relevant external support agencies and its learning support staff. The non-teaching staff are deployed effectively and used well to assist both pupils and teachers. The support for pupils with special educational needs is very good; it has a positive impact on their attainment and the progress they make. The child protection procedures are very securely in place and there is a very good awareness of the relevant requirements throughout the school. There are also very good procedures for health and safety that are well known by all staff, who consistently demonstrate safe practice in lessons. The governing body and the headteacher take their health and safety responsibilities seriously and all the required safety inspections and checks are regularly carried out and properly recorded. The school is aware of its responsibilities towards risk assessment and formal procedures are being developed.
27. The school has effective means for monitoring discipline and behaviour. These are securely in place and the teaching staff, and the headteacher in particular, are very aware of the children who can display challenging and inappropriate behaviour. External support and advice are used well to support the children with specific behaviour difficulties. However, not all members of staff consistently implement the school's behaviour policy with sufficient rigour, and inappropriate behaviour can cause disruption to learning. This has a dampening effect on the teaching and learning in some classrooms and in assemblies. The school monitors attendance well and does everything possible to promote good attendance and punctuality.
28. The headteacher, class teachers and the support staff know their pupils extremely well and have a very good understanding of their individual personal needs. Overall, the procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' academic progress and personal development are good.
29. The formal arrangements for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress are comprehensive and effective. Assessment forms a natural part of many lessons,

and the whole-class sessions are frequently used to check how much the pupils have understood. However, the marking of work is not contributing effectively to this process. The teachers set the pupils tests and assessments and keep the results in individual portfolios. In this way, they build up a picture of each child's achievements. The headteacher undertakes wide-ranging analysis of each cohort's annual test results in order to assess the school's performance and to set targets for the future. Taken overall, the formal assessment arrangements, notably in the core subjects, are good, but the day-to-day marking is not providing additional analysis of where improvements can be made.

30. Chandag Infant School is a caring school that places a high priority on the support and welfare of its pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

31. Relationships between the school and parents are very good. The school enjoys the active support of many parents. The majority of parents expressed a very high level of satisfaction with most aspects of the school's work. There are a good number of committed parents and governors who regularly help in the classrooms and accompany the children on out-of-school trips. The majority of parents is involved in their children's work at home. For example, scrutiny of pupils' home school reading records indicated a high level of support. The parent teacher association organises and runs social and fund raising activities. A considerable amount of money has been raised and many useful learning resources have been purchased for the school. The headteacher and her staff are very approachable and parents were observed taking the opportunity to talk informally to the class teachers at the start and end of the school day. Not all parents agreed that the school works closely with them, but the inspection evidence did not support these parents' views. A small number of parents disagreed that their children get the right amount of homework to do at home. The inspection team judged the use of homework to be good.
32. Communication between the school and home is good. The school sends out regular, informative newsletters and frequent letters about specific events and activities. It publishes a comprehensive and informative prospectus that includes all the statutorily required information. The governors hold an annual meeting with the parents and publish a useful annual report, which also includes all the required information. Parents are given a personalised, informative annual report and offered the opportunity to attend appropriate consultation meetings to discuss their children's work and progress with their teachers. The reports clearly indicate the progress the pupils have made, what they can do, and what they understand. However, the reports tend to be a little too positive and fail to set targets for improvement. The parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed of their children's progress and fully involved in their education.
33. The school works very well in partnership with parents and this has a positive effect on the pupils' academic progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

34. There have been a number of changes in the leadership of the school since the last inspection. During this period, the school was also the subject of a proposed amalgamation. The new headteacher has brought stability and clear direction following this time of considerable difficulty and uncertainty. For much of the period the school was able to sustain the standards that were being achieved at the time of the last inspection, but in 2000 the results in national tests revealed a considerable fall in standards. The new headteacher acted promptly to ensure that standards recovered quickly to their previous level. Through regular monitoring activities she has also identified the need to raise standards further by increasing the number of pupils achieving at higher levels.
35. The headteacher has involved the staff, governors, parents and the local community in redefining the school's aims and values. The 'Golden Rules' are prominently displayed throughout the school. The children and their parents are very aware of them and their behaviour has reportedly improved significantly, although there is still need for further improvement amongst a minority. The headteacher has set out other areas of improvement in a clear and well-structured development plan. A comprehensive review of the curriculum is well under way and further improvements to the building are planned.
36. The subject co-ordinators now have increased responsibility and are becoming more involved in monitoring the quality of the planning, the teaching and the standards achieved. However, the impact of these activities varies considerably because they are at different stages of implementation. Most of the work has so far has been focussed on literacy and numeracy, but the science co-ordinator is just beginning a programme to monitor the quality of the teaching. It is planned that other co-ordinators will take an increasing role in these monitoring activities.
37. The governors support the school well. They are instrumental in shaping the direction the school is taking and ensure that it fulfils its statutory responsibilities. They are very aware of the difficulties faced by the school over recent years and have actively worked to bring stability to the situation. The governors are kept well informed by the headteacher and play a full role in determining the financial priorities and in monitoring the school's spending. The carry forward figure (8 per cent) in 2000 has been utilised to appoint additional learning support staff and a part time teacher for special educational needs. Consequently, the carry forward amount has been reduced to 3 per cent in 2001. The headteacher also reports to the governors and the teachers the results of her comprehensive analysis of the school's performance to inform them of any weaknesses. The curriculum committee has been particularly involved in supporting the headteacher in bringing about improvements in standards this year.
38. The management of the school's provision for special educational needs is good. The register of special needs is carefully maintained and regularly reviewed. As individual pupils improve their attainment and make good progress, they are moved to a more appropriate stage on the register. Their individual education plans are then revised accordingly. Good liaison takes place with the various support agencies for special educational needs, and appropriate records are kept.

There is no specific additional funding for special educational needs, but the school uses its own resources well to ensure good provision. The funds for in-service training of the staff are used effectively.

39. The school makes good use of its available resources. In order to raise standards the governors have employed a part time teacher to help the lower attaining pupils. This strategy has been particularly effective for these pupils who are making good progress as a result. The funds for improving information technology provision have been used well to extend the teachers' expertise. The governors seek to the gain best value from their spending decisions and the school administrator provides unobtrusive, efficient and responsive support for the headteacher.
40. There are sufficient teachers for the number of pupils on roll. Two additional learning support assistants have been appointed to help the teachers, but there are times, particularly in the reception classes when more non-teaching support would help the teachers to accelerate the pupils' learning. The learning support assistants give a good level of support and direction to the pupils with whom they work. The school has a good range of resources that are used effectively by the teachers and accessible to the pupils.
41. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. Two classes suffer from minor distraction as their classrooms provide access to other rooms. Four classrooms have built in cloak cupboards that restrict space, particularly in the quiet areas. The building provides few additional spaces; for example, there is no central library or computer suite. The teaching of groups of children with special educational needs has to be undertaken in the hall that tends to be a main thoroughfare between different areas of the school. There is good disabled access into and throughout the school, but currently there is no special toilet provision for disabled pupils. The general condition of the building is good and the caretaker and his staff keep the school very clean. The school is situated in pleasant surroundings, including a well-resourced playground and extensive grass areas although there is no designated secure play area for the youngest children.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

42. In order raise overall standards further, particularly those achieved by the more able pupils, the governors, headteacher and teachers should:
- 1) improve the quality of the lesson planning so that it sets out clearly what the pupils will learn and identifies clear and challenging opportunities for more able pupils. *(paragraph 16)*
 - 2) raise expectations of the pupils' behaviour and increase the consistency with which it is managed. *(paragraph 7, 17)*
 - 3) enhance the quality of marking so that it helps the pupils to improve their work. *(paragraph 16)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	33
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	15	44	33	6		

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	170
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	13

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

National comparative data	5.2
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National comparative data	0.5
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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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	31	28	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	27	28
	Girls	26	27	25
	Total	50	54	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (86)	92 (96)	90 (96)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	29	28
	Girls	26	26	26
	Total	52	55	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (96)	93 (96)	92 (98)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	110
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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)	7.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.6
Average class size	28.3

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	76

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
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	£
Total income	340 993
Total expenditure	339 194
Expenditure per pupil	2 008
Balance brought forward from previous year	26 797
Balance carried forward to next year	28 596

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	170
Number of questionnaires returned	65

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	29	3	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	37	2	3	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	49	2	3	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	42	9	5	0
The teaching is good.	58	35	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	23	57	15	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	35	5	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	34	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	32	46	17	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	51	42	0	3	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	49	5	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	37	26	6	12

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

43. There are currently two reception classes for children in the foundation stage. The provision is satisfactory overall and the children make very sound progress. Most begin school with above average skills in personal and social development, literacy and numeracy. The arrangements for promoting the children's literacy skills are good, and they make good gains in their speaking, reading and writing skills. The teaching is generally sound, and often good, and ensures that the children exceed the early learning goals in most areas of the foundation stage curriculum. The position is similar to when the school was last inspected.

Personal, social and emotional development

44. Most of the children have benefited from pre-school experience. They are confident when faced with new and challenging activities and show a high level of independence. For example, when offered the choice between a range of activities, such as construction, painting and role-play, they enthusiastically go to different areas of the classroom and readily engage in their chosen task. The children have been involved in agreeing codes of behaviour in the classrooms. Many consistently respect these codes, but at times a significant minority disregards them. This manifests itself in the way they call out of turn and chatter among themselves while the teacher is speaking. A few children have difficulty sharing materials and equipment with others. Most can persevere with activities such as bead threading, painting and reading, but they are sometimes inattentive when working as a whole class.
45. The teachers are patient and show a high level of concern for the well being of the children in their care. When they perceive that children are becoming inattentive or over exuberant, they generally impose a quiet control which restores the calm and good order necessary for effective learning to take place. They make a good effort to develop the children's awareness of how they ought to treat other members of their class. They ensure that the children move sensibly to other areas of the building, such as the hall for assembly or physical education. Nevertheless, the lack of a safe outdoor play area where the children can co-operate over the use of wheeled vehicles is a constraint. Moreover, there is no suitable area adjacent to the classrooms where co-operative activities could flow from inside to outside. This also somewhat restricts the variety of opportunities for social development.
46. Overall, most children achieve the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. This is the result of the teachers' steady approach and their recognition that social development is an essential feature of the children's early learning.

Communication, language and literacy

47. By the end of the foundation stage, the children exceed the early learning goals in language. Their early reading skills develop particularly well, but their listening skills are just average. This is because a few children have not developed sufficient social skills to listen patiently at all times. Their achievement in most of the important aspects of language is the result of thorough planning which is consistently done in both reception classes.
48. The teachers organise a variety of activities for developing the children's speaking skills. As a result, the children speak confidently and clearly about a range of topics. In talking about events in their own daily lives or in re-telling stories they have read, many children speak logically and at length. During model-making activities, many children pose questions about the process and will extend the dialogue by responding to the assisting adult's reply. They show considerable excitement when they recognise letters and words in print. The teachers consistently link letter names with their sounds. This is helpful when the children write for themselves and attempt to spell words.
49. By the end of the foundation stage, a significant proportion of the children can write their own sentences and use conventions such as capital letters and full stops. One child, while discussing a reading book, pointed to the name Daisy, saying "That's a capital D for Daisy because it's the mummy dog's name!"
50. The teaching of literacy is always sound and often good. The teachers clearly inspire an enjoyment of books. The children, who are currently following up work after reading "Minibeasts", consistently refer back to the text and jubilantly read out the complicated, unfamiliar names of the insects illustrated there. The teachers help the children to develop their writing skills by leading shared activities. The children find this provides a sound basis for them to develop their own written sentences and raises their awareness of how to form clear and legible letter shapes. The children enjoy talking about their work and are unafraid of summoning any available adult to share it with them.

Mathematical development

51. The emphasis on practical experience in mathematics ensures that the children make satisfactory progress in the development of their understanding of number. When the early learning objectives are very precise and understood by the children, they progress at a faster rate. The children start school with above average skills in mathematics. This is also the case when they begin the statutory National Curriculum programme. By the end of the reception year, many are already working within the early stages of the National Curriculum.
52. Most children can now use a "hundred square" to count on. They recognise simple addition facts and understand that seven plus three is the same as three plus seven. The higher attaining pupils confidently add three numbers, using mental calculations. The concept of comparative size and weight is well established. This is because the children have carried out practical investigations such as measuring their own heights against stacks of cans. They recognise that the common shapes they see around them have mathematical attributes. Role-

play activities in the classroom shop have secured a basic understanding of money operations.

53. The teaching is generally satisfactory. It is best when the teachers identify precise objectives for different groups and have good organisational skills to ensure that activities are purposeful and harmonious. In one class, for instance, good initial questioning enabled some pupils to count on from comparatively high numbers. On another occasion, however, the pupils were restless during the initial teaching, persistently called out and slowed down the pace of work. The adults provide effective support for groups of pupils. The children are learning to use a computer for mathematics and are given clear guidance. For some pupils, mathematics represents a considerable challenge. However, well-focussed teaching with small groups of children improves their confidence and understanding.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

54. The provision is satisfactory for the areas of the curriculum that enable the children to make sense of their world. Sound foundations are being laid in the children's learning in science and technology. Through the minibeast project, the children gain first hand knowledge of what various insects look like. They also develop a moral understanding of how a wide variety of species is an essential feature of a healthy natural world. The children have regular opportunities to develop keyboard skills and help each other to use computer programs.
55. Through effective use of the local environment, the adults develop the children's observational skills so that they become aware of features of the world immediately around them. This, together with opportunities to look at domestic artefacts, helps to establish the children's awareness of changes over time.
56. The children use construction toys well and can talk imaginatively about their models. However, the teachers recognise that time to develop other important skills, such as cutting and fastening, has been restricted by the emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Nevertheless, recent opportunities to cut patterns from paper rectangles or to make replica minibeast from re-cycled materials are valuable components of the broader curriculum.

Physical development

57. In many respects, the physical skills of the children are being developed well. The constraints upon them arise from the absence of provision for controlling and pedalling vehicles, energetic climbing, jumping and balancing in a safe, purpose designed area. The children are confident in the activities they undertake because the teachers place a high premium upon ensuring their safety. They are expected to change without fuss, walk sensibly to designated areas and listen carefully to instructions. In the one lesson seen, the teacher's expectations were very clearly communicated and had a very beneficial effect on the children's attainment. The children enjoy warm-up activities and are willing to have a go at a range of balancing, running and stepping activities while preparing for the school

sports day. On this occasion, the children achieved slightly higher rates of performance than those expected at this stage. The range of equipment available in the hall for indoor physical education suggests that there is provision for a good range of experiences. This has ensured that the favourable picture seen at the previous inspection has been maintained as far as indoor activities are concerned.

58. The children develop their fine manipulative skills to a satisfactory level. The majority can hold and use pencils and brushes with control. They also handle scissors and other equipment satisfactorily. They learn how to hold a range of untuned percussion instruments correctly. The teachers are insistent upon good hygiene activities, such as hand washing and drying. The teaching seen during the one lesson observed in physical education was of a high standard.

Creative development

59. By the end of the foundation stage, the children develop a satisfactory range of creative skills. This is because they have regular opportunities for painting, printing, collage and other work. The role-play area is changed at intervals to ensure that the children can use their speaking skills to invent different imaginary situations. At times, they accompany their singing with a variety of untuned percussion accompaniment. There are opportunities for using a range of materials during artwork. For example, the children have printed using materials such as string, corks and vegetables. A very successful project involved a seaside scene using flour and water paste in the mode of a screen print.
60. The teaching is satisfactory overall. At times, however, the activities are too prescribed and restrict the children's choices, for example, in the use of materials and in the way they might interpret art for themselves. Aesthetic stimuli around the classrooms are somewhat limited, even though the children's own work is regularly displayed. The children enjoy singing, but are now ready to respond to higher expectations of the sounds they produce.

ENGLISH

61. Standards in English are now improving and are nearer to those seen at the previous inspection. In the 2000 tests for seven-year-olds, the pupils' attainment in writing was in line with the national average but fell below the average in reading. The results were well below those of schools of a similar type. There was a greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the 2000 cohort than in the classes seen in Year 2 during the present inspection. The improvement seen recently is also due to the fact that the teachers have continued to improve the planning for English to provide a better balance of activities.
62. Standards in reading are currently well above average. However, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in writing is still too low. This is because the learning objectives for this group are still not sufficiently precise. As a result, some writing activities are not challenging enough.

63. When they enter the reception classes, the pupils' speaking skills are above average. However, the listening skills of a significant minority are less well developed. These pupils have yet to learn to listen attentively and sustain concentration. The good listeners respond appropriately to the teachers' questions and express their own points of view clearly and cogently. This was well illustrated in a class in Year 1 where the pupils were sharing ideas about character and plot in preparation for writing in pairs. The pupils with less confident speaking skills were supported well by being paired with more assured speakers. This raised their attainment significantly as they wrote about what they had discussed. Working in pairs, the pupils successfully extended their initial ideas so that the resultant writing was more interesting and lively than that proposed during the initial discussion. The quality of speaking and listening is highest among groups where the relationships are based on courtesy and the pupils support each other's work.
64. The development of reading is purposefully planned for each individual pupil with the result that standards are now well above average. Early reading skills are firmly established during the foundation stage and carefully built upon throughout Key Stage 1. There is a high degree of consistency in the school's approach to the teaching of reading, which contributes to the good progress made by the pupils. The pupils develop a range of strategies for reading. Whole class reading of shared texts builds their early confidence in recognising sounds. This is further extended when the pupils read either in small groups or individually to an adult. The pupils enjoy the stories they read as a class and are developing fluency and expressiveness through reading together. The reading programme is carefully designed to match the rates of progress of each individual pupil. Home support for reading is strong and contributes very well to the pupils' enjoyment of books and the development of their technical skills.
65. The pupils' attainment in writing is improving because the teaching of language is generally of good quality. The teachers have used the national literacy strategy effectively to plan an appropriate range of activities. They ensure that writing is a regular feature of work in many subjects, such as religious education, history and geography. Across the breadth of the curriculum, the pupils have opportunities to write for different purposes, such as labelling, recording personal experiences, narrative and descriptive work. The teachers recognise that the books they read with the children provide valuable sources of ideas as well as models for expression that can be drawn upon when the children themselves write. The story of "Six Dinner Sid" provided an interesting and amusing basis for pupils in Year 2 to write about their own characters such as "Five Dinner Fletcher". They had successfully transferred to their own writing the interjections and exclamations that feature in the original story.
66. Many pupils write at considerable length. However, in some instances it is clear that insufficient time is allowed for them to complete the writing tasks. The teachers provide valuable guidance for the pupils to plan their writing. This results in work that is generally well organised. For example, narrative writing usually has a setting, a plot, characters and a conclusion. However, the marking

of work does not go far enough in showing the pupils where they need to improve. For example, where there are persistent key spelling errors and where standards of handwriting fall below expectations, this could usefully be recorded at the end of a child's work and serve as a target for subsequent writing tasks. The majority of pupils are able to form letters well and space words appropriately. Nevertheless, they do not always take sufficient care or make enough effort to write neatly in order to improve overall presentation of their work. There are regular opportunities for pupils to use information technology in their English work. There are well-established agreements for the teaching of spelling. Spellings are regularly learned and tested as part of the school's effective programme of homework. However, the expectations that pupils will show greater independence and application to check their own spellings are not high enough.

67. The school has developed clear guidelines for the teaching of literacy. The test results have been carefully analysed and the teaching in every class has been monitored. There is, therefore, a considerable consistency of approach across the school. Care has been taken to provide appropriate resources. All of these features reflect the school's aim to continue the trend of improvement and to raise still further the attainment of all groups of pupils.

MATHEMATICS

68. At the previous inspection, the National Curriculum assessment results indicated that the pupils' attainment exceeded expectations. The results for 2001 show that this good achievement has been maintained, after a significant drop last year (2000). The previous report noted that the scrutiny of lessons and samples of the pupils' work indicated average attainment, rather than higher attainment. This was due to the fact that higher attaining pupils were insufficiently challenged and therefore not realising their full potential.
69. The current inspection indicates that standards in mathematics are generally above expectations, but that there is some variation in the rate of progress the pupils make as they move through the school. The rate of progress made by the higher attaining pupils is inconsistent. More needs to be done to provide learning tasks that challenge these pupils to even better achievement. Quite simply, they are capable of more. In relation to their capabilities, the standards the other pupils with special educational needs achieve are good.
70. Generally good standards are achieved through careful teaching that focuses well on the development of the pupils' basic skills in mathematics. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully and beneficially incorporated into the curriculum with many positive effects.
71. The pupils in the reception classes can count and use simple numbers efficiently in a variety of situations and mathematical activities. They show a good awareness of simple shapes and basic measures. They can use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively to aid their learning. In Year 1, the pupils show good mental agility in addition, subtraction and simple division. They understand hundreds, tens and units and can use this in calculating amounts of money. The higher attaining pupils show very good ability in calculating in thousands and the lower attaining pupils can successfully identify coins to make up given amounts. In Year 2, the pupils show a good understanding of fractions, of simple algebra, and of basic work in compiling graphs. They have good mental arithmetic skills. The pupils continue to make mainly good progress overall, although this is variable due to the insufficient challenge in the tasks provided for those at the higher attainment levels.
72. The quality of the teaching, while judged to be good generally, varies at different stages. Where it is very good, the challenges provided in the learning tasks are of a high order. The pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and to devise their own methods of calculation and of tackling

problems. These methods are regularly assessed for their effectiveness, and the pupils are encouraged to be independent. The teachers' knowledge of mathematics and the needs of the pupils are good. The lessons are planned very carefully to provide high levels of progressive challenge, and the learning objectives of the lessons are clearly identified and maintained at the forefront in the pupils' activities. Where the mathematics teaching is less than satisfactory, the teachers plan too many activities for the work to be controlled efficiently, the learning objectives are unclear, and insufficient attention is given to ensuring that the work is appropriately matched to the abilities of the various groups. Consequently, many of the pupils become confused about what they are expected to achieve. This leads to dissatisfaction and boredom, and results in unsatisfactory behaviour. The momentum in the learning fades, and progress is unsatisfactory.

73. In the main, the pupils are very interested in their learning and most of them work very hard. They show increasing independence, share ideas and results, and are eager for success. They contribute well to oral-work sessions and are often painstaking in their recording, although this can be untidy. The teachers' marking of work does not emphasise enough the need for neatness and good presentation of work. Consequently, the pupils are not set a sufficiently high standard in these aspects. Sometimes, the written praise given to the pupils in the workbooks is inappropriate. For example, the word 'excellent' is used when work is of either a good or fair standard only.
74. The coordination of the mathematics provision is good. Very efficient analysis takes place of the various attainments of the pupils in national and other tests, and action is taken to ensure improvement. The teachers' planning is monitored and evaluated and the school has begun a programme for monitoring the teaching and learning. This has contributed effectively to the regaining of the good mathematics standards achieved prior to last year. However, whilst the pupils' numeracy skills are advanced effectively in mathematics lessons, there is little evidence that these are developed consistently across other areas of the curriculum. The coordinator for mathematics has recognised this and is taking steps to ensure further development. The need for the provision of greater levels of challenge for higher attaining pupils in some classes has also been recognised as an aspect for further development.
75. The resources for mathematics are plentiful, of good quality and used effectively.

SCIENCE

76. In 2000, the teachers assessed standards in science to be broadly average compared to those of other schools nationally. Further analysis of these assessments shows that fewer pupils achieved the higher levels than the national average. These results did not compare favourably with similar schools but reflected the higher than usual number of pupils on the special educational needs register. This year the teachers' assessments show standards to be above average overall and the proportion attaining the higher level to have doubled.
77. Standards in the current Year 2 are above average. In their lessons on electrical circuits, the teachers provided good opportunities for the pupils to develop their investigative skills and increase their knowledge. They offered a good challenge and extension activities for the more able pupils. The teachers were clear in their explanations and probing in their questioning. They used good resources very effectively to hold the pupils' interest. These were good lessons in which the pupils made clear gains in their knowledge and skills and most responded well to their teachers. However, a number of pupils found it difficult to settle down during the introduction to the lesson and had to be repeatedly reminded to put up their hands when answering a question. However, when they were involved in the investigation they worked very well.

78. An analysis of the pupils' work shows they make steady progress in their acquisition of knowledge and that there is a high degree of independence in much of the work. However, it also shows that there is little recording at the higher level that should be expected of the more able pupils and little use of information technology to present the findings of investigations in a structured manner. The teachers' half-termly planning in Year 1 sets out clearly what the pupils will learn in each lesson but in Year 2 the plans set out a global objective for a much longer period that cannot be easily applied either to individual lessons or different ability groups. This is why the work in the pupils' books contains very few examples of more able pupils working at higher levels.
79. The co-ordinator is currently undertaking a year long professional development course and already this is resulting in a more rigorous and analytical approach to the management of the science curriculum. She is monitoring the impact of the changes to the curriculum brought about by the introduction of the national guidelines for science to replace the school's own scheme of work.
80. Standards have fluctuated since the last inspection. They are higher now than they were in 1997, but the planning of activities to extend the more able pupils remains an area where more work is needed.

ART AND DESIGN

81. Standards in art are similar to those found at the previous inspection. The planning for this subject is in a state of transition because recent national guidance is gradually replacing the scheme of work on which the teaching and learning in art were previously based. The school has identified the need to ensure that the more recent approach to the teaching of art takes full account of the way the pupils should develop their skills from one year to the next. The planning will need to be more detailed and rigorous to meet this end.
82. From the work seen, standards are satisfactory overall. The pupils' painting and drawing skills are developing satisfactorily, although at times the media used are not the most appropriate for the selected tasks. There is a tendency to over-use felt pens rather than pencils, pastels, crayons or charcoal. When more imaginative approaches are introduced, for example, the use of wood and wood shavings for collage and a range of materials for weaving, the work is generally of better quality. These activities satisfactorily extend the pupils' appreciation of the characteristics and application of different materials.
83. Satisfactory use is made of natural objects, such as flowers, to develop the pupils' observation skills. Similarly, a visit to the Fleet Air Arm museum provides a valuable opportunity for the older pupils to draw from first hand observations in order to enhance their sense of line and tone.
84. The resources for work in art are satisfactory and support the sound provision made. In one class, Picasso's work had been used successfully to stimulate the pupils' bold use of paint and shape. In another class, printed fabric from another culture served to raise the pupils' appreciation of pattern. Nevertheless, the use

of the work of artists and designers is not a sufficiently regular feature in the development of the pupils' awareness of art and design.

85. Although the teachers discuss the quality of the pupils' work, it is not always at a sufficiently rigorous level to raise attainment further.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

86. Standards are in line with those expected by the end of Key Stage 1 and similar to those outlined in the last inspection report. The detailed scheme of work that was in use at that time has recently been replaced by a new scheme based on the national guidelines. This is now providing a comprehensive range of design and technology activities for the pupils. Although no lessons were taught during the course of the inspection, there are displays of work that show clearly the standards that the pupils are achieving. In Year 1, for example, the pupils have drawn and written about a range of different fruits before deciding on the combination they would use to make a fruit salad. In Year 2, the pupils have designed and made a wide range of vehicles including axles and wheels that illustrate that they are beginning to take account of the materials they use, the function of the product and its appearance.
87. The teachers' half termly plans include an appropriate range of opportunities for the pupils to design and make products. In Year 1 these plans are more clearly focussed on the development of skills than in Year 2. The school has a good range of resources, notably construction kits, which are easily accessible to the pupils. The co-ordinator is managing the changes in the curriculum effectively and monitoring the order in which units of work are taught so that the pupils' skills and knowledge are built on as they move through the school.

GEOGRAPHY

88. Standards in geography were satisfactory at the time of the previous inspection. Evidence from the scrutiny of the pupils' work and the teachers' planning for the subject indicates that standards remain satisfactory. No lesson observations in geography were made during the current inspection, due to the timetabling arrangements.
89. From the earliest stage, the pupils are provided with a range of experiences relating to the place in which they live and the environment in general. They use photographs and maps to locate places where their family have been on holiday and are rapidly gaining ideas about their environs and the wider world. This is aided effectively by a focus for learning called: 'Where in the World is Barnaby Bear?' in which the pupils follow the travels of a favourite toy animal. The older pupils make studies of Keynsham and of local routes, roadways and housing in the area. They also work on the concept of 'An Island Home', learning about significant geographical features. The standard of the work they produce is satisfactory overall.
90. The teachers' planning is under-developed. At each stage, there is a clear identification of the work to be followed, and appropriate 'blocks' of time are given to the activities. However, the planning currently lacks clear learning objectives and a comprehensive structure to support the teaching and the learning. The school has recognised this and has made the development of the geography curriculum a priority in the school development plan for 2001-2002. A nationally recommended structure for learning and teaching has been adopted, and the school is beginning the task of adapting this to the needs of the pupils. The coordinator for the subject is monitoring

the progress of the developments, but as yet has had no opportunity to evaluate the teaching and the learning. Outline plans are in hand for these tasks.

HISTORY

91. Standards in history were satisfactory at the time of the previous inspection and remain so. A scrutiny of the pupils' previously completed work, discussion with the subject coordinator, and observation of a single lesson indicate that the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
92. At each stage, the pupils gain insights into the past and can make comparisons with the present day. They are establishing a knowledge and understanding of chronology through the study of people such as Samuel Pepys. At the time of the current inspection, the pupils in Year 1 were about to have a visit from a grandparent who was coming to talk about the style and events of holidays when he was a child. Studies of homes add to the pupils' historical learning. The pupils also acquire an appropriate vocabulary in their learning about the past.
93. In the lesson observed at Year 1, the teaching was satisfactory and the pupils made satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding. Good use was made of resources such as photographs, maps, documents and historical artefacts. The work the pupils had to do was efficiently organised, and their efforts effectively supported. The pupils were diligent, despite the prevailing very hot weather and the over-warm classroom. They listened well and were interested in the written task they were given.
94. As with geography, the school has recently adopted a nationally recommended scheme of work for history. This has still to be developed fully. The school's planning is not yet adequate to support a clear pattern of progressive learning throughout each stage, or to support the teachers fully in their work. Again, the learning objectives are not sufficiently clearly identified. This shortcoming has been recognised by the school and history has been included as an area for attention in the school's development plan for 2001-2002.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

95. Standards in information and communication technology are average. The pupils are benefiting from an increasing range of opportunities to use information technology across the curriculum, but at the moment the development of skills is not planned clearly enough to allow them to achieve higher standards. However, they are confident in their use of computers and software. The good use made of computers to assist and extend learning, particularly in English and mathematics, is contributing to secure standards and raising the pupils' confidence.
96. The teachers have undertaken an extensive training programme and are now much more confident and knowledgeable about how to make the best use of information technology to support the pupils' learning. They set interesting tasks for the pupils. For example, the youngest children were asked to use a drawing programme to create pictures of minibeasts, which they did successfully. In Year 1, the pupils used a word processor to write letters as part of a literacy task and in numeracy lessons they have used software to practice addition and subtraction and to help their understanding of place value. In Year 2, the pupils make good use of a word processor to write poems and mathematics software to practice halving. The teachers use these opportunities to develop the pupils' skills. For example, when the pupils are using a word processor, the teachers will explain how they can change the font and embolden the text.

97. Although information and communication technology lessons were not taught during the inspection, the quality of the support and teaching in other lessons is entirely satisfactory, and in some lessons it is good.
98. The co-ordinator has brought about significant improvements through training activities that are valued by other members of the teaching staff. These activities were based on an audit of the teachers' skills and complemented the national training programme, which they have just completed. In addition to the teachers' enhanced knowledge and skills, the school now has better resources and a development plan that sets out a programme of activities to bring about continuing improvement. There have been many improvements since the last inspection.

MUSIC

99. The pupils make steady progress and achieve standards that are broadly in line with those expected by the end of Key Stage 1. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. In the reception classes, the pupils build on their earlier experiences of singing and using percussion instruments. They can name and select an increasing range of instruments to produce sound effects to accompany their singing. They recognise simple rhythmic patterns and can maintain a steady beat when playing together. Where the teachers have a more developed knowledge of how to teach music, standards are often somewhat higher than average. This was the case when the pupils in Year 1 listened to a contemporary melody, matched it with clapping and body percussion and then tapped out the rhythm on percussion instruments.
100. The quality of the singing is mostly what is expected at this stage. At times, however, it falls a little below the average standard because the pupils do not make a consistent effort to sing together tunefully. Where the teachers evaluate the quality of singing and expect the pupils to rehearse parts of songs, the standard improves. This was the case when the pupils were rehearsing "The Yellow Submarine" in preparation for a local musical event. The quality of their diction and the pitch of their voices improved markedly after the teacher demonstrated what she wanted to hear and encouraged the pupils to imitate her.
101. It was not possible to make any firm judgement about either the quality of the pupils' listening skills or the extent to which music contributes to their cultural development. The planning for each half term merely records the fact that the school uses a published scheme, but does not indicate how this is adapted to meet the school's aims for music. There are a good variety of resources, including many from a range of cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

102. Standards in physical education were good at the time of the previous inspection and constituted a strength of the school. They remain so.
103. Almost all of the pupils in the reception classes can undress and dress themselves for physical education lessons without help. They follow their teachers' instructions very well, involve themselves in activities with notable maturity, and make very good progress in developing skills.

When practising for an obstacle race, for example, many can balance bean-bags on their heads, run a given distance, deposit the bean-bag in a targeted area and finish running a set course. They make very good progress in their learning, including the setting out and clearing away of games equipment. This all-round good progress continues in Year 1, where most of the pupils develop very good catching skills, for example, though their throwing skills are less accurate. However, it was clear from a lesson seen that they are getting better. The pupils can improve their own performance times with practice and they demonstrate an increasing understanding of ball control when working with a partner or in a team. At Year 2, the pupils continue to make good progress in the development of physical skills. Most of them show good hand and eye coordination for their age. When playing team games, many respond appropriately, but some have a limited understanding of the concept of fair play. They tend to be argumentative, and are not readily appreciative of the success of others.

104. The teaching is mostly good, and often very good. The day-to-day work is planned well to provide for the continuous development of the pupils' skills. The children are encouraged to be increasingly independent and to set themselves targets for improvement. Good attention is paid to ensuring safe practice, to warming-up in preparation for exercise and to warming down afterwards. The teachers use questions effectively to promote the pupils' thinking. They also demonstrate tasks well to ensure the pupils understanding of what they have to do, and what they should be aiming for in order to improve. The learning objectives are clearly communicated. Consequently, the majority of the pupils is keen to participate, sharing tasks and apparatus beneficially, and they make good progress.
105. The school's policy is clear, and the teachers generally have a good understanding of the demands of the curriculum. They plan together efficiently at the various stages. This enables them to provide a structured programme of work, and good standards in the subject are maintained. The facilities for physical education are good. The school has recently renewed much of its equipment, and the range of apparatus is good and of high quality. The outside areas are spacious, and the resources for the subject are used well to support the pupils' learning.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

106. Standards have improved since the last inspection. The pupils' attainment now exceeds the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' knowledge and understanding of aspects of Christianity and Judaism are very secure at a level appropriate for these young pupils. A good foundation is laid in the reception classes and is carefully built upon in Years 1 and 2. The regular teaching in classrooms is usefully supported by stories from the Old and New Testaments that often illustrate the themes selected for periods of school worship. A very good example was seen when a presentation in assembly described the journeys of Paul. The children were helped to understand that the dangers he faced confirmed his strong trust in God and in the teachings of Jesus.
107. The pupils are successfully relating their own experiences to aspects of religious education. The writing of some of the younger pupils vividly illustrates their feelings of joy on special occasions when they have received gifts, such as their birthdays. They can understand that the special Jewish celebrations of Hanukkah have parallels in the Christian Christmas. They learn about special events such as the Passover Feast and the Last Supper and begin to appreciate that feelings of joy and sadness form a part of the spectrum of emotions experienced by human beings. The careful way in which the pupils record their work is a reflection of their interest and emerging sensitivity to what religion signifies.

108. The teaching is good. The work is very well pitched at a level that the children can comprehend. In one class, a teacher skilfully used the recent First Communion experience of two pupils to raise awareness of how the event was special to them. It underlined the particular commitment these pupils and their families were making to the beliefs and practices of their church. The pupils listened with an appropriate degree of reverence and respect and showed a proper curiosity about the tangible symbols their classmates had brought in for them to see. Some of the older pupils write at length and show a good recall of details of stories from the Bible and of events such as the discovery of Jesus' empty tomb. The teachers have successfully created a climate where the pupils can talk quite sensitively about issues close to them. They happily discuss the people whom they perceive to be important in their lives and also how certain friendships are formed.
109. In all the lessons seen, the pupils listened with interest and readily participated in discussion. They showed a degree of absorption that had a positive impact on their behaviour. The teachers used resources and approaches that successfully captured the pupils' attention.