

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WHITEHALL NURSERY & INFANT SCHOOL**

Walsall

LEA area: Walsall

Unique reference number: 104163

Headteacher: Mrs W D Crickard

Reporting inspector: Mrs M Lewis  
22787

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> May 2000

Inspection number: 198189

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	West Bromwich Road Walsall West Midlands
Postcode:	WD1 3HS
Telephone number:	01922 721991
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K Draper
Date of previous inspection:	October 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Margaret Lewis	Registered inspector	English Art Design & Technology Music	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to further improve? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led & managed?
Sue Boyle	Lay inspector	Equal Opportunities	How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Kathryn Forsyth	Team inspector	Areas of Learning for Children Under Five Special Educational Needs Mathematics History Religious Education	Pupils' attitudes, values & personal development
Jan Roman	Team inspector	English as an Additional Language Science Information Technology Geography Physical Education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated approximately one mile from the centre of Walsall. It serves an area of mainly older type terraced houses, including some privately rented houses and also some local authority housing. The school has 212 pupils on the full-time school roll (108 boys and 104 girls). At the time of the inspection there were 59 part-time children in the nursery classes and 17 in the Reception classes who were under five years of age. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language is very high. The children come from predominantly Asian and English families. English is the first language for approximately one fifth of the children. The other children speak either Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali or Gujarati as their first language, but of these children two thirds are capable of speaking English at a variety of levels. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average. The attainment of most pupils on entry to the school is well below the national average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average.

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

This is an improving school that achieves well in some important areas. The school is effective in promoting good behaviour and attitudes to work. The school shows respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of the different cultures amongst the families in the school. It works very well in partnership with its parents. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning are improving, but there is still some unsatisfactory teaching. This is found in the small group teaching of pupils in the early stages of English acquisition skills, and for some pupils with special educational needs. A small minority of lessons at the end of the key stage are unsatisfactory. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are generally taught well. The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The school promotes pupils' moral development well.
- The nursery and reception classes provide children with a good start to their education.
- The school is successful in promoting good behaviour, good relationships and positive attitudes to learning.
- The school works well in partnership with its parents and is thought of highly by parents.
- It cares well for its pupils.

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

- Overall, standards of attainment in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science are below those of similar schools. This takes into account the high number of pupils with English as an additional language.
- The specialist teaching of literacy and numeracy for pupils in the early stages of language acquisition, and for some pupils at the end of the key stage, is not as good as it should be. This prevents pupils from learning as quickly as they should.
- The provision for some pupils at the early stages of the special needs register is not as good as it should be, and this hinders their progress.
- Pupils do not reach the standard in information technology they should by the age of seven.

*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 October 1997 and was judged to have serious weaknesses in a number of key areas. This is no longer the case and the school has improved from that time. There have been improvements in the management of the school and its organisation, although the headteacher and staff are aware of what still needs to be done. The standard of pupils' behaviour has improved. The quality of teaching has improved, although it is still unsatisfactory overall at Key Stage 1. The school has made significant steps forward in developing a good partnership with its parents. Alterations have been made to the school building and accommodation and use of space has improved. The teaching arrangements for groups of pupils in the early stages of English as an additional language in the reception classes have changed, although this does not impact sufficiently well on their progress. Small groups of pupils who have English as an additional language are still taught separately from their classmates. They do not receive the broad experiences of others during the literacy and numeracy hour.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
Reading	E	E*	E*	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E very low E*
Writing	D	E	E	B	
Mathematics	D	E*	E*	D	

Normally, comparisons with similar schools do not take into account the very high number of pupils who have English as an additional language. At the time of the inspection this number was very high at 79.7 per cent and the table above has been amended to reflect this high percentage. The school's results over a four-year period have fluctuated. They dropped significantly in 1998 owing to staff illnesses and changes. In 1999, pupils' results in the writing tests rose significantly. Over the last four-year period, girls' performance in tests for reading, writing and mathematics has been below that of boys. The number of pupils with English as an additional language has risen in the school overall during the past year. Standards are still below average in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science. Standards in information technology are below those expected nationally at the age of seven, because the provision for teaching this subject is inadequate. In religious education, pupils achieve standards and make progress that is in line with local expectations. Pupils make good progress in art and achieve standards above those usually found for seven-year-olds. Standards and progress in other subjects are satisfactory, although it was not possible to make judgements on standards in geography and design technology.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils like school and have good attitudes to their learning. The youngest pupils in the nursery and reception classes settle to work confidently.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well around the school and at playtimes. They respond well to school rules. A small minority display boisterous behaviour during playtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils generally work together well and develop good relationships with each other and with teachers and adults who help them. Pupils' personal development is sound.
Attendance	Rates of attendance are well below average and this has a detrimental effect on the standards attained by pupils. The school works hard to encourage good attendance and this has shown an improvement.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	satisfactory	unsatisfactory

*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.*

Forty-eight lessons were seen. In total 88 per cent of these were at least satisfactory and 12 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. A substantial amount – 56 per cent - of lessons were good or very good. The teaching of English and mathematics is almost always at least satisfactory. Half of the lessons in English were good and more than a third of the lessons in mathematics are good or very good. A significant amount of good or very good teaching is evident in the reception classes and the nursery. Particular strengths in the teaching include good planning of lessons linked to National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and high expectations of children's learning. The school checks the quality of the teaching and learning in classes and in subjects systematically.

Small group teaching for ethnic minority pupils, who receive separate teaching for literacy and numeracy by specialist teachers, and some teaching at Year 2 is unsatisfactory. The main weaknesses of the teaching in these lessons are that teachers do not have a clear idea of what they want the children to learn, their subject knowledge is insecure, and they do not use questioning, explanations and activities well enough to help the children progress. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught effectively in the nursery and in the majority of classes in the school. The needs of some children on the early stages of the special needs register are not satisfactorily met. Provision for those at Stage 3 and above, including those with statements of special educational needs, is satisfactory.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the under-fives provides a good start to the children's education. The school offers a sound range of learning opportunities across subjects, except for the development of the skills of information technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs. The quality of individual education plans for some pupils at the early stages is not good enough to ensure they make enough progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The checking of the progress and language acquisition plans for pupils is not good enough. When groups are withdrawn for specialist teaching, this is unsatisfactory.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Is satisfactory overall. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. The curriculum gives pupils a good insight into a wide range of cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school makes sound provision for pupils' health and welfare.

The school works well in partnership with its parents. This is a strength of the school. The school has good relationships with its parents and carers. Parents are kept well informed about their child's learning and progress. The school makes a great effort to inform parents about new developments in the curriculum. It provides courses and workshops for parents.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership. She has led the improvements since the previous inspection. She is well supported by a good senior management team, which is committed to creating an improving school and works hard in areas where work is still to be done.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The new governing body is very supportive of the school and understands its needs. It is involved with the current school development plan. The chair of governors knows the school well but the new governing body has not yet made the necessary arrangements to fulfil all of their responsibilities. Governors are not yet sufficiently involved with monitoring the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and senior staff have established sound monitoring procedures for the teaching of the literacy and numeracy hours. Governors are not yet fully involved in checking the effectiveness of its spending decisions.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory use is made of current resources and school funds are appropriately allocated.

Overall, staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. There is a significant weakness in the area of resources for information technology. The school has insufficient computers and a limited amount of software. There is limited space for outdoor play for pupils in the nursery. Large and small outdoor play equipment for nursery children is old and in need of replacement.

### 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>• The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best</li> <li>• The school is approachable</li> <li>• The teaching is good</li> <li>• The children like coming to school</li> <li>• Their children make good progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amount of homework</li> <li>• Lack of extra-curricular activities</li> </ul>

Inspection evidence supports most of the positive views of parents. Inspectors do not agree that all teaching is good and that all children make good progress. Inspectors do not agree with parents' criticism of the amount of homework which they think is about right. They agree that there are few extra-curricular activities apart from a recorder class.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children start the part-time nursery classes with attainment in social and early learning skills which, for the most part, are well below those usually found for children of this age. Achievements in speaking and listening, in early reading, and mathematical skills are very low. The majority of children make satisfactory progress in their learning in the nursery and in the reception classes. This is due to satisfactory and some good teaching in the nursery and good and very good teaching in the reception classes. However, children in the early stages of English acquisition skills, who are withdrawn in small groups for specialist teaching in the reception classes, make slow progress due to unsatisfactory teaching.
2. Inspection findings show that by the time they reach the age of five, the overall standard of pupils' achievements is still well below that expected for their age in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical development. In the areas of personal and social and creative development most children at five are close to the expected standards for their age. The findings for language and literacy skills, mathematics and personal development are the same as the school's initial assessment of children's achievements when beginning in the reception classes.
3. The school's 1999 national test results show that compared with the national standard, at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment in mathematics and reading was very low, and in writing was well below average. Teacher assessments of pupils' work in science were well below expectations. When compared with the results of pupils at similar schools, those of Whitehall's pupils were below the average in reading and mathematics, and above the average in writing. These comparisons take into account the very high percentage of pupils in the school for whom English is an additional language.
4. The previous inspection findings in October 1997 indicated that pupils' attainments in English, mathematics and science were broadly in line with the national average. However, following the inspection, pupils' test results in 1998 for reading, writing and mathematics dropped significantly and were far below the results of the previous two years. In 1999, although still below the expected level nationally, standards rose in line with the national trend. Mathematics and writing rose significantly and standards in reading also rose slightly. Taking the four years together, the performance of girls in reading, writing and mathematics is below that of boys, which is unlike the national picture.
5. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in mathematics, English and science are rising in Key Stage 1, partly as a result of a stable staff and improved standards of teaching for the majority of pupils since the previous inspection. This improvement is also partly due to the successful introduction of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. Overall, levels of attainment are now below rather than well below national expectations for all three subjects. Standards of attainment and the rate of progress for pupils in the early stages of language acquisition in English are unsatisfactory. They do not learn as quickly as they should in the specialist teaching groups for literacy and numeracy. This is because of unsatisfactory teaching. At the end of the key stage, lower attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they could. For instance, in mathematics, these pupils are not able to explain confidently how they

have solved a problem.

6. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment in information technology is below that usually found. This is because the majority of teachers do not plan or teach pupils the full range of information technology skills set out in the National Curriculum. They do not make full use of information technology to support pupils' work in other subjects, especially word processing in English and data handling in mathematics and science. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in religious education is in line with locally agreed expectations.
7. Pupils make good progress in art and achieve standards above those usually found for seven-year-olds. Progress in physical education and music is satisfactory, and pupils achieve in line with expectations for their age by the age of seven. There was insufficient evidence to evaluate pupils' attainment in design and technology and geography.
8. Although there is early identification of pupils with special educational needs from the nursery onwards, some pupils on the early stages of the register of special educational needs do not make satisfactory progress and achieve as well as they should. The targets set for pupils on their individual educational plans are not sufficiently well focussed and are inappropriate. There is insufficient detail about their needs. Provision for those pupils on the higher stages of the register, at Stages 3 to 5, is better and those pupils make satisfactory progress.

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

9. Most pupils like school and have good attitudes to learning. The youngest children come into nursery and school confidently, and quickly engage themselves in activities and lessons. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour relate directly to the quality of teaching. Where the teaching is good, pupils have good attitudes to their work. In lessons where teaching is unsatisfactory, pupils quickly become disinterested in their work and fidget and, in some cases, talk out of turn.
10. Pupils are generally well behaved in lessons and around the school. A small minority of pupils display boisterous behaviour in the playground.
11. Personal development is satisfactory. Most pupils work well together when given the opportunity. In the nursery, children quickly learn how to share and take turns and they enjoy being the helper who helps to organise drink and fruit at break time. Older pupils have fewer opportunities to demonstrate their use of initiative and, consequently, there is limited evidence of pupils taking responsibility.
12. Pupils respect their teachers and other adults in the school, and form constructive relationships with one another. Pupils of different cultural backgrounds work and play well together. In a religious education lesson, Muslim pupils explained the importance of appropriate dress, washing and the use of the prayer mat to pupils of other religions. Pupils listened attentively and responded positively to the values and beliefs which were different to their own.
13. The personal and social programme, which is linked to school assemblies, is effective in encouraging pupils to reflect on what they do and understand the impact of their actions on others.

14. Attendance rates have a detrimental effect on standards of pupils' attainment. Although still very low, the rate of attendance shows a marked improvement since the time of the last inspection.
15. The school has worked hard to improve attendance and is continuing with its efforts to do so. The attendance policy is clear and implemented well.
16. Most pupils arrive fairly punctually at the start of the day, but there are a very small number who arrive during the registration period, and sometimes later. The school is aware of this and does all it can to encourage all parents to bring their children to school on time.

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

17. The quality of teaching has improved overall since the previous inspection in October 1997. There is less unsatisfactory teaching than at the last inspection, when more than a fifth of lessons were unsatisfactory and there was less good or very good teaching.
18. The teaching of children under five is satisfactory, and for pupils at Key Stage 1 overall it is unsatisfactory. There is a substantial amount of good and very good teaching. More than half of the teaching was judged to be good or very good and almost a third was satisfactory. However, one eighth of lessons was unsatisfactory. The unsatisfactory teaching was in the small group teaching by specialist teachers for pupils in the early stages of English language acquisition, and in some lessons at the end of the key stage.
19. Consistently good or very good teaching is evident in the teaching of the children under five in both the reception classes and the nursery. Good teaching is also evident across the Year 1 classes, with some good teaching and very good teaching in one of the Year 2 classes. The teaching of the under-fives is good or very good in nearly three-quarters of lessons. In Key Stage 1, almost a half of teaching is good or better. However, there is some unsatisfactory teaching in the specialist groups in the reception classes and Year 1, and at the end of Key Stage 1.
20. The contribution of the nursery nurses to children's learning and teaching in the nursery classes is very effective. Their teaching is good, although they are not trained as teachers. They have a good understanding of how young children learn. They plan children's work well and provide good learning activities to extend their learning. They work together very well as a team on a day-to-day basis under the management of the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator.
21. Pupils at the early stages of language acquisition in English do not receive the breadth of experiences in their specialist withdrawn group teaching of others in their class. In withdrawn groups, teaching is unsatisfactory in lessons where teachers do not have a clear idea of what they want the pupils to learn. Teachers do not always use questioning, explanations and activities well to support the pupils' understanding of new ideas and pupils become inattentive and distracted. This hinders the quality of pupils' learning.
22. Pupils throughout Key Stage 1 have been organised into classes according to their previous learning. This organisation is very effective for the pupils in most classes and their rate of learning is satisfactory. However, pupils do not learn as well as they should in English, mathematics and science in one class at the end of the key stage

due to unsatisfactory teaching. In these lessons, explanations to pupils and answering of pupils' questions is ineffective. Pupils are not given sufficient encouragement and opportunities to express their answers at length and teacher's subject knowledge, for instance for teaching letter sounds and blends of sounds, is insecure.

23. The rate of pupils' learning is best in the early years, the Year 1 classes and in one class in Year 2. In these classes, the teaching of English in the literacy hour is always satisfactory and often good. Pupils' learning is slower and often unsatisfactory in the specialist small group teaching of literacy and numeracy for pupils in the early stages of language acquisition. The groups of pupils whose progress is hindered are taken from the under-fives in the reception classes and from the Year 1 classes.
24. The teaching of mathematics, including the National Numeracy Strategy, is satisfactory overall. More than a third of lessons are good or very good. However, when small groups of pupils in the early stages of English language acquisition are withdrawn for specialist teaching in mathematics, teaching is unsatisfactory. Teaching centres more on language in these sessions than on mathematical concepts.
25. Teachers have a consistent systematic approach to planning. They plan in year groups and planning is clearly linked to the literacy and numeracy strategies, and to the nationally recommended schemes of work for some subjects. Planning groups meet together each week and a member of the senior management team contributes and monitors teachers' planning for each year group. Systematic monitoring of teaching is undertaken by subject co-ordinators in English, mathematics and science. Subject co-ordinators in mathematics, English and science also monitor pupils' work regularly. All but a small minority of teachers have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. They have established sensible and clear classroom rules and routines that ensure a purposeful, calm working atmosphere in lessons. When teachers choose relevant and interesting activities and involve the pupils, particularly with practical activities in what is to be learned, pupils behave very well and learning is good. Teachers' clear explanations and expectations of what pupils need to do, along with good relationships and management of behaviour, make an important contribution to raising the levels of achievement.
26. Almost all lessons have a clear beginning. In literacy lessons, most teachers introduce new work enthusiastically and give good introductions to their lessons. They read stories very well and use resources, such as stories, puppets, sound boxes, taped recordings and artefacts, to stimulate pupils and make lessons interesting.
27. A feature in very good lessons is the careful direction of pupils' thoughts with the use of questioning and checking for understanding by teachers. Independent activities are well prepared for all lessons and generally meet the learning needs of different groups or individual pupils in the class. At the end of nearly all lessons, teachers bring pupils together to discuss what they have learnt. By doing this, they help to consolidate new learning and judge how well pupils have learnt a new skill. For instance, at the end of the numeracy hour in a Year 1 lesson, pupils demonstrated effectively before the class with the use of 3 dimensional shapes. They explained clearly how they had arrived at their answers for the number of faces, edges and corners of a shape. However, these parts of the lesson are not usually extended sufficiently by teachers to move pupils forward to the next stage in their learning. For instance, in a mathematics lesson for pupils at Year 2, the time was used ineffectively to provide further mental arithmetic rather than to help pupils assess for themselves what they had learnt.
28. Teachers' planning usually clearly identifies what pupils are to learn, and in the best lessons they are informed at the outset of what they are going to learn in the next lesson or series of lessons. In these lessons, this good practice leads to good

attitudes and learning by pupils, but it is not a consistent feature found in all classes. In the planning of specialist lessons for pupils with English as an additional language, the objectives of the lessons are not always specific to the needs of the pupils. However, in mathematics lessons, where pupils work together with their classmates to solve mathematical problems, there are good opportunities for careful listening and focussed talk to increase their language skills and mathematical ideas.

29. Teachers generally have good relationships with pupils. They use praise and encourage all pupils to take part in lessons, including those with special educational needs and those who are hesitant English speakers. On occasions, referral to pupils' own targets during lessons encouraged pupils to do their best and achieve well in the lesson. Most lessons are taught at a good or appropriate pace and teachers intervene well to ensure pupils progress in their work. Teachers give few opportunities to pupils to take responsibility and use their initiative in lessons and during the school day.
30. Support assistants give valuable support to pupils with special educational needs and to pupils with English as an additional language. They work alongside different classes and support the pupils well, enabling them to make sound progress. However, there is not usually written planning in place to guide support assistants, and teachers' planning does not always indicate clearly with which groups of pupils they are to work. This lack of targeted support for individual pupils is an unsatisfactory use of support assistants' time.
31. The day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory. Teachers mark pupils' work consistently and give immediate feedback to pupils during lessons. Teachers set targets with pupils and parents on a frequent basis.
32. Almost all parents are pleased with the quality of teaching for their children. A few think that their children do not get the right amount of work to do at home. Inspection findings disagree with parents' views on teaching, but confirm that the school gives pupils the usual amount of work to do at home.

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

33. The school's curriculum contains all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. There have been no significant changes since the previous inspection. Health education is addressed through a well-planned programme of personal, social and health education and across other subject areas. The school has elected not to teach a programme of formal sex education. The school provides a daily act of worship. The strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are sound.
34. Although the curriculum meets the needs of the majority of pupils, those with English as an additional language in the early stages of language acquisition do not have the same breadth of experiences in literacy and numeracy as do others of their age. This is because these pupils spend a significant amount of time away from their classmates and miss the richness that others are given. Due to their low levels of proficiency in understanding and speaking English, the school has arranged for five Year 1 pupils with English as an additional language to be taught in a mixed class of older reception pupils. They are given access to the National Curriculum in literacy and numeracy, but do not move into all the programmes of study for the National Curriculum in other subjects as early as they should at their age.

35. Although the school follows the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs, the provision made for these pupils is unsatisfactory. The quality of individual education plans for pupils identified at the earliest stages of the special needs register is inconsistent. Some plans do not focus sufficiently well on the specific learning needs of these pupils, and are not useful in moving them forward in their learning.
36. The curriculum for pupils under five in both the nursery and the reception classes provides pupils with a good start to their education. It is satisfactory and planned in accordance with the Desirable Outcomes for children of this age. Children's personal and social development is a strength of the early years curriculum in both the nursery and reception classes. The development of pupils' speaking and listening skills is particularly well promoted in the nursery.
37. The planned teaching time is in line with national recommendations and lessons start promptly. Additional time is given to literacy, numeracy, physical education, creative activities and personal, social and health education to support the needs of the pupils at the school. The school plans the daily literacy and numeracy hour in accordance with the national frameworks. In Years 1 and 2, classes are organised according to pupils' previous learning.
38. Overall, planning of the curriculum is sound and as well as the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, the school uses the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidelines for some subjects, such as science and geography. It is looking towards using these guidelines in other subject areas such as design technology and music, from the next term. The use of these guidelines has not yet had sufficient time to impact upon the standards of pupils' learning and standards of attainment in the subsidiary subjects of the curriculum. Planning for information technology does not take sufficient account of the need for systematic teaching of skills or the elements of data handling and control.
39. Provision for pupils' personal development is good. The school has worked hard since the last inspection to implement a personal, social and health education programme, and this is taught well in the majority of lessons and impacts well on pupils' attitudes to their work and their relationships. In collective worship, stories are well chosen to help children understand the implications of their actions on others.
40. The school continues to offer extra-curricular recorder classes and there are regular opportunities for children to take part in performances. The school has some links with the community. These are mainly with the local churches and places of worship, and pupils have been involved in planting flowers in the local area. The school has curricular links with its feeder junior school, particularly for music. The school organises book days and science days to enrich the curriculum and these events involve many parents in their children's learning. The local area is used well for developing pupils' understanding in geography; for instance, in a topic on Houses and Homes. Visits out of school and visitors to school are used well to enrich the curriculum. For example, Year 1 pupils visited a zoo during the week of the inspection and Year 2 pupils recently visited a Safari Park. Visits are followed up and built upon in lessons, for instance, in developing pupils' writing skills. Visitors to school include string players, the Fire Service and the school nurse. The school is also supported by the local library service who visit the school and offer story telling sessions for nursery pupils on a regular basis.
41. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is sound. Although insufficient time is sometimes given for pupils to reflect in assemblies, provision for reflection within religious education and personal and social education lessons is good. It is a strength

of the school. For example, the use of a prayer mat was explored well by teachers to give pupils an insight into the Muslim religion. The school celebrates a wide range of different religious festivals across the year and parents are invited to join these celebrations.

42. Provision for moral development is good. This has improved significantly since the last inspection through the introduction of the personal, social and health education policy. Pupils are taught a clear sense of right and wrong. In the majority of classes, these messages are backed up by effective pupil management strategies.
43. Although provision for social development is sound overall with the promotion of positive relationships within the school, there are limited opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively or for purposeful talk. This also leads to missed opportunities for pupils with English as an additional language to develop and enrich their English speaking and listening skills.
44. Provision for cultural development is sound overall. In the art curriculum, for instance, pupils learn about a wide range of different Western artists. The school has been involved in an African Caribbean dance project and is due to be part of an integrated Arts project in September. The curriculum gives pupils a good insight into the cultures of other peoples.

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

45. The school has improved its care for pupils since the previous inspection and now makes consistently satisfactory provision for the welfare and support of its pupils. The headteacher is responsible for health and safety in the school. She has had appropriate training and carries out regular monitoring. The school follows the local child protection committee's guidelines and, although it does not have its own written policy, in practice the current arrangements work effectively and are sound. Pupils are taught about issues to do with child protection and teaching staff are kept adequately informed. However, the school must ensure that the midday supervisory staff are clear about what to do should they have concerns about a child. Overall, the arrangements for health and safety and child protection are sound.
46. The school provides good educational support and guidance. Class teachers keep regular and detailed records of pupils' personal development and behaviour. Pupils' personal and academic development is discussed with parents and pupils each term, and targets are set and agreed. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are sound except for those pupils in the early stages of English language acquisition. The learning profiles for these pupils do not identify the appropriate action to support their increased language learning. The school analyses its results in English and mathematics carefully, and uses the results from this analysis for future curriculum planning. The English and mathematics co-ordinators keep detailed records of pupils' results and track pupils' achievements from the initial assessments in Key Stage 1. Pupils' reading is tested frequently as they progress through the school.
47. Arrangements for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. The school has set appropriate targets for the next three years, with further initiatives planned for the next term. It is on line to reach these targets. It uses an electronic registration system which detects patterns of absence, and it works closely with the educational welfare officer to follow up concerns

48. All staff, including support staff and midday supervisors, have had assertive discipline training. This, with an effective programme for personal and social development, is effectively promoting pupils' good behaviour in lessons and pupils' personal development. The caretaker, who is also a committed member of the school governing body, is very effective in carrying out his day-to-day duties. His work makes a sound contribution to the support and well being of pupils.

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

49. The school has developed a good partnership with parents and this represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. Parents and carers are very satisfied with the work the school is doing and with the relationship they have with the school.
50. The school has good links with parents and has worked hard to involve them in learning. For example, it has made considerable efforts to involve and inform parents about the numeracy strategy, over the course of three meetings. There have also been courses for parents about reading and a session on children's writing. In addition to this, a small, but extremely committed, group of parents attended the family learning workshops. Others, who were keen to improve their parenting skills, attended the "Tears and Tantrums" workshop which was run as a collaborative effort between the school and the local family centre.
51. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress. Almost all parents attend parent teacher consultation evenings when teachers discuss children's progress and share targets with parents and pupils. Pupils' annual reports are clear and detailed and often have information so that parents know what their children need to do to improve.
52. Although information for parents about their children's progress is good, some information, particularly about the school, is very limited. The school is in the process of updating its prospectus. The current one is clear, but does not contain information about the school's arrangements for pupils with special educational needs, and information about the curriculum is minimal.
53. A good number of parents help in school and parents are willing to help with visits. Although there is no fund-raising organisation, a small but willing group of parents organise social fund-raising events to contribute to school funds. The dedicated book and science days were well attended by parents, and parents worked hard and gave good support to help make the school's centenary celebration a success.

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

54. The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership. Her style of management is caring and supportive. She has a good understanding of the needs of the many diverse ethnic family groups in the school. She is well liked by parents and well supported by the new governing body. The previous inspection report in 1997 reported that there were shortcomings in the quality of leadership and management and this formed part of the key issues for action for the school. The subsequent action taken by the school in response to the action plan, led by the headteacher, has dealt with many of the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. This has had a positive impact on the quality of provision provided for the pupils in the school. However, although the teaching staff has been reorganised and staff have left the school, there is still some

unsatisfactory teaching.

55. The headteacher is well supported by a senior teacher and the senior management team, as well as staff and governors. Following the previous inspection, a clearly defined management structure, supported by appropriate delegation of responsibilities and a policy for the role of the team, was established. This works well and succeeds in providing a shared commitment and purpose within the school. Relationships between staff are good and the day-to-day organisation of the school works well. The school is supported well by the administrative assistant. The senior management team is confident. It holds regular weekly meetings, and is fully involved in the monitoring and support of teaching and the curriculum in the school. However, its main emphasis has been on class teaching rather than on small group teaching and the teaching of special educational needs pupils. Teaching at the end of the key stage has been well monitored and supported by the school. The school has broad aims in place which rest on a clear set of appropriate values and the aims are used effectively to support the pupils in the school. However, although staff and governors express a firm commitment to improving attainment and raising standards, there is no mention of this in the school aims. The school has a separate set of aims for the nursery and the infant department which, although overlapping in some respects, do not reflect the work of the school as a whole.
56. The school is aware of the areas where it has effectively reviewed its organisation since the previous inspection and has accurately identified areas, such as information technology and special educational needs, where further work remains to be done. These areas are supported in the school development plan for the forthcoming two years and are carefully linked to costs and fund sources. It recognises that the acquisition of English is a major priority for the majority of pupils in the school and is to receive funding for a forthcoming initiative with the local education authority. The school development plan has improved since the previous inspection for the maintenance of the existing needs of the school and for planning at the longer term. However, evaluation of past years is unclear, and developments recognised as in need of improvement, such as the information technology curriculum, have been on hold for the current year. Although funding has not yet been allocated for this subject, areas which could have been addressed, such as a review of curriculum planning and assessment of pupils' skills, have not been tackled with a sense of urgency and sufficient commitment.
57. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance has begun. The school has monitored the performance of its pupils by ethnicity and gender in English and mathematics. Monitoring of English, mathematics and science is fully in place and is undertaken by the subject co-ordinators and headteacher, who are all members of the senior management team. Other subject co-ordinators are fairly new to their posts and have not yet undertaken a full part in monitoring their subject areas, although they are fully involved with the planning and resources in their subject areas.
58. Since the previous inspection, the governing body has fulfilled its role satisfactorily. It has thorough, detailed minutes of meetings and of those of sub-committee meetings. The current chair of governors has established regular meetings with the headteacher and is well informed about the school. The recently re-constituted governing body is enthusiastic and, although several members have no previous experience, the new governors are very perceptive as to where improvements are needed in the school, and show a commitment to do work with the school to enable these to take place. They are becoming involved in the current school development plan, but this has not yet had an impact on the future direction of the school. Planning for all governors to attend training for school management and threshold assessment courses is in place and due to take effect shortly. The school reports to governors regularly on the efforts

it is making to reduce the levels of unauthorised absence. In the short time it has been in place, the governing body has formed new sub-committees with terms of reference, but has not yet designated a special needs governor. Neither have curriculum governors been appointed to liaise with school subject co-ordinators, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Governors are not yet sufficiently involved in shaping the direction of the school and monitoring its work. The school brochure, which is under review, does not currently meet all the necessary requirements or inform parents sufficiently well on the school curriculum.

59. The school is in the process of fulfilling recent government requirements to prepare an induction policy for new staff. At present, it has no systems in place for the induction of newly qualified teachers or for teaching staff who may be appointed to the school.
60. Teachers have an appropriate range of expertise and experience and between them provide satisfactory coverage of the National Curriculum, apart from in information technology. However, the specialist teachers for pupils with English as an additional language have insecure knowledge of developing literacy and mathematical skills. These teachers are not used effectively for the benefit of all these pupils in the school. Specialist teaching is given to small groups of pupils in the early stages of English acquisition who also have special educational needs.
61. There are a satisfactory number of support staff, with a wide range of experience and expertise. They work very effectively alongside teachers and provide good support for pupils, for example, in the numeracy and literacy hours. The support offered to pupils with statements of special educational needs is satisfactory and ensures that pupils make sound progress towards the specific targets in their individual educational plans. However, the use of classroom assistants, including the bi-lingual classroom assistants, is not carefully monitored and the school is unaware of their impact on pupils' learning.
62. Teachers receive appropriate training for the curriculum both as a whole staff and as individual co-ordinators. Recent whole staff training has included training in mathematics, science and literacy. Training in science has recently concentrated on the development of effective questioning techniques to support pupils' understanding and improve their learning.
63. Educational priorities are supported satisfactorily by financial planning. Spending is linked to costs and the finance committee meets regularly to review spending. The school uses additional funds through specific grants appropriately. These are linked to costs in the school development plan and used for their designated purposes.
64. The school building has been improved since the last inspection and the accommodation is adequate for the delivery of the curriculum. However, the school library is difficult for pupils with physical disabilities and those in wheelchairs to access. The outdoor play area and outdoor resources for the nursery are inadequate.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

### 65. The school should now:

◇ **Improve pupils' progress and raise attainment in information technology by the age of seven by :**

- increasing the sense of urgency to tackle the shortcomings in the subject;
- improving teachers' knowledge and expertise in information technology;
- planning to teach systematically the full range of skills in the National Curriculum;
- improving the amount of hardware and software available to support the curriculum;
- making sure that information technology is used to support and extend learning in other subjects.

*The school already has identified information technology as a priority area for improvement in the school development plan and has a long-term development plan in place.*

*(paragraphs 6,38,56,60,121,123,124 & 125 refer)*

◇ **Improve the quality of teaching to raise pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science by the age of seven by:**

- Providing planned, focussed activities to develop pupils' skills in speaking and listening, for instance, in role-play and drama activities;
- Ensuring that all activities provided in maths lessons are matched to pupils' interest and levels of understanding;
- Increasing pupils' independent learning in science and ensuring that pupils record their science observations and results independently and in a variety of ways, with less dependence on worksheets;
- Improving the quality of the individual education plans and setting appropriate targets for pupils on the early stages of the special educational needs register.

*(paragraphs 5, 19,22,27,28,30,35,54,86,91,92,93,94,95,96,97, 103,104,105,106,107 & 112 refer)*

◇ **Improve the provision of pupils with English as an additional language by:**

- Identifying and monitoring carefully appropriate action to support pupils' language acquisition skills and ensuring that they develop their language skills together with other pupils;
- Improving the quality of teaching of phonic knowledge and skills and mathematical ideas for these pupils with the use of well chosen, interesting activities to improve reading, spelling and mathematics.

*(paragraphs 1,5,18,21,23,24,34,43,46,60,76,80,85,91,96 & 99 refer)*

## OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Fuller involvement by governors in monitoring the work of the school. Ensuring that all statutory requirements reported to the governing body are fulfilled immediately  
*(paragraph 38 refers)*
- Improve the use of accommodation, outdoor space and resources for the nursery children. Ensure that the library facilities are readily available to all pupils including those with statements of special educational needs

*(paragraphs 64,82,87 & 98 refer)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

### 67. Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Un-satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11	46	31	8	4	0

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

### 68. Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	29	212
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	77

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	43

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	169

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	23

### 69. Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.8
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	3.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

### 70. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	42	39	81

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	31	27
	Girls	19	28	15
	Total	38	59	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	47 (35 )	73 (51 )	52 (47 )
	National	82 (80)	83 (78)	87 (83)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	26	27
	Girls	17	16	16
	Total	42	42	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	52 (56 )	52 (57 )	53 (52 )
	National	82 (80)	86 (83)	87 (85)

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

### 71. Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	6
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	32
Pakistani	121
Bangladeshi	16
Chinese	0
White	79
Any other minority ethnic group	15

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

### 72. Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

### 73. Teachers and classes

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	26

#### Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	141

#### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	121

Number of pupils per FTE adult	4.8
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### 74. Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	484,310
Total expenditure	474,693
Expenditure per pupil	1,832
Balance brought forward from previous year	49,877
Balance carried forward to next year	9,617

## 75. Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	271
Number of questionnaires returned	35

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	43	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	49	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	46	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	44	6	12	3
The teaching is good.	51	46	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	43	9	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	23	6	0	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	20	3	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	49	43	8	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	43	49	3	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	54	6	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	48	6	3	13

## **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**

76. The overall attainment of children on entry to school is generally well below the nationally expected levels. Children make good progress through the nursery and early reception classes, but by the time they are five years old, children's standards of attainment are still well below those normally found for their age group. There is a high proportion of good and very good teaching in the nursery and reception classes and this ensures that children make good progress in their learning. The support given to children in the reception classes who speak English as an additional language is not always appropriate. Progress for these children is unsatisfactory.
77. At the time of the inspection, seventeen of the children in the reception class were below five years of age. Most children have attended the nursery class on a part-time basis. The curriculum meets the requirements of the national guidelines for children under five and takes account of the recommendations for reception children in the literacy and numeracy frameworks.
78. Personal and social development are strengths in the nursery and reception classes, and children make good progress. Children work well together and most behave in appropriate ways. In nursery, children learn to take turns and share fairly. They show appropriate self-respect and are developing self-confidence. This is demonstrated in opportunities to help the nursery nurses in organising drinks and fruit and in reporting back about activities they have experienced during the day. Children have good relationships with adults and other children. They recognise what is right and wrong and most children are sensitive to other children. This was best seen in religious education, where children were finding out about Muslim prayer. Muslim children explained how they prepared for prayer and the importance of the prayer mat. The planned programme for personal and social education is effective. In the reception class, children listened attentively to the story of Timothy and the Big Bully, and afterwards talked about the implications of their actions on others and what they should do if they were bullied. Most children demonstrate independence in selecting an activity or resources and in personal hygiene.
79. The attainment in language and literacy by the age of five is well below that normally found for pupils of this age. Speaking and listening skills are under-developed. The nursery staff recognise this and provide many good quality opportunities to develop these skills. Children are encouraged to listen to stories, rhymes and to other children. Stories are an important part of the nursery curriculum and this is built upon in reception classes. Children learn how to use and enjoy books and know that pictures and words have meaning. They recognise some letters of the alphabet by shape and sound. By the age of five, many children recognise their own name and some can write their names, although letters are not always formed correctly. Children with the potential for high attainment make very good progress in the reception classes and quickly learn key words and are able to read simple texts. For those children who have English as an additional language, progress is slow. This is due mainly to the inappropriate activities set for these children.
80. Attainment in mathematics by the age of five is well below the level expected for children of this age. Whilst most children can sort and match objects, only a few use mathematical language to describe position and size and write numerals accurately. Activities in the nursery are good and children enjoy counting games and number songs such as 'Ten Green Bottles'. A few children recognise and use numbers to 10.

Most children make good progress in their learning. However, for those children who speak English as an additional language in the reception classes, progress is unsatisfactory. Although mathematical vocabulary is emphasised in the work of these children, the tasks set do little to promote mathematical understanding.

81. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world at the age of five is well below that generally found. Some children discuss their homes and families, but they are less aware of the environment in which they live. Few children are confident in talking about past and present events in their lives. The nursery and reception classes provide a good range of activities, such as naming and looking at different kinds of fruit. The support offered to children with English as an additional language during the exploration of fruits and vegetables was effective in promoting language acquisition. Children make appropriate use of tape recorders and computers.
82. Children's attainment levels in physical development are well below the level expected. Generally, children are able to handle appropriate tools, pencils and crayons satisfactorily. Their ability to move confidently and imaginatively with increasing control and co-ordination is being developed through the Top Start programme. Unfortunately, the activity room and the outside play area are too small and limit children's progress. Children in reception have better facilities and make better progress in their physical skills.
83. In the area of creative development, children make satisfactory progress and attainment levels are as expected for five-year-olds. Children express their ideas in drawing, painting and modelling. In reception, there are a range of good drawings of pets and figures, which show that children's skills are developing well. Three-dimensional models are a feature of the work of nursery and reception classes.
84. The overall quality of teaching for children under five is satisfactory, with some very good teaching in the reception classes. Teaching is strongest in personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics. In the nursery, planning is effective and assessments are well used to inform the teaching and pupils' individual Early Years Development profiles. Activities set are interesting and appropriate to the needs of young children. Teaching methods and organisation are effective in ensuring all pupils are engaged. The inclusion of children with English as an additional language in all activities ensures that they have good quality language activities with their peers. In the reception classes, teachers make good use of the frameworks for literacy and numeracy. Children are well prepared for starting the National Curriculum. In these classes, children receive some direct teaching and there are lots of opportunities for investigative work through practical play activities that help learning. Where the teaching is very good, teachers have high expectations of levels of work and behaviour. They make learning exciting and interesting. In one mathematics lesson, children were excited and keen to help 'Silly Bunny' count. The high expectations and good questioning technique of the teacher ensured that the higher attaining children achieved good standards. In this lesson, children were able to work out that if they spent 2p on a lollipop and 3p on a comic, they would get 5p change from 10p.
85. In some lessons, children who have English as an additional language are withdrawn. The teaching in these lessons is unsatisfactory, as tasks set are often inappropriate and sometimes boring.
86. Children with special educational needs are identified from an early stage. The quality of the individual education plans for children on Stages 1 to 3 varies between satisfactory and unsatisfactory. Areas of difficulty are generally well identified, but some targets for improvement are inappropriate.

87. Resources in the nursery and in reception are satisfactory overall, although resources for physical development in the nursery are inadequate. There is no climbing apparatus, some resources are in poor repair, and there is insufficient space in the activity room and outdoor area.
88. Teachers, nursery nurses and parents work well together. Arrangements for starting the nursery and reception classes are good and parents receive good quality information on how well their children are doing in school.

## ENGLISH

89. Pupils' performance in the 1999 Key Stage 1 tests show that in comparison with schools nationally, the number of pupils attaining at the expected level in reading was very low, and that the number of pupils achieving at the higher levels is well below the average. In writing, pupils' attainment was well below the expected level (Level 2) but close to the national average at the higher levels (Level 3+). In comparison with similar schools having an above average number of pupils registered for free school meals and a very high percentage of pupils who have English as an additional language, pupils' attainment was below average in reading and mathematics and above average for writing.
90. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language has increased since the previous inspection. The previous inspection in October 1997 indicated that pupils' attainment in speaking and listening, reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 was broadly in line with national averages, and this would suggest that standards have slipped since then. However, pupils' performance in the 1998 tests fell to significantly below the national average.
91. The majority of pupils, including those for whom English is their first language, start the programmes of study for English with skills in language and literacy which are well below those usually found in pupils of this age. Inspection findings show that most pupils, including a substantial proportion of those whose first language is not English, learn at a steady rate. By the end of the key stage, standards overall in speaking and listening and reading are below those expected nationally. Standards in writing are broadly in line with the national average. Few pupils reach the higher level (Level 3) in reading or writing. Pupils on the early stages of the special needs register and those pupils with English as an additional language who are withdrawn from English lessons in the Year 1 classes for specialist teaching do not always learn as well as they could.
92. Pupils generally listen well to their teachers and follow instructions carefully; for instance, in a memorable lesson for personal and social education, the oldest reception pupils "pass the smile". They listen carefully for the need to look at each other's eyes, remember their previous games and explain these to pupils who were absent accurately. By the end of the key stage, pupils' level of speaking and listening has improved, although overall it is below that usually found nationally. Some pupils discuss and explain their reading confidently and exchange confidences about visiting the local library. Pupils at Year 2, including those with special needs, discuss their art work enthusiastically and explain clearly the techniques they have used to strengthen their models and what they are particularly looking at in their observational drawings. However, some Year 2 pupils are hesitant to speak and find it difficult to explain their project work in English and their artwork.
93. Pupils enjoy reading with teachers and helpers in school and some read regularly at home with their parents. During the literacy hour, most pupils make sound progress in

their learning and understanding of vocabulary and in their knowledge of letters and sounds. Some pupils, particularly those in Year 1 who have specialist teaching, do not progress in their understanding of letters and how sounds fit together as well as they could. However, many pupils develop their knowledge of reading and books well, although, by the end of the key stage standards in reading overall are below those expected nationally for seven-year-olds. Some pupils show a good understanding of the differences between the characters in the stories they read. They retell and explain favourite parts in their storybooks well. They distinguish readily between fiction and non-fiction texts and use the contents and indexes of books independently to find facts and information. Towards the end of the key stage, they read their well-matched texts confidently and fluently with understanding, although few read expressively. Some tackle unfamiliar vocabulary confidently and show no hesitancy over words of several syllables, such as grasshopper, emperor and overcoat. The majority read accurately within the level expected for their age, although no pupils reach the higher levels of reading. Pupils in one Year 2 class do not reach these same levels of attainment. They have developed a sight vocabulary, but have limited strategies for tackling new words.

94. Pupils learn to form their letters accurately in a legible print script from the beginning, and by the end of the key stage the majority of pupils write confidently and some write at length. However, in the one class of Year 2 pupils, the presentation skills for many pupils is below average. For these pupils, the punctuation of simple sentences is not secure. Pupils in this class have not begun to join groups of letters in their writing. The majority of pupils make good progress with their writing skills and, although none achieve at the higher levels, most achieve well at the expected level. They write legible stories at length and generally use accurate spelling and simple punctuation. All pupils write for a wide range of reasons that are meaningful for them, such as their own books, stories, menus recipes and instructions. Writing and recording across other subjects of the curriculum is not so well developed. Pupils do not always write independently in other subjects. There are missed opportunities for factual writing; for instance, in science, when worksheets, which leave little room for writing, are frequently used.
95. The rate of learning of pupils with special educational needs at the early stages of the register varies in different classes. It is dependent on the quality and match of targets in teachers' planning for these pupils, but overall it is unsatisfactory.
96. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with a proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in the small specialist teaching groups for pupils with English as an additional language, and for some pupils with special educational needs. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge. They make learning and activities interesting and ensure that pupils enjoy their lessons; for instance when exploring words and sounds that rhyme and initial letter sounds using sock glove puppets. Teachers plan their lessons well and follow the National Literacy Strategy confidently. They monitor pupils' progress well in reading and writing. However, teachers' reading records merely record the books pupils have read and do not include what they need to do to improve. Teachers bring pupils together to discuss what they have learnt at the end of lessons, but they do not always explain to pupils at the outset of the lesson what they are to learn. They prepare resources well for the literacy hour and match and support pupils' independent activities effectively to enable all pupils to learn. Teachers use classroom assistants well, both English speaking and bi-lingual, to support groups of pupils. This makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. However, the deployment of classroom assistants is not always clearly indicated in teachers' planning. Teachers use their questioning skills effectively to guide pupils' thoughts and to make sure that pupils understand their work and have grasped new ideas. They make use of questioning particularly well to elicit responses from pupils. For example, in a lesson on blends of

sounds for Year 1 pupils, the teacher showed good skills of intervention to ensure that all pupils were concentrating and learning. In the minority of lessons where teaching is unsatisfactory, this is due to insecure knowledge of the teaching of blends of letters and sounds, and ineffective questioning and explaining to pupils. Teachers value pupils' contributions to discussions. They establish clear expectations of behaviour and ensure that pupils take turns in discussions even when they become excited. For instance, in a discussion on a previous day's visit to the zoo, the teacher maintained good relationships, control and a gentle sense of humour with pupils. She used effective strategies to achieve the planned objectives for the writing lesson. However, teachers do not plan regular opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills across the curriculum subjects, for instance, for role-play or drama.

97. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and this is helping raise standards, particularly in spelling and writing. There is not always a sufficiently strong focus on the use of technical language across all curriculum subjects, for instance, in science and mathematics, although in subjects such as art and music this is done well.
98. The subject is managed well. It is in line with the national strategy for literacy. The co-ordinator has led the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy successfully and continues to give regular training and support to staff. Recent new resources assist the teaching of literacy well. Pupils have a wide choice of texts to choose from. The library is well organised and books are appropriately classified. However, the library is isolated on the second floor of the building away from other teaching areas. This makes it difficult for pupils to visit independently and for those in the school with physical disabilities.

## **MATHEMATICS**

99. Standards in mathematics are improving. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment are below the national average in all aspects of mathematics. Many pupils make good progress. However, the progress for the younger pupils in Key Stage 1 who have English as an additional language is unsatisfactory.
100. In the national tests for seven-year-olds in 1999, the percentage of pupils attaining the level expected of their age (Level 2) was very low in comparison with the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level (Level 3) was well below average. In comparison to schools with similar characteristics, standards were below average.
101. The results over a three-year period show that after a decline, standards are beginning to improve. The inspection findings confirm that standards are rising, with more pupils achieving the higher levels. This improvement is because of the analysis of pupils' performance in the national tests, which has identified areas for improvement for teaching, and because of the effective introduction of the numeracy strategy.
102. Throughout the key stage, pupils demonstrate ability in working out number facts. Many of the pupils in one Year 2 class understand place value and can work out doubles and have knowledge of the multiples of 2, 5 and 10. In one lesson, some pupils demonstrated that they understood that multiplication means times, lots of, sets of, groups of and that  $4 \times 2 = 8$ , therefore  $8 \div 4 = 2$ . Pupils are less confident about division, but a few understand the concept of division as sharing. In some classes, teachers recognise the importance of mathematical language and this is emphasised

in lessons. In these lessons, pupils are quick to respond and develop an effective mathematical vocabulary. Generally, however, pupils are not competent or confident in explaining how they have solved problems. By the end of the key stage, pupils can name 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional shapes and know how many sides and corners they have.

103. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good overall. Where the teaching is good, pupils settle down to their work quickly and enjoy the challenging tasks set by teachers. Nearly all pupils enjoy the mental mathematics and take part in whole class activities. Where tasks lack challenge, pupils work at a slower pace and some become restless and disinterested.
104. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some examples of good and very good teaching. In a small proportion of lessons, teaching is unsatisfactory. Lessons are generally well planned and resources are always well used. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations, recognise the needs of their pupils and are effective in promoting mathematical vocabulary. Tasks set in these lessons are interesting and involve pupils in applying knowledge learned or in investigative work. In one lesson, pupils were asked to describe shapes by feeling them inside a bag and only using words such as edges, corners and faces. This activity provided a good level of challenge and promoted collaborative working. This working together and solving problems is a highly effective way of ensuring pupils with English as an additional language have opportunities for careful listening, oral exchange and supportive talk with their peers.
105. Most teachers use effective ways to ensure that all pupils take part in mental arithmetic sessions at the beginning of lessons. However, in some classes, teachers do not always remind or challenge pupils to calculate answers without using their fingers or a number square.
106. Where the teaching is unsatisfactory, tasks given to pupils are too easy, there are too few opportunities for pupils to talk to one another about their work, and when pupils are brought together at the end of lessons the time is not always used appropriately. In one lesson, this time was simply used as an opportunity for more mental arithmetic, rather than a time when pupils are helped to assess what they have learned or to move pupils forward in their learning.
107. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is variable, but overall it is unsatisfactory. Where the teaching is good, pupils receive appropriate support and progress is reviewed regularly. However, there are a number of individual education plans for pupils that are not updated on a regular basis.
108. The organisation of pupils into classes according to their previous learning is effective for the pupils in most classes, and their rate of learning is satisfactory. It is less effective for the set class of lower attaining pupils in Year 2. Inspection findings show that the standards of the average and above average pupils are improving, whilst the standards of the below average pupils are simply being maintained. This is due to more effective teaching in the set class of above average pupils at Year 2. The school has introduced the National Numeracy Strategy effectively. It has recently introduced assessment and record keeping procedures. Most teachers are using these procedures well to plan their lessons and ensure that tasks set for pupils are appropriate.
109. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Her analysis of pupils' results has been helpful in deciding what needs to be done in order to raise standards. The quality of mathematics teaching is systematically monitored.

## SCIENCE

110. Teacher assessments of pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, indicate that standards are well below the national average and well below those in similar schools. However, this comparison does not take into account the very high percentage of pupils with English as an additional language in the school.
111. Inspection findings show that standards of attainment are below those expected for pupils at age seven. In one class of pupils in Year 2, most pupils found it difficult to talk about their work in their science lesson, or to answer simple questions such as the difference between living and non-living things, simple circuits, and roots of a plant. However, in Year 1, pupils made good progress in their learning when they were involved in activities to classify different types of materials. Pupils were able to sort materials according to transparency and justify their judgements. When pupils played an active part in their science tasks, they showed positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour was good.
112. The quality of teaching was satisfactory overall. Where teaching is good, teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their lessons with a clear purpose for what they want pupils to learn in the lesson. They choose tasks well to engage the pupils' interest and ensure that they are suitable for all pupils' needs. For instance, in a lesson when pupils learnt to sort different materials by their basic physical properties, the teacher provided a good range of materials and used good methods and scientific vocabulary to help pupils understand. This resulted in effective learning. Teachers make good use of questioning to assess pupils' understanding and extend their learning. Pupils learn at a steady rate, and sometimes well, in these lessons. In the one lesson where teaching was unsatisfactory, there was a lack of secure subject knowledge and effective strategies for managing pupil behaviour. This hindered pupils' learning. In science lessons, teachers rely to a large extent on worksheets for recording work, and pupils are given limited opportunities to develop independent recording skills or to extend their independent factual writing. Pupils with special educational needs do not always make enough progress in their science lessons.
113. The school science policy and scheme of work provide a good basis for teachers' planning. The recently revised scheme of work is based on the guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The curriculum has a balance of practical and investigative work. Teachers record pupils' individual progress well. Subject management is good. The co-ordinator has regularly monitored lessons as well as leading staff in the moderation of work. Following an analysis of previous teacher assessment, she has identified areas for development and arranged training for teachers for developing effective questioning techniques in science to extend learning.

## ART

114. Art has maintained a high profile in the curriculum since the previous inspection, and the school has maintained its standards in this subject. At the end of the key stage, pupils in Year 2 attain standards that are above those usually found for seven-year-olds. Pupils learn well in art lessons. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs benefit equally from working alongside their classmates. Pupils exchange ideas and suggestions with each other to improve their efforts in art. Pupils are very interested in their lessons and sustain their concentration on their work very well. They work with care and compare and evaluate each other's work spontaneously as they work. They are proud of their efforts and explain their work clearly to visitors. For instance, some pupils with special educational needs

explain how they have reinforced the legs of a model ostrich sufficiently well to take the weight of its body.

115. Pupils learn well by exploring and working in a wide range of media, such as clay, mod rock, paint, pastels, paper and fabrics. They develop a wide variety of techniques. They experiment with individual and large-scale collages, individual screen-printing, weaving, modelling and sculpture. They respond to the work of other artists, such as Van Gogh and Monet. They relate their own paintings, for instance of reflections, to the work of famous artists. These experiences increase their learning about the use of colour and different tools to obtain different effects. Pupils learn to draw from first hand observations. For instance, they draw bicycles by observing the real object, and tigers from large posters. They use a variety of hard and soft drawing pencils carefully choosing appropriately from a selection of pencils, charcoal and pastels to improve the quality of their drawings. Within an impressive lesson humming with activities, all children explored the technique of printing on fabric using screens, rollers, paint and leaves to create a design.
116. Teaching in art is good overall. It is always satisfactory and in some lessons it is very good. Teachers plan well together across the year groups and, as a result, all pupils have identical experiences in art in their year group. Pupils are well supported by teachers and classroom assistants in their lessons. Teachers are enthusiastic and have good subject expertise. They give pupils interesting and stimulating experiences and provide good opportunities for interaction with each other during art lessons. Lessons make a good contribution to all pupils' social development and teachers encourage speaking and listening and evaluation of each other's work well. This interaction promotes language well for those pupils in the early stages of English language acquisition. Teachers prepare resources well for these lessons. At the end of lessons, pupils are brought together and the difficulties that they have encountered are discussed. Teachers use questioning effectively during this part of the lesson to discuss what pupils have achieved and any difficulties they encountered.
117. The curriculum is well organised and the school scheme of work ensures that pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are developed and built on throughout their time in the school.
118. Most classrooms are large and provide a good working space for lessons, although the absence of water in some classrooms restricts the level of these pupils' responsibilities and independence during their art activities.

## **HISTORY**

119. Standards in history have declined since the previous inspection. They are below those usually found for pupils at the age of seven. One history lesson was seen during the inspection and only a limited amount of work was available for scrutiny. In the lesson seen, pupils demonstrated an appropriate understanding of the passing of time and they used photographs to help them learn about the differences between past and present.
120. The quality of teaching in the lesson seen was satisfactory. Teachers' planning had appropriate learning objectives and appropriate use was made of the school and college building in order to explain how the school has changed over time. However, there were few opportunities for pupils to learn by raising questions for themselves and to develop their own skills of historical enquiry.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

121. Standards in information technology are not high enough; they are below those usually found at the end of Key stage 1. The subject has declined since the previous inspection. The new school policy refers to the guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, but gives insufficient detail or guidance to ensure the systematic teaching of skills. The teaching of information technology is planned across the subjects of the curriculum. However, there were few examples of pupils using computers to support their learning in other subjects. These opportunities were often not reflected in teachers' planning or in completed work on display. Where groups of pupils were seen using computers, they were able to select a programme, use a mouse and use simple word processing to present their work. Very little pupils' work was available for scrutiny.
122. Pupils enjoyed information technology and talked enthusiastically about their work.
123. Although Year 1 planning takes account of the acquisition of skills for pupils, the majority of teachers' planning makes reference only to the programmes to be used to support various subjects. The school does not meet all the requirements of the National Curriculum for the teaching of information technology. It does not plan or teach sufficiently well in the area of control or handling of data. It intends to use record keeping systems devised by the local education authority. However, no work is yet underway to build the teaching of skills into the scheme of work and the subject development so far is lacking in urgency.
124. The co-ordinator of the subject is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has been in place for just over twelve months. She has limited subject knowledge, but has worked hard to develop her skills and has attended several training courses. She attends year group planning meetings to support staff. Information technology is a priority in the school development plan and the school is to receive funding next term through the National Grid for Learning initiative. A training programme for staff and enhancement of resources is a feature of the school development plan.
125. Resources are inadequate. Hardware is insufficient and outdated, and this prevents the school from providing sufficient access to pupils to develop their information technology skills.

## **MUSIC**

126. The school has maintained satisfactory standards in music since the previous inspection. Standards of attainment are typical of those expected for pupils at the age of seven. Music was observed in a small number of lessons in both year groups in the key stage and during a whole school performance for Music Alive Day. This short celebration included the pupils from the afternoon nursery class who sang confidently before the assembled school.
127. Pupils have good attitudes to their work, enjoy their lessons and perform with assurance. They develop their instrumental skills well and make good progress in their learning. They handle percussion instruments sensibly and with care. They distinguish between the sounds of different instruments and demonstrate and recognise long and short sounds well on a teacher prepared tape recording. In a Year 1 lesson, all pupils follow simple pictures and graphic scores well, learning to play at the correct time and to follow the teacher as a conductor. They develop the ability to sing and play and observe rests in the music quickly and accurately. This is as a result of good teaching.

By the time pupils reach Year 2, a group of Year 2 pupils play tuned percussion accurately to accompany songs for the whole school. They play together and keep in time with the singing and the piano throughout.

128. Pupils develop a wide repertoire of songs from memory as they move through the school. This makes a sound contribution to all pupils' language development. The song repertoire includes songs with a verse and chorus, call and response songs and echo songs. They sing tunefully and enthusiastically, although at times in a large group, pupils' diction is not clear and distinct. At Year 2, pupils are beginning to develop phrasing and dynamics of loud and soft in their singing, but there is sometimes a lack of duration and smoothness in melodic lines.
129. Although there are no teachers with qualifications in music on the staff, the quality of teaching is good overall. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and accomplished in music. She takes the Year 1 classes for music lessons and this contributes well to pupils' progress. She gives opportunities for pupils to practise and refine their work. Lessons are planned well with clear points for what the pupils are intended to learn. Resources are prepared very well for lessons. These include teacher-made colourful aids that enable pupils to learn and sustain their concentration well. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound and all teachers are confident in teaching music. They are supported well with a variety of taped resources and by the co-ordinator.
130. Extra-curricular recorder groups take place each week. This is a good contribution to the music curriculum and to the personal development of the pupils who take part.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

131. Satisfactory standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Although only a few lessons could be observed, there is sufficient evidence for a judgement to be made. Pupils' attainment is in line with that expected at the end of the key stage and pupils' attitudes are positive. By the age of seven, pupils showed an awareness of space and practise and refine their performance and skills in dance successfully. They grasp increasingly more difficult elements of the dance routine, moving in time to the music. They work well together with their partners and progress to working in larger groups well. Teaching is satisfactory overall and teachers pay due regard to health and safety. They make effective use of support staff to ensure those pupils with statements of special educational needs fully participate in lessons.
132. The subject is managed well. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has a clear understanding of physical education and its development within the school. She is currently working towards developing the 'Top Play' scheme from reception to Year 2. The co-ordinator has attended a number of training courses and has planned and prepared staff training linked to the new initiatives. Planning for the subject is currently satisfactory across the school and meets National Curriculum requirements. This contributes well to standards and to pupils' learning. New resources have been provided as part of the implementation of the 'Top Play' scheme. Due regard is given to health and safety within the management of the subject.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

133. Standards of attainment are in line with local expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress.

134. By the age of seven, most pupils have an understanding that there are different religions which make a difference to what people believe and value. As a result of visits within the locality, pupils are able to give good descriptions of local places that are special to the different faith communities. They understand that the Koran and the Bible are very important books and that some clothes are connected with membership of a faith community. Many pupils can name celebrations within the Christian year, such as Christmas and Easter, and talk about Divali and Eid. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in learning about religion and learning from religion. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers make best use of the rich and diverse religious backgrounds of the pupils in the school. In the lessons observed, Muslim pupils demonstrated how they prepare for prayer, the importance of the prayer mat and how they pray. The lessons were handled sensitively with lots of opportunities for speaking and listening. Through careful questioning, the teachers ensured that key facts were explained by the Muslim pupils. Other pupils were fascinated and interested, listening attentively and responding positively to the values and beliefs, which were different from their own.
135. There are good links between religious education, the personal and social education programme and assemblies. Through themes such as 'myself', pupils learn that everyone is unique. They are encouraged to think about experiences and feelings which are similar to their own from characters in stories and from listening to other people.
136. Good use is made of visits in the local area and parents are very supportive in providing religious artefacts and being involved in religious activities.