

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SLIP END LOWER SCHOOL**

Slip End

Luton

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109440

Acting Headteacher: Mrs M Johnson

Reporting inspector: Mike Capper  
23239

Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> May 2001

Inspection number: 211966

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ross Way Slip End Luton Bedfordshire
Postcode:	LU1 4DD
Telephone number:	(01582) 720152
Fax number:	(01582) 720152
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Higgens
Date of previous inspection:	March 1999

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23239	Mike Capper	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9561	Hussain Akhtar	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23658	Stephen Parker	Team inspector	English Geography History Equal opportunities	How good are curricular opportunities?
23609	Alison Cartlidge	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music Religious education Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd  
7 Hill Street  
Bristol  
BS1 5RW

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33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Slip End Lower School is located in the village of Slip End, near Luton in Bedfordshire. Most pupils come from the local village, but about a third come from urban areas further afield. Pupils are admitted between the ages from 3 to 9. There are 127 pupils on roll; 26 of these attend the nursery part-time. Children are admitted to the nursery in the term that they are four and transfer into a mixed reception/Year 1 class in the term after they are five. In Years 1 to 4, there are four classes, with two mixed-age Year 1/2 classes and single age classes in Years 3 and 4. Some pupils change classes during the school year in Years 1 and 2 because of the termly transfer from the nursery. Pupils come from a range of social backgrounds, with a below-average number of pupils eligible for free school meals. There are 30 pupils on the special needs register, most of whom have learning difficulties, with two pupils having statements of special educational need. This is slightly above the national average. Test results show that pupils' attainment on entering the nursery is broadly average. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. Two pupils come from travelling families and receive additional support from the local authority's traveller support service.

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

This is an effective school with pupils attaining good standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 4. Relationships are good throughout the school and most pupils have a positive attitude to learning. Teaching is good in the nursery and satisfactory, overall, in the rest of the school. The school is very well led; the acting headteacher has established a shared sense of purpose that is apparent throughout the school and is a significant feature of its work. All members of staff have their pupils' wellbeing and education at the forefront of their planning. This means that the school is well placed to improve further in the future and now provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- High quality leadership has ensured that there has been rapid school improvement.
- Pupils achieve good standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 4.
- The good quality of teaching and the stimulating curriculum help children in the nursery to make good progress and to achieve high standards.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to develop spiritually and to learn about cultures other than their own.
- Members of staff work hard to ensure that pupils are happy and develop good self-esteem.

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

- Higher-attaining pupils are not consistently challenged in lessons and do not always achieve as well as they should.
- In Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4 insufficient use is made teachers' knowledge of what pupils know and can do in order to identify what needs to be taught next.
- Transfer arrangements between the nursery and Year 1 class are disruptive to learning and mean that pupils do not all have access to the same curriculum.
- Pupils from Year 1 onwards lack independence when they are working in class.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Under the leadership of two different acting headteachers, the school has made very good progress since the last inspection in 1999. Standards are higher in English, mathematics, art and design, geography and information and communication technology and the quality of teaching has improved significantly. Most of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been addressed, although there continues to be a lack of challenge for higher-attaining pupils in some lessons. Leadership and management are very good and the acting headteacher is well supported by the governing body, which now takes a greater part in strategic planning for school improvement.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	D	A	B	C
Writing	A	A	A	C
Mathematics	E	A	A	C

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

Children achieve good standards in the nursery and reception year (Foundation Stage) and they are on target to exceed expectations in all areas of learning by the start of Year 1. Standards are very good in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematics, and good in all other areas of learning.

Inspection findings are that by the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above average in writing and average in reading, mathematics and science. National Curriculum test results for pupils at the end of Year 2 fluctuate significantly from year to year according to the number of pupils identified as having special educational needs in a particular year. The table shows that pupils' attainment in 2000 was well above average in writing and mathematics and above average in reading when compared to all schools. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment was average. However, in the current Year 2, fewer pupils are on target to achieve Level 3 this year than in 2000, although most pupils are likely to achieve the expected Level 2.

By the end of Year 4, inspection findings are that pupils' attainment is above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. Pupils' writing skills are particularly well developed, with some pupils working at the level normally expected for a pupil in Year 6. In science, the weakest part of pupils' attainment is their ability to use and apply their scientific knowledge to practical situations.

By the end of Year 2 and Year 4, pupils achieve satisfactory standards in information and communication technology, religious education, art and design, music, design and technology, geography and history. In physical education, there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on attainment in Years 2 and 4. However, in Years 1 and 3, pupils' attainment is satisfactory for their age.

Throughout the school, most pupils are achieving standards that are appropriate to their prior attainment. However, potentially higher-attaining pupils do not always achieve as well as they should. This is because teaching does not consistently meet their needs, with pupils sometimes doing the same activity whatever their ability.

The school makes appropriate use of test data to help set targets that are realistically challenging and based on a good knowledge of the differing capability of various year groups.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to come to school and eager to succeed.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory, overall. Pupils behave well on the playground and when moving around the school. However, in lessons, although behaviour is often good, it can, on occasions be unsatisfactory. This has a negative impact on pupils' learning.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils get on well together and take seriously any responsibilities that they are given. In the nursery, children are very independent. However, other pupils do not show the same levels of independence in lessons.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are in line with national averages.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with 97 per cent of lessons being satisfactory or better, 13 per cent of lessons being very good or better and 3 per cent being unsatisfactory. The unsatisfactory lesson occurred in an information and communication technology lesson because there are insufficient computers available to teach the whole class together successfully.

In the Foundation Stage, teachers have a good understanding of the needs of young children and the nursery nurse and a well-trained learning support assistant provide good quality support and teaching in lessons. They work alongside children during 'free choice' activities asking effective questions to encourage children to discuss what they are doing and to extend their knowledge. A very structured approach to teaching reading is effective in raising standards rapidly in the foundation year.

In Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4, teachers are most effective in subjects where they have a good knowledge of the subject. Teachers now have a clearer understanding of what they are going to teach in each lesson and work is more closely matched to pupils' particular needs. However, work provided for higher-attaining pupils is still not consistently challenging enough. This means that the needs of all pupils are not consistently met.

A particular strength in teaching throughout the school is the way all teachers explain the purpose of lessons to the pupils, involving them in their own learning and making the work more meaningful. Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to the good progress of pupils with special educational needs and pupils from the travelling community by providing well-focused help.

In Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4, the main weakness in teaching is the insufficient use of information collected on pupils' progress to plan future work, especially for higher-attaining pupils. Pupils are given insufficient opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills, although these skills are taught effectively in English and mathematics lessons. There is insufficient focus on encouraging pupils to be independent and to take the initiative when working in subjects such as science.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Overall, satisfactory. However, pupils in the Foundation Stage and Year 1 do not always get the same curricular opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are given good support and make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is good, overall. Daily acts of worship are very well planned, and the acting headteacher sets an inspiring example in her command of an audience and strong encouragement of pupils' response.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory, overall. Teachers know the pupils well and support their personal development effectively. However, assessment procedures are very recent and are not yet used sufficiently in identifying the needs of individual pupils.

The school has good links with parents and the local community.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The acting headteacher and senior teacher have established a very clear, shared vision for the future of the school that is based on a very good understanding of how the school can improve further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are supportive and are beginning to take an active role in deciding priorities for future school development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. The acting headteacher has established very thorough procedures for analysing test data and monitoring teaching. These have been a major factor in the school's recent improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The day-to-day management of finances by the acting headteacher and school secretary is good and spending is clearly targeted at raising standards.

The school is beginning to apply the principles of 'best value' to its work, for example, by comparing the school's performance with other schools.

The school is staffed with a good number of teachers and support staff. Accommodation is very good, although the library requires further improvement. Resources are satisfactory, overall, although some are beginning to get tired and tatty and will need replacing soon.

## 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>• Children like school.</li> <li>• Teachers are very approachable.</li> <li>• The school has good links with parents.</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The inconsistent approach to homework.</li> <li>• The range of out-of-school clubs.</li> <li>• The frequent changes in headteacher.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive comments. Inspection findings are that provision for homework is satisfactory, although the amount of homework is not always the same in different year groups and this confuses parents. The school has identified the need to increase the number of out-of-school clubs in the next academic year. Although there have been two changes of headteacher since the last inspection,

these have helped the school to improve over that time.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children's attainment on starting school in the nursery is broadly average. This is confirmed by a variety of teacher assessments made in the children's first few weeks in the nursery. Overall, children achieve good standards in the nursery and reception year (the Foundation Stage) and they are on target to exceed expectations in all areas of learning by the start of Year 1. Standards are very good in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematics, and good in all other areas of learning, with some children already working at Level 1 of the National Curriculum in English and mathematics.
2. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above average in writing and average in reading, mathematics and science. National Curriculum test results for pupils at the end of Year 2 fluctuate significantly from year to year according to the number of pupils identified as having special educational needs in a particular year group. In 2000, test results were well above average in writing and mathematics when compared with all schools. In reading, pupils' attainment was above average when compared with all schools. When compared with similar school, pupils' attainment was average in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspection findings show that the current Year 2, which contains a higher number of pupils identified as having special educational needs, is not on target to achieve the high standards indicated by test results in 2000. Fewer pupils are on target to achieve Level 3 this year, although most pupils are likely to achieve the expected Level 2.
3. By the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment is above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. Pupils' writing skills are particularly well developed, with some pupils working at the level normally expected for a pupil in Year 6. In science, the weakest part of pupils' attainment is their ability to use and apply their scientific knowledge in practical situations. Even higher-attaining pupils in Year 4 who have a good scientific knowledge are unable to devise, plan and organise simple experiments or investigations.
4. Since the last inspection, pupils' standards of attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 have improved in English, mathematics, information and communication technology, art and design and geography. The school has maintained the good standards found in writing at the time of the last inspection.
5. Throughout the school, most pupils are achieving standards that are appropriate to their prior attainment and there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys or girls in English or science. However, potentially higher-attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is because teaching does not consistently meet their needs, with pupils often doing the same activity whatever their ability. In mathematics, in the last two years boys have performed better than girls in national tests and in Years 3 and 4 most of the higher-attaining pupils are boys. Girls and boys are given the same opportunities in lessons and the difference in attainment in mathematics is less evident in Years 1 and 2.
6. Pupils from travelling families achieve lower standards than other pupils, especially in English and mathematics. Nevertheless, those that were in school during the inspection receive good support from teachers, learning support assistants and the local authority traveller support service and they make good progress in lessons.
7. Standards of literacy are good, overall, in both key stages. Pupils become confident readers, with Year 4 pupils having well-developed research skills. Speaking and listening skills are good throughout the school.
8. In numeracy, pupils achieve satisfactory standards by the end of Year 2 and good standards by the end

- of Year 4. In Year 2, pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to 100. Their ability to solve problems in their heads is well developed and is a strength of attainment. In Year 4, pupils are beginning to apply their mathematical knowledge to real life problems. They confidently explain the strategies they have used to solve a problem.
9. Pupils achieve above satisfactory standards in information and communication technology by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. This is an improvement since the last inspection, with provision and resources significantly better than they were at that time. Pupils develop a satisfactory range of skills and gain a good knowledge of the many applications of information and communication technology. They understand that information and communication technology means more than just working on the computer.
  10. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4, pupils achieve satisfactory standards in religious education, art and design, music, history, geography and design and technology. In physical education, there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on attainment in Years 2 and 4. However, in Year 1 and Year 3, pupils' attainment is satisfactory for their age, with most pupils learning new skills at an appropriate rate.
  11. Pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs receive effective support from learning support assistants and make good progress. Detailed individual education plans mean that pupils with special educational needs are challenged in lessons at a level appropriate to their prior attainment.
  12. The school has good procedures for identifying gifted and talented pupils and they are given some helpful support out of lessons. However, as at the time of the last inspection, their needs are not consistently met in class and this slows their progress and their level of achievement.
  13. The school makes appropriate use of test data to help set targets for individual pupils and for test results at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. These are realistically challenging and are based on a good knowledge of the differing capability of various year groups.

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

14. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils have good attitudes to the school. They are keen to come to school, excited by the work they are given and eager to succeed.
15. Children have good personal and social skills when they start school. They settle well into school life in the nursery, becoming happy and confident. Children in the nursery are enthusiastic about their schoolwork, try hard in activities and learn to co-operate with each other. They are given opportunities to make choices about what work they are going to do. They do this sensibly and concentrate well on whatever they have chosen. Children show respect for property as well as care and concern for each other. They develop a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and have very good relationships with adults in the class.
16. In Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4, pupils often show good interest in the work they are given. They take care with their work and enjoy seeing the finished product on display around the school. Pupils are encouraged to express their ideas and opinions. They respond to teaching with confidence, enthusiasm and enjoyment.
17. Behaviour is satisfactory, overall. There have been no recent exclusions from school. When they come to school, in assemblies, at lunchtimes and at playtimes, virtually all pupils behave well. Pupils move around the school in a quiet and orderly manner and have a very clear understanding of the standards expected of them. During the inspection, there was no evidence of bullying or a lack of respect for school property. In lessons, behaviour is often good but on occasions is unsatisfactory, having a negative impact on pupils' learning. Unsatisfactory behaviour occurs when pupils are not motivated by the work they are given or when they are expected to sit for too long listening to the teacher. A lack of challenge in some activities, particularly for higher-attaining pupils, is the main reason for the occasional deterioration in some pupils' behaviour.

18. Relationships in the school are good. Pupils form constructive relationships with each other and with adults. They work co-operatively, demonstrating that they will listen with interest to each other and will try to understand the other person's point of view. Pupils show great consideration for others, particularly when accidents occur. Pupils play together well in the play areas. At all times pupils consistently demonstrate patience, tolerance and understanding for others, whatever their background.
19. Pupils' personal development is good, overall. Pupils are given good opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility for aspects of school life. They demonstrate that the trust is well placed. Pupils regularly perform jobs within the classroom and around the school. Older pupils regularly help the younger ones in a range of different ways in the school and in the playground. All pupils help to raise funds to support charities and collect tokens to support the school. However, pupils in Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4 lack independence when working and find it difficult to take the lead when expected, for example, to work without adult support on investigations or experiments in science and mathematics.
20. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the school. Pupils who have been identified as having emotional and behavioural difficulties make good progress in improving their social skills and behave sensibly for much of the time.
21. Attendance and punctuality at the school are satisfactory. The rate of authorised and unauthorised absence is broadly average. Virtually all pupils are punctual, with many arriving early. They come happily to school, eager and ready to learn, enabling the school to make a prompt and efficient start to the school day.
22. The good attitudes to learning and good relationships have a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning.

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

23. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with 13 per cent of lessons being very good, 33 per cent being good, 51 per cent being satisfactory and 3 per cent being unsatisfactory. The unsatisfactory lesson occurred in information and communication technology where there are insufficient computers available to teach the whole class together successfully. The quality of teaching has improved significantly from the time of the last inspection, when 21 per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. Extensive monitoring of teaching by the acting headteacher and local education authority and intensive support and training has had a dramatic impact on this improvement in teaching, especially in art and design and mathematics.
24. As at the time of the last inspection, the quality of teaching is good for children in the Foundation Stage. Teachers have a good understanding of the needs of young children and the nursery nurse and a well-trained learning support assistant provide good quality support and teaching in lessons. They work alongside children during 'free choice' activities asking effective questions to encourage children to discuss what they are doing and to extend their knowledge. For example, when one child was scooping rice into the weighing scales, the nursery nurse discussed how the scales could be made to balance. Teachers plan a wide range of fun, practical activities to stimulate the children's' interest and help them to learn effectively. In the nursery, an interesting role-play D-I-Y store gives the children the opportunity to experiment with a range of materials and to learn how to work together sensibly. The learning support assistant is used effectively in the reception/Year 1 class, giving children plenty of practical tasks in numeracy and literacy sessions.
25. A very structured approach to teaching reading is effective in raising standards rapidly in the foundation year. Short, focused sessions held at different times of the day build on what children have already learnt and give them the opportunity to practise their skills effectively. Throughout the day, questioning is used successfully to help children think for themselves and there are high expectations of their independence in lessons. In the nursery, well-structured assessments are regularly used to help the teacher plan future work. A relative weakness in teaching is the limited opportunity provided for children to discuss their intentions when choosing their own activities and to explain what they have done at the end of a lesson. Parents are very pleased with teaching in the nursery class.

26. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4. Teaching continues to be good, overall, in music, with very good teaching in Years 1 and 2, and is now satisfactory in all other subjects. Teachers are most effective in subjects where they have a good knowledge of the subject and when lessons are planned to meet the needs of all pupils. For example, in music the teachers provide a wide range of challenging experiences and ask specific questions to extend the learning of pupils of differing prior attainment. Teachers' subject knowledge has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection, particularly in subjects that have been a focus for whole-school development. For example, improvements in teachers' knowledge in mathematics have enabled them to teach a range of strategies to the pupils, improving their interest in the subject and raising their attainment in mental mathematics. Teachers have a clearer understanding of what they are going to teach in each lesson and work is more closely matched to pupils' particular needs. However, work provided for higher-attaining pupils is still not consistently challenging enough. Teachers' planning indicates that, on occasions, there is a lack of understanding of how more able pupils can be challenged with 'extension' activities merely being more of the same rather than an opportunity to extend skills and knowledge.
27. A particular strength in teaching is the way all teachers explain the purpose of lessons to the pupils, involving them in their own learning and making the work more meaningful. Members of staff are respectful and caring and demonstrate a good understanding of pupils' personal needs. Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to the progress of pupils with special educational needs and pupils from the travelling community by providing well-focused help. However, occasionally teachers do not make full use of additional support at the start of lessons when they are speaking to the whole class.
28. Teachers make effective use of learning resources to make lessons interesting and plan various activities to make learning fun. Pupils' work is displayed attractively around the school, demonstrating the value teachers place on pupils' hard work and achievements. In Years 3 and 4, effective use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects. For example, pupils use their computing skills effectively when designing and making their own greetings cards.
29. The main weaknesses in teaching are the insufficient use of information collected on pupils' progress to plan future work, especially for higher-attaining pupils, and the limited use made of literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, although these skills are taught effectively in English and mathematics lessons. For example, in many religious education lessons, all pupils complete the same worksheet filling in missing words or copying the same information when they are capable of writing what they have learnt in their own words. In addition, teachers' expectations of how well pupils should present their work are insufficiently high in some classes, leading to work not being as tidy as it should be. In Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4, there is insufficient focus on encouraging pupils to be independent and to take the initiative in their learning, for example, by checking their work for errors. Teachers' expectations of how independent pupils should be when working are too low.
30. The vast majority of parents are pleased with the quality of teaching. However, 18 per cent are not happy with the amount of homework their children receive. Inspection findings are that pupils are given suitable work to complete at home, although provision is inconsistent in different year groups, with some classes getting more than others.

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

31. The school offers a satisfactory curriculum to pupils in Years 1 to 4, and weaknesses in provision noted in the last report have been corrected. The curriculum for children aged under five is based on the new national guidelines, which ensures that they are well prepared to begin the National Curriculum at the start of Year 1. The curriculum meets statutory requirements in all subjects.
32. The numeracy and literacy strategies are in place for pupils in Years 1 to 4. Standards have risen in English and mathematics because teachers' planning is securely based on the targets set out in the

official frameworks of the strategies, which secures pupils' progress through the school. In addition to the daily literacy hour, extra time is given to reading in order to raise standards further, and this is extending pupils' confidence and enjoyment. Opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy and literacy skills in other subjects are satisfactory but are not fully developed. Teaching in religious education is soundly based on the locally agreed syllabus. There has been satisfactory progress in putting in place a scheme of work for information and communication technology, including the use of skills in other subjects.

33. Schemes of work have been recently revised to take account of the amended National Curriculum and planning is soundly based on official guidelines. The geography curriculum was a key issue in the previous inspection, and provision is now satisfactory. The curriculum for art and design has also been improved. Nevertheless, several subjects, including mathematics, continue to lack up-to-date policies.
34. A good policy and scheme of work have recently been put in place for personal, social and health education to link elements taught in different areas of the curriculum. Health issues, including drugs awareness and sex education, are introduced informally as opportunities arise in other subjects, notably science. The study of citizenship has been introduced and given a significant boost in a whole-school focus day devoted to the topic. Such focus days have also been used very effectively to raise interest in a number of subjects, including art and design and history. These imaginative initiatives have led to work of high quality whilst widening pupils' experience of working with visiting adults and other year groups in a range of stimulating ways.
35. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved since the last inspection and is now good. These pupils are provided with good quality individual education plans, setting out specific targets to guide their development in language and mathematics. Their work in class is carefully planned and supported so that they take a full part in the main activities. Their targets are regularly reviewed and appropriately updated so that they make good progress. The school has effective procedures for identifying pupils who may have special educational needs.
36. All pupils do not have equal opportunity to benefit from an appropriate curriculum, and two areas of weakness make provision unsatisfactory. Firstly, pupils in the foundation year transfer into a mixed age reception/Year 1 class in the term that they become five years old. Older pupils in Year 1 are consequently transferred to a Year 2 class to keep class sizes broadly similar. As a result, pupils do not receive all elements of the curriculum specified for their age, and they miss some experiences enjoyed by their peers. The transfer is also very disruptive to teachers in Years 1 and 2, because they never have a settled class. Secondly, lack of challenge for pupils with higher attainment was noted as a weakness in the previous inspection and there continue to be instances of unchallenging tasks. In history, for instance, all pupils in Years 1 and 2 are at times given the same task of colouring in pictures in worksheets. This lack of challenge arises in part because the curriculum is planned so that pupils in two year-groups study the same topic at the same time in six subjects. This has the advantage that teachers in two classes support each other in planning, but tasks need to be planned more carefully to ensure that they are appropriate for pupils across the full range of attainment in the two year-groups.
37. Provision for activities outside lessons is satisfactory. There are popular gymnastics, library and information and communication technology clubs. Parents and outside agencies offer an after-school club, football coaching and violin instruction. The school has recently developed a register of gifted and talented pupils and set up extra lessons out-of-class to give them additional stimulus. Out-of-school visits are of high quality, and these experiences are used well to stimulate interest. Good use is made of the local community to support learning. There are strong links with the local church, and the vicar regularly leads assemblies. The school is fully involved in village events such as the summer fair and a music festival. Contacts with the receiving middle schools are sound and support curriculum planning to ensure that leavers are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.
38. Provision for pupils' personal development is good overall. School assemblies play a key role in emphasising each element of provision. Daily acts of worship are very well planned, and the acting headteacher sets an inspiring example in her musicianship, command of an audience and strong encouragement of pupils' response. Visiting adults seen during the inspection also stimulate pupils' keen interest through stories, a puppet and guitar playing. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to reflect

on their own experiences and explore questions of meaning and purpose. Teachers value pupils' ideas during informal interactions and make good use of class discussions to develop knowledge and insight into other values and beliefs. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate the beauty of the world and their place in it, expressing their feelings creatively, for instance, in art, English and music. Talks in school assemblies highlight moral issues, which are carefully explained and illustrated using personal anecdotes and published stories. Concern for the physical and emotional wellbeing of others is evident in all aspects of school life. Adults promote values of honesty, fairness and truthfulness in their caring relationships with pupils. Teachers control behaviour through positive encouragement, stressing principles of fairness and self-respect. Pupils are involved in drawing up rules for their class and understand their purpose. Teachers give a clear lead in showing consistent care and concern for all pupils and in encouraging reflection on the consequences of their actions.

39. Pupils are encouraged to develop social responsibility by helping with routine classroom tasks and as monitors for specific duties such as helping in the library. There is a positive working atmosphere in most lessons, and pupils respond well to consistent encouragement to co-operate with others. However, pupils are not given sufficient encouragement to show initiative in lessons. As a result, they lack independence when working and find it difficult to take the lead when expected, for example, to work without adult support on investigations or experiments in science and mathematics.
40. Older pupils work well with younger ones during special events days, and pairs from different classes regularly read to each other. Pupils develop wider understanding of citizenship through charitable fund-raising and hearing of the experiences of visiting adults. In an assembly during the inspection, members of the school council took on the responsible role of reporting to the school on their recent discussions of a charter of children's rights.
41. Many subjects make a good contribution to pupils' understanding of their own and other cultures. For instance, music played on entry to assembly is carefully explained and pupils are set challenges to encourage appreciative listening. A fine collection of art from around the world on display in the hall celebrates the richness and diversity of artistic traditions. A multi-cultural dimension is developed well in the programmes of study for art and design, geography and music. Religious education makes a strong contribution to pupils' understanding of world religions.

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

42. As at the time of the last inspection, the school has satisfactory procedures to care for its pupils. Admission arrangements are well established and help children to make a confident transition from home to nursery and then on to mainstream school. Pupils are well supervised and play in areas designated for their use. Trained first-aiders warmly look after sick or injured pupils. However, whilst the first aid practice is good, there is no medical room. All accidents are recorded and, where necessary, reported to parents.
43. Health and safety arrangements have improved since the last inspection. The school is vigilant about health and safety matters. Risk assessments are now carried out regularly. Teachers ensure that pupils learn about safe working practices in class. Issues about personal health and safety, including sex education and drug awareness, are dealt with on a whole-school basis in science lessons, through group times and 'skills' days and by receiving talks from a local police officer and a visiting 'life bus'.
44. Teachers know their pupils well and are trusted by them to deal effectively with any problems. Relationships are good. The acting headteacher, who is the child protection officer, is knowledgeable and keeps other members of staff informed about the relevant issues. However, the school has not yet formalised a policy on pupils in public care, and there has been no training on child restraint.
45. Procedures for ensuring good attendance are satisfactory. Registration procedures are efficient and records of attendance are properly maintained; reporting requirements are fully met. Absences are promptly followed-up, by contacting home where necessary, and regular contact with the education welfare officer is maintained. Family holidays during the term time are discouraged. Lateness is recorded and monitored well by the acting headteacher and the school secretary.

46. The school is successful in promoting good behaviour outside lessons. Discipline procedures are well established. Pupils show a good understanding of the school rules and enjoy being rewarded for good performance; they value an entry in the 'Golden Book' and the weekly 'sharing assemblies'. Management of behaviour is satisfactory in lessons; in good lessons there are hardly any disruptions and this helps in maintaining a good pace of learning. There is no evidence of bullying or of other forms of oppressive behaviour being an issue in the school. Pupils know what to do if they have a concern.
47. Pupils' personal development is well supported through pastoral care and the curriculum, including the 'skills' day, and the school council. Arrangements for monitoring pastoral concerns and pupils' personal development are good: rewards, support and reporting systems are most helpful in this respect.
48. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to establish procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. These are now satisfactory, overall. Children are assessed when they start school and this information is used effectively to identify what individual children need to learn next. The nursery teacher keeps detailed records of children's progress and uses this information very effectively in order to ensure that activities build on previous learning. Careful observations are made of children when they are at work, and this information is recorded to show which skills have been used in a particular activity.
49. There are thorough procedures for assessing pupils' progress over time in Years 1,2, 3 and 4. Good use is made of statutory and non-statutory tests and a termly assessment portfolio usefully shows examples of pupils' work in English and mathematics. Pupils are also regularly tested in these two subjects. Test results are used effectively to help decide what pupils should achieve at the end of the next year. Individual targets are set for pupils as well as targets for the whole class. These help pupils to take some responsibility for their own learning. Teachers regularly evaluate pupils' learning at the end of lessons or at the end of each topic. These evaluations provide satisfactory information on the work of a class but are not yet sufficiently detailed to help teachers decide on a lesson-to-lesson basis what pupils need to learn next. Taken together, assessment procedures are still very new and their impact so far has been limited.
50. The help and guidance given to pupils to support their academic progress is satisfactory overall. Whilst the educational support for pupils with special educational needs is good and they make good progress, it is not consistently adequate for high-attaining pupils and their progress is not as good as it could be.

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

51. The school's partnership with parents has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Parents are supportive of the school's work and their involvement in the life of the school is good. They feel that the school has improved since the last inspection. Parents report that their children enjoy coming to school and that teachers are approachable and willing to listen to their concerns. Their support for their children's education has a positive impact on standards. For example, they co-operate well with the school in maintaining satisfactory levels of pupil attendance and, as a result, no pupils have missed the recent national tests.
52. Parents are satisfied with the teaching, which has improved and is now satisfactory, and pleased with the school's expectations, which are adequately high. They are satisfied with the progress that their children make and the support for their children's personal development, which are generally good. Some parents are less satisfied with the amount and consistency of homework. Inspectors found that pupils, including the nursery children, usually take work home, and that the amount is appropriate. Similarly, the inspection evidence does not fully support some parents' concerns about the lack of 'outside of lesson' activities. Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory, although mostly in the area of sports. The school is aware of a need to include other areas of the curriculum.
53. The school values its strong links with parents and provides them with a good range of information, including a regular newsletter. However, a small number of parents are unhappy about the information that they receive regarding their child's progress. The inspection team agrees that whilst the annual reports on children's progress are informative, they give insufficient information about what the standards

should be or what parents can do to their improve their child's academic standards. Arrangements for parents to meet formally with teachers are satisfactory. The school organises regular parent-teacher consultation evenings, which are well attended. The school has a good open-door policy that is encouraged effectively by the acting headteacher. During the inspection, teachers were freely available at the end of the school day to deal with minor concerns if parents had them.

54. There is good liaison between the school and home when children start school. Parents are welcomed into school at any time to discuss concerns, and new children spend time in the class before they are due to start. These activities help them to settle into school quickly.
55. Parents have high expectations of their children's performance and their involvement in the education of their children at the school is good. The school values this support and encourages them to visit the school and take part in the activities on offer. They happily attend meetings and school events, including fund-raising activities. Parents also give good support to the 'skills' days held by the school.
56. There is an active and supportive parents' association that raises substantial funds for the school. Parents and other members of the local community help the school in a number of ways, for example, by running a football club, hearing readers and supervising children on visits. This support makes a good contribution to pupils' learning.
57. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved in the various stages of the special needs Code of Practice.

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

58. The leadership and management of the school have improved significantly since the last inspection. Under the leadership of two different acting headteachers, the school has made very good progress and has addressed the serious weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection. Standards have risen and the quality of education provided by the school has improved significantly.
59. The current acting headteacher is providing very good leadership for the work of the school. Although one in five parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicated that they did not feel that the school was well led and managed, this referred to their concerns over the changes in leadership rather than the quality of current leadership. Almost all parents are very happy with the quality of leadership provided by the current headteacher and they feel that the school has improved whilst she has been in post. A number of parents expressed concern about the lack of stability in leadership since the last inspection. Inspection findings show that whilst there have been two acting headteachers since the last inspection, this has had a positive impact on improving the school and has not adversely affected the learning of pupils.
60. There is a very clear, shared vision for the future of the school that is based on a very good understanding of how the school could improve. The acting headteacher has maintained the caring ethos which was evident at the time of the last inspection, but has increased the focus on ensuring that pupils achieve good standards in their work at all times. The many changes that have taken place in the last year because of this focus have enabled staff to become more involved in the management of the school, both in their roles as co-ordinators and class teachers. The teamwork and shared sense of purpose that is apparent throughout the school is a significant feature of the school's work, with all members of staff having their pupils' wellbeing and education at the forefront of their planning. This means that the school is well placed to improve further in the future.
61. Strategies for monitoring the work of the school have been significantly developed since the last inspection, when their absence was identified as a major weakness. Detailed records of pupils' individual test scores are kept and these are used very effectively to set targets for improving pupils' attainment. The acting headteacher has established very thorough procedures for analysing test data using a commercial computer program. This includes looking at gender issues and has been useful in identifying where pupils have particular weaknesses.
62. The monitoring of teaching is excellent. The acting headteacher has established a climate where the

monitoring and evaluation of teachers is accepted as an everyday part of life. Teachers are regularly observed at work in the classroom and the information gained from this is used successfully to set individual targets for improvement, to acknowledge strengths in teaching and to identify priorities for personal and professional development. Training for teachers and other members of staff has been given a clear priority and has helped to develop teachers' confidence. Taken together, these strategies have had a very good impact on the quality of teaching throughout the school and have led to teachers becoming more reflective about the effectiveness of their own teaching.

63. Co-ordinators provide a good lead in their subjects and where their curriculum areas have been a recent focus for school improvement, in subjects such as English, mathematics, art and design and information and communication technology, co-ordinators have had a full role in monitoring teaching and learning. In other subjects, co-ordinators have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in their subjects but their involvement in monitoring teaching and learning is less well developed. Nevertheless, the role of subject co-ordinators has improved since the last inspection.
64. The involvement of governors has increased significantly since the last inspection and is now good. The acting headteacher and governors have developed the school's long-term planning, with governors beginning to take a more active role in deciding priorities for the future. The school development plan is good. It is detailed and sets a clear and appropriate agenda for school improvement. A less detailed five-year strategic plan effectively shows how it is hoped that the school will develop over the longer term.
65. Governors are very supportive of the school's work and are very committed to developing the school further. There are several committees that meet regularly and perform useful roles. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, based on regular visits to school as well as the detailed information that is provided by the acting headteacher. Governors are given detailed feedback on test results and they use this data effectively to gain an understanding of what could be improved. Individual governors also have responsibility for different curriculum areas. This is effective in helping governors to gain a wider perspective on the school's work. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and publish a prospectus and report to parents, and these now meet almost all the requirements. However, the prospectus does not include national comparisons for the national tests at present.
66. The day-to-day management of finances by the acting headteacher and school secretary is good. Financial planning is thorough, with spending clearly targeted on raising standards. The school development plan includes appropriate detail of how improvements are to be funded.
67. The school uses specific grants well so that they have a positive impact on learning. For example, the element of the budget allocated to special needs is used appropriately to provide additional staffing. The school is beginning to apply the principles of 'best value' to its work, for example, by comparing the school's performance with other schools. Parents make a significant contribution to the financial security of the school. The money they raise is spent well to improve resources or accommodation. Parental contributions recently paid for new books and equipment.
68. The school is staffed with a good number of teachers and support staff. Learning support assistants and nursery nurses make a good contribution to pupils' learning, particularly when working with pupils with special educational needs in the nursery or when working with reception children in the reception/Year 1 class.
69. Accommodation is very good, although classrooms for older pupils are quite small. The library is small and the school has identified the need to improve this provision. The building is well maintained and attractive displays help to make the school welcoming for pupils.
70. Resources are satisfactory. There have been good improvements in resources for information and communication technology since the last inspection. However, in some subjects the quality and range of resources is only just adequate and those resources that the school has are beginning to get tired and worn and will need replacing soon.



## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

\* This indicates that the school has already identified these areas in the school development or strategic plan.

- (a) Raise the achievement of higher attaining pupils and ensure that all pupils are consistently challenged in lessons by:
- Improving teachers' understanding of how to provide activities that will challenge higher-attaining pupils; (Paragraphs 26, 121, 143)
  - Making better use of assessment information, including evaluations written at the end of lessons, to help decide what pupils of differing prior attainment need to learn next; (Paragraphs 29, 49, 105, 123, 134, 145, 165) \*
  - Identifying in lesson planning expectations for pupils of differing prior attainment; (Paragraphs 26, 110, 121) \*
  - Reviewing planning when two year groups study the same topic at the same time so that the needs of pupils of differing ages or prior attainment are met. (Paragraphs 36, 124, 140, 144)
- (b) Review transfer arrangements between the nursery and Year 1 class to lessen disruption to the school and to ensure that all pupils have access to the same curriculum. (Paragraphs 36, 74, 95) \*
- (c) Develop pupils' independence from Year 1 onwards by:
- Raising expectations of the levels of independence to be achieved by pupils; (Paragraphs 29, 39)
  - Giving pupils more opportunities to show initiative in lessons such as science and mathematics. (Paragraphs 110, 120, 143)

In addition, the following areas for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- Review the amount of homework given to the different year groups so that practice is in accordance with the recently adopted policy. (Paragraphs 30, 103, 109)
- Improve the consistency and quality of the presentation of pupils' work throughout the school. (Paragraphs 29, 110, 122) \*
- Ensure that pupils are given more opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills in lessons other than English and mathematics. (Paragraphs 29,, 105 111, 122, 139, 170)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	39
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	13	20	1	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	19	95
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	29

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

### **Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	10	22

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	21	21	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (91)	95 (100)	95 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	10	9	9
	Total	22	21	21]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	95 (100)	95 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	76
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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

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

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Average class size	23.8

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	87

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.5
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	257,307
Total expenditure	251,201
Expenditure per pupil	2,148
Balance brought forward from previous year	6,803
Balance carried forward to next year	12,909

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	91
Number of questionnaires returned	27

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	37	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	37	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	55	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	41	11	7	15
The teaching is good.	67	30	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	48	7	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	22	4	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	37	0	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	33	56	11	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	41	30	22	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	44	8	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	37	15	11	22

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents indicated that they are very happy with the leadership of the acting headteacher and the improvements in the school since her appointment. However, they are concerned about the lack of stability in leadership and management that has been caused by the changes in headteacher since the last inspection.

## **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**

71. Children in the Foundation Stage of their education are taught in the nursery and in a mixed age reception/Year 1 class. Children transfer into this class at the start of the term in which they are five. Children in the mixed age class spend three afternoons a week in the nursery and are given additional support during literacy and numeracy lessons. The rest of the time they are taught alongside older pupils in the mixed age class.
72. There have been good improvements in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. The curriculum has been developed and the good teaching seen during the inspection is having a positive impact on children's learning. As a result, children continue to achieve high standards of attainment in all areas of learning.
73. Children's attainment on starting school in the nursery is broadly average. This is confirmed by teacher assessments made in the children's first few weeks at school. Overall, children achieve good standards in their first year in school and they are on target to exceed expectations for their age in all areas of learning. Standards are very good in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematics, and good in knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development, with some children already working at Level 1 of the National Curriculum in English and mathematics.
74. The curriculum for children in the foundation year is satisfactory, overall. Whilst provision for children in the nursery is good, children who have moved into the mixed reception/Year 1 class do not get the same range of opportunities. The school has done all it can to mitigate against the effects of this arrangement by employing additional support staff and by giving children some opportunities to work in the nursery. Nevertheless, the curriculum for these pupils is not as broad and balanced as that provided to children in the nursery. This has a negative impact on learning in some areas of the curriculum. For example, in creative and physical development children in the reception/Year 1 class get fewer opportunities to learn through structured play activities and this slows the development of skills.
75. In the nursery, the curriculum is very carefully planned and takes full account of the needs of all pupils. Planning is based on the nationally recommended 'Early Learning Goals' and, where appropriate, the expectations of the National Curriculum. A very good balance is achieved between activities that are closely directed by the teacher and activities where children have greater freedom to work at their own pace. Appropriate use is made of the outdoor area and children are given numerous opportunities to show independence in their learning.
76. Children who have been identified as having special educational needs are given good support and attain standards that are appropriate to their prior attainment. The level of support that they are given enables them to make good progress.
77. Assessment of children's attainment and progress is good in the nursery and satisfactory in the reception/Year 1 class. Assessments are made when children start school and this information is used very effectively to identify what individual children need to learn next. In the nursery, the teacher keeps very detailed records of children's progress and uses this information successfully in order to ensure that activities build on children's previous learning. Careful observations are made of children when they are at work and this information is recorded to show what skills have been used in a particular activity. The nursery nurse gives very good support in the ongoing assessment of children's learning. Less detailed assessments are made in the reception/Year 1 class, with the main method of assessment being the regular evaluation of learning at the end of lessons. This gives less detail on the progress of individual children than the assessment procedures in the nursery.
78. There is good liaison between the school and home when children start school. Parents are welcomed into school at any time to discuss concerns and new children spend time in the class before they are

due to start. These activities help them to settle into school quickly.

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

79. Children make good progress in this area of learning because of the good quality teaching. Times when children talk together are used effectively to encourage children to think about things that affect them and to talk about the needs of others. Children are encouraged to think about what they are doing and to work independently. They do this confidently and once they have made a choice, children show good perseverance, normally sticking at a task until it is finished. However, teachers do not yet give children sufficient encouragement to explain in detail how they are going to work on their chosen activity or, at the end of the day, to talk about what they have done. This means that some opportunities to extend learning and teach new skills are missed. This has a negative impact on progress in all areas of learning.
80. Members of staff are calm, caring and patient and have a good knowledge of both the social and educational needs of individual children. Children's behaviour is well managed, with very good use made of praise to develop self-esteem. The level of independence shown by the children and their learning in this area of the curriculum is a particular strength of work in both the nursery and the reception/Year 1 class. Throughout all areas of the curriculum, the teacher and learning support assistants ensure that children are encouraged to become independent, to relate well to each other and to behave sensibly. As a result, children become confident and secure individuals. They are very happy at school and get on well together.

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

81. The quality of teaching is good in this area of learning. There is a very strong emphasis on developing children's language skills in all activities, which helps children to make good progress in this area of learning. Children are given many opportunities to take part in discussions and talk about what they are doing, so they become confident in talking to large or small groups as well as to individuals. They explain what they are going to do when they have a choice of activities and talk happily to visitors about the work they are doing. Role-play activities are well planned and are used effectively to support the development of children's speaking skills.
82. Reading skills are taught effectively. The school has adopted a very structured approach to the teaching of reading. This involves three short sessions a day where children practice learning about the sounds that letters make and then use this knowledge to build words and read simple texts. Inspection findings show that this approach is successful in helping children to develop a very good knowledge of the sounds made by letters. Older pupils confidently build simple words using their phonic knowledge and recognise these words when they see them in print. Most children have a good 'sight vocabulary' and have built up a good knowledge of different words. They are beginning to read confidently. Teachers read stories well and children enjoy listening to them. They respond appropriately, joining in with the teacher when they recognise a text. Many children are beginning to read simple texts and can talk accurately about the events in the story. The teachers in both the nursery and the reception/Year 1 class have high expectations of what children should achieve. In the mixed age class, the teacher plans activities that are appropriate to the needs of the children.
83. Children develop a positive attitude towards writing and are given many opportunities to improve their skills. As a result, children become confident writers. They are very enthusiastic and are always willing to record their ideas on paper, often using recognisable words or letters. Supplies of paper, pens and pencils are always available and children readily use them. Children are successfully encouraged to write for a range of purposes, for example, when writing out 'bills' in the role-play area.
84. By the end of the foundation year, many children are using very well developed writing skills. Higher-attaining children write short sentences using capital letters and full stops. Lower attaining children confidently write for a range of purposes, often using recognisable letters or words.
85. Children regularly take reading books home. This homework makes a sound contribution to children's learning.

## **Mathematical development**

86. Children make good progress in developing mathematical skills. Most children recognise numbers to ten, with a large number of higher-attaining children recognising higher numbers and confidently carrying out simple addition and subtraction sums. When working orally, higher-attaining children can work out 'one more than' a given number. These children are very confident about recording their findings on paper or whiteboard and are becoming very good mathematicians. Children enjoy playing simple number games on the computer and confidently use appropriate mathematical language, such as 'bigger than' and 'smaller than'.
87. The good teaching of the subject ensures that all children are well motivated and interested. In both the nursery and reception/Year 1 class, mathematical concepts are often taught in a practical way that involves the children and promotes good learning. Careful planning means that the needs of all children are met. This is very effective in the reception/Year 1 class where children are given good opportunities to learn through play. In this class, children take part in the mental mathematics aspect of the numeracy hour with the Year 1 pupils before being withdrawn from the lesson for practical activities in a different room. In these sessions, activities are exciting and stimulating and encourage children to think of themselves as mathematicians. The learning assistant who works with the children at this time provides very good support and this enables children to learn well.
88. In the nursery, older children are given extra numeracy support in a small group. This is effective in developing skills. Children are encouraged to think mathematically in these sessions, with a good emphasis being given to the development of mathematical language.

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

89. Pupils make good progress in this area of learning, developing a wide range of skills and knowledge. Children know the names of different body parts and understand what plants and animals need to help them grow. They understand that babies change into toddlers and know what babies need to make them happy. All children understand that things change over time and they can confidently talk about recent past events in their own lives. Work on festivals such as Diwali and Christmas helps children to understand that not everyone is the same or believes in the same things. Children talk confidently about where they live and accurately recall recent events in their life.
90. Children show appropriate skills when using the computer. They read simple text on the computer and confidently use the keyboard and mouse to write out words, draw pictures or play games.
91. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. Much of the teaching in this area of learning takes place incidentally as children respond to the activities that they are given. Teachers make good use of these opportunities. This was seen to good effect when children began to find snails in the outdoor area after a particularly rainy day. These discoveries led to long discussions about why this was. The teacher and nursery nurse found books that helped children identify the different parts of the snail and encouraged them to look through magnifying glasses to find out what a snail looked like. Children respond well to the high expectations of teachers and they show good levels of concentration on whichever activity they have chosen.

## **Physical development**

92. The quality of teaching is good in this area of learning and this helps children to make good progress in developing physical skills. Children in the nursery are given good opportunities to work in the outside play-area. When they do so, they show a good level of physical skills, climbing confidently and riding tricycles with good control. Children who are in the reception/Year 1 class do not get the same access to outdoor activities, although they are able to work outside on the afternoons that they go back into the nursery.
93. Children's learning in this area of learning is also enhanced by regularly timetabled physical education lessons. Careful lesson planning helps to ensure that all children are fully involved in activities. Children

listen carefully to instructions from the teacher and move around activities sensibly. The teacher ensures that children are aware of why exercise is important and how it can help the body. During the inspection, children practised different ways of moving around the hall, using different parts of their body. The teacher allows sufficient time in each lesson for the teaching of specific skills but also gives children time to 'experiment' with equipment in their own way and to develop their own ideas. At these times, the teacher gives good support to individual children. This helps to ensure that the needs of all children, including those who have special educational needs, are fully met.

### **Creative development**

94. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good and children make good progress. An imaginative range of resources is used to stimulate interest and promote good learning. The activities that are set out each day cover a range of different skills such as painting, printing and cutting. Children are successfully encouraged to try out these activities and to experiment with the techniques they have been taught. As a result, children draw and paint confidently, with increasing control of a range of tools, for example, when using different materials to make pictures of themselves. The quality of some art is high. For example, children produced good quality paintings using a combing technique. These pieces of work are now displayed attractively around the school. Children enjoy singing and join in with enthusiasm when making music in the classroom or in assembly.
95. In the nursery, the teacher and nursery nurse successfully encourage pupils to work independently. Children in the reception/Year 1 class get some opportunity to learn creative skills through purposeful play, but these are less frequent than for other children. As a result, their pace of learning in this area of the curriculum slows once they have transferred out of the nursery.

### **ENGLISH**

96. Standards in English by the end of Year 2 have improved significantly since 1998, when results in the National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 were well below average. In the 1999 and 2000 tests, the number who reached the expected level (Level 2) or higher in writing was well above the national average and the average of similar schools. Standards in reading were well above the national average in 1999, but not as high in 2000 when they were average compared with similar schools. Nevertheless, they were above the national average and almost a third of pupils reached the higher level (Level 3). Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of pupils presently in Year 2 is above average in speaking, listening and writing, and average in reading.
97. There are no national figures against which to compare standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 4. At the last inspection, standards were average in reading, speaking and listening, and above average in writing. Inspection evidence indicates that there has been an improvement in standards in reading, speaking and listening, and that the attainment of pupils in the present Year 4 is above average in these elements as well as in writing. Pupils with special educational needs are given additional support through the school so that they make good progress in developing literacy skills.
98. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils from travelling families achieve lower standards than other pupils. However, they are given good quality support from teachers, learning support assistants and the local authority traveller support service. This helps them to make good progress in lessons and over the time that they are in school.
99. By the end of Year 2, pupils pay close attention to instruction in the literacy hours and take an active part in discussions, speaking clearly in Standard English. Many pupils extend their answers, responding well when encouraged to develop their ideas. Pupils in Key Stage 2 listen politely to the views of others and use more formal language appropriately in class discussions, with correct use of technical terms. These good skills help their learning in other subjects, where ideas are explored and developed through talk. A few pupils, mainly boys, become restless when questioning does not actively involve them, but overall attentiveness is good. There has been a recent increase in the use of drama to extend the range of purposes for talk. For instance, role-play is used to deepen understanding in religious education. Good use is made of school assemblies to give higher-attaining pupils the

opportunity to speak under pressure. In one such assembly, members of the school council gave an impressive performance in telling the school about their recent discussions of children's rights and responded well when coached to project their voices to the back of the hall.

100. Pupils make steady progress in reading, although standards by the end of Year 2 are lower than in writing. In response, the school has identified the need to grade reading materials more precisely for language difficulty so that pupils' progress is more clearly guided. Pupils in Year 2 have secure skills in sounding out new words to find the meaning and a sound understanding of what they read. Those with special needs are given additional support and careful monitoring so that they build on success. Many parents give good support at home. Enthusiasm for reading is evident in all years and recent book purchases have been well chosen for their appeal. As a result, older pupils have favourite authors and can explain their preferences fluently. By the end of Year 4, pupils read longer texts with good concentration in the daily silent reading sessions. They have good understanding of what they have read and read aloud, emphasising the meaning with dramatic expression. They are confident in using non-fiction books to find information and so are able to study independently in other subjects. Their knowledge of how to find books in a library is well developed as a result of recent teaching.
101. Pupils learn to write for a widening range of purposes and audiences, with creative writing being a particular strength. Many pupils in Year 1 are able to write stories on the pattern of traditional tales. Frequent well-structured opportunities to develop story-writing skills mean that, by the end of Year 2, pupils generally have a good grasp of conventions for beginnings and endings of stories. They have a wide range of vocabulary and standards of spelling and punctuation are good. However, standards in handwriting are inconsistent, reflecting a lack of firmness in past practice, but a new policy is leading to improvement and a joined style is generally established by Year 3. Pupils in Year 4 are confident in writing longer factual accounts and these skills are well used in expressing their learning in other subjects. In history, for instance, their letters home describing the experiences of evacuees are of a very high standard in expression, accuracy and presentation. In writing long stories in chapters, they make good use of techniques, such as dramatic speech to catch the reader's attention. Some of their recent stories are excellent, because of the care given to the planning, drafting and proof reading process. In all years, some pieces are word-processed.
102. Teaching is satisfactory overall in both key stages and no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. One good lesson was seen in Key Stage 2. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and plan their lessons in detail with clear targets. It is a good feature that they begin each lesson with an explanation of the targets, so that pupils understand what is expected of them. Pupils co-operate well in discussions because texts chosen for study are interesting and teachers encourage all to take part. Teachers generally read aloud well, helping pupils to understand and raising their interest in books. In the good lesson, interaction with pupils was brisk and well focused, so that pupils were kept on their toes in thinking out answers and remembering previous learning. A weaker feature of several lessons was that not enough emphasis was given to explaining spelling patterns and other text features, using the board to develop examples and techniques of choral reading and repetition to develop reading skills. Tasks are generally well matched to the levels of attainment of different groups in the class. At times, groups working without direct teacher supervision work too slowly and expectations for pace and independence need to be asserted more firmly. Teachers' expectations could also be higher for pupils checking the accuracy of their work using a dictionary. The final whole-class review is used well to develop pupils' speaking skills and review their learning of language targets. In marking, teachers respond sensitively to pupils' ideas, give encouragement and identify the main weaknesses that need attention. However, teachers' hard work is not always effective because pupils are not routinely required to do corrections or follow-up work.
103. Homework is used effectively to support learning. However, the amount of homework given varies from class to class, with a greater amount of homework given in Year 2. Some parents expressed concern about this and the inspection team agrees that a more consistent approach to the amount of homework given would be helpful.
104. The subject is well managed. The new co-ordinator has been very thorough in reviewing provision and has produced a detailed and well-informed action plan. Initiatives to raise standards in reading are beginning to show results. A significant initiative is the involvement in a local authority project, which

aims to improve the teaching of phonics to younger pupils.

105. Resources for reading have been improved and group reading arrangements, when pupils read in ability groups, are working well. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, although more detailed information is needed on the reading difficulties met by younger pupils to inform the next steps in teaching and so ensure that they make best progress. The programme for writing is carefully designed to ensure that pupils have regular and in-depth practice in major kinds of writing, such as letters, stories and factual accounts. However, the use of literacy skills in subjects other than English is underdeveloped. An overuse of copy writing and worksheets in some subjects limits pupils' opportunity to purposefully practise skills. To raise pupils' interest and enjoyment, print of all kinds is well displayed and the curriculum is extended effectively through a range of visits, visitors and events. The library is small and the school has identified the need to improve this provision.

## **MATHEMATICS**

106. Pupils' attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 4. The present Year 2 class has a high number of pupils with special educational needs and this means that attainment is not as good as in the last two years when test results were well above average. Throughout the school, particular strengths in attainment are pupils' skills in mental arithmetic and their understanding of number. Pupils' ability to carry out mathematical investigations is satisfactory overall but is not as well developed as other aspects of the subject. Pupils' attainment is significantly better than at the time of the last inspection when pupils made unsatisfactory progress resulting in below average attainment throughout the school. Pupils now make satisfactory progress overall, with pupils with special educational needs being well supported in lessons and making good progress towards targets set in their individual education plans. The school has set challenging but achievable targets for test results in the next two years.
107. In the last two years, boys have performed better than girls in national tests and in Years 3 and 4 most of the higher-attaining pupils are boys. Girls and boys are given the same opportunities in lessons and the difference in attainment is less evident in Years 1 and 2.
108. Pupils from travelling families achieve lower standards than other pupils. However, they make good progress in lessons and over time because of the good level of support they are given by members of staff and the local authority traveller support service.
109. Most parents are happy with the standards their children achieve. Some parents of children in Year 2 expressed concern about coaching for end-of-key-stage tests in lessons and the amount of homework given to this year group. This was not observed during the inspection although the school does give pupils several opportunities to practise using past test papers. The inspection team agrees that a more consistent approach to the amount of homework given to different year groups in accordance with the policy recently adopted by the school would be less confusing to parents.
110. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with examples of good and very good teaching seen during the inspection. Teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory overall at the time of the last inspection. At that time some teachers relied heavily on worksheets and gave pupils too few opportunities to carry out mathematical investigations. These weaknesses are largely resolved. Throughout the school, teachers are careful to explain what pupils are expected to learn in a lesson and this helps pupils to become more involved in their learning. The mental mathematics sessions at the start of lessons are particularly effective in gaining pupils' interest and attention. Teachers are effective in providing pupils with a range of strategies to support them in their mental calculations. Fun activities involve all pupils and they respond well to the competitive edge to some of these tasks. For example, in Year 3, pupils enjoyed working in teams placing numbers into a 4-digit sequence to see who could get nearest to the target number. Knowledgeable learning support assistants give effective support to pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs. In the very good lesson in Year 2, the teacher maintained a brisk pace and provided a good range of fun, practical activities. These activities helped keep pupils' interest throughout the lesson and effective questioning extended their learning rapidly. Pupils understood the purpose of the work and its application to everyday life. Higher-attaining pupils

are still not challenged enough in some lessons and the discussion at the end of lessons is often rushed, providing insufficient time for pupils to review what they have learnt or for the teachers to assess the extent of their progress. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils have good attitudes in mathematics lessons. They are particularly enthusiastic when given practical or open-ended problems to solve. However, pupils are not always given sufficient encouragement to work independently or show initiative, for example, when carrying out investigations. The quality of presentation is variable across the school and in some year groups is not as good as it should be.

111. The school now provides a satisfactory curriculum. Effective use is made of the numeracy strategy to support teachers in their planning. However, pupils are not yet given sufficient opportunity to practise and refine their numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics. Since the last inspection, the school has developed satisfactory procedures for monitoring pupils' progress. In lessons, teachers provide work that more closely matches pupils' needs although sometimes the work planned for higher-attaining pupils is insufficiently challenging.
112. The subject co-ordinator provides effective leadership and there has been good progress in the development of mathematics since the time of the last inspection. The subject has been a recent area of priority and the school has responded well to the training and support provided. Members of staff are enthusiastic about improving practice further and areas for development have been identified through the monitoring of teaching and learning. The school has set up an effective system for monitoring pupils' progress over time and this is beginning to be used to help plan work. The school displays mathematical work attractively and this helps to raise the profile of the subject. Gifted pupils are given an effective opportunity to extend their learning during a lunchtime mathematics club.

## **SCIENCE**

113. Pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national averages by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Whilst most pupils are achieving standards that are appropriate to their prior attainment, potentially higher-attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is because teaching does not consistently meet their needs, with pupils often doing the same activity whatever their ability.
114. Teacher assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2000 show that standards of attainment were higher in that year. However, the current Year 2 includes a high number of pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs and, as result, they are achieving at a lower level. Inspection findings indicate that fewer pupils are likely to achieve Level 3 in the current Year 2.
115. Teacher assessments and inspection evidence show that there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls or from different backgrounds.
116. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when they are given individual support and they attain satisfactory standards in relation to their prior attainment. Well-trained learning support assistants make a good contribution to the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers ensure that learning support assistants are well informed about what is being taught in a lesson. This enables support to be unobtrusive but effective. The small number of pupils from travelling families are given sound support and make satisfactory progress.
117. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 understand that there are different sources of light and can explain where electricity comes from. They know which types of food are good for you and which are less healthy. By the end of Year 2, pupils are beginning to develop a wider range of skills and knowledge. They describe in more detail where light comes from and know that plants need light and water to grow. They understand that electricity is dangerous and explain how we use electricity in our everyday lives. Most pupils can build a simple circuit to light a bulb. In Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of the differences between various materials. They successfully categorise materials according to their properties and understand how materials can be changed by the application of heat.
118. By the end of Year 4, pupils have improved their knowledge of various materials as they begin to

categorise them using more complex criteria such as natural and man-made. They can explain in simple terms the differences between solids, gases and liquids and know how to separate materials using techniques such as evaporation and filtering. Most pupils can identify when they are using the forces of pushing and pulling and can explain how friction makes a moving vehicle slow down.

119. The most important weakness in attainment throughout the school is the pupils' relative lack of skills in using and applying their scientific knowledge to practical situations. Pupils lack independence and they find it difficult to organise and carry out investigations without a high level of adult support. Pupils do not always make accurate predictions and even higher-attaining pupils find it hard to draw their own conclusions using their scientific knowledge. By the end of Year 4, higher-attaining pupils who have a good scientific knowledge are unable to devise, plan and organise simple experiments or investigations.
120. The quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. Teachers prepare carefully for lessons, making good use of resources, including information and communication technology where appropriate. Activities are interesting and teachers try hard to make learning purposeful. They are very careful about ensuring that pupils understand why they are doing a particular activity and what they should learn from that activity. This helps to keep pupils interested in their work and means that on most occasions pupils behave well. However, where the teacher spends too long talking to pupils or there is a lack of challenge in the work that is given, a small number of pupils lose interest and their behaviour becomes disruptive, disturbing the learning of all pupils. Many pupils find it hard to work independently and teachers do not sufficiently encourage pupils to develop this skill. This is a significant weakness of teaching and it means that pupils' investigation skills are not as good as they should be.
121. Lessons are carefully planned and teachers often identify how they hope to challenge higher-attaining pupils. However, this is not apparent in practice, with higher-attaining pupils often doing the same work as other pupils. This means that they do not learn as quickly as they should. Teachers' planning indicates that there is a lack of understanding of how the learning of higher-attaining pupils can be developed, with many 'extension' activities merely being a consolidation of existing skills.
122. Teachers use questioning well to encourage pupils to think about what they are learning and to assess their understanding. Throughout the school, teachers are careful to use the correct scientific vocabulary such as the Year 2 teacher who spoke to the pupils about 'calories' and 'kilo-joules'. Pupils are given good opportunities to use their numeracy skills in science lessons. For example, in Year 4, pupils measured bones using a variety of mathematical skills. In contrast, the overuse of worksheets and copying means that pupils get too few opportunities to use their literacy skills. Pupils generally present work neatly, although on some occasions the teachers' expectations are too low in this area. As a result, some work, particularly in Year 3, is not as well presented as it should be and this detracts from the quality of pupils' learning.
123. The quality of teachers' day-to-day assessment of pupils' work and progress is satisfactory. Teachers regularly mark work and often write useful comments to help pupils identify what they need to do to improve. Teachers evaluate learning at the end of lessons and record their evaluations on their planning. This is most effective when the evaluations clearly identify those pupils who have achieved well or who will need additional support. However, insufficient use is made of this information to help decide what needs to be taught next.
124. The school provides a broad and balanced science curriculum and since the last inspection the school has adopted an appropriate scheme of work which helps to ensure that pupils' learning builds on what they have previously been taught. However, the school has not yet fully ensured that the needs of pupils of differing ages are met when pupils in different year groups study the same topic.
125. The subject co-ordinator has only recently been appointed. She has had little opportunity to monitor teaching or learning in order to develop an understanding of the relative strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Science has not been a recent focus of school improvement. Nevertheless, the co-ordinator has drawn up a subject development plan that identifies clear and appropriate priorities for improvement. This includes the need to improve resources which, at the moment, are barely adequate to meet the needs of the school's scheme of work.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

126. Pupils' attainment in art and design is satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 and pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection when pupils' attainment and progress were unsatisfactory. There are examples of high quality work, particularly following workshops in school led by an advisory teacher. Three-dimensional artwork has improved. Pupils in Year 2 have designed and made attractive clay tiles depicting playground games and pupils in Year 4 have made interesting sculptures by folding and twisting aluminium foil. Pupils' skills develop appropriately throughout the school, for example, their ability to blend and mix colours when using paint or pastels. Pupils are given suitable opportunities to study the work of famous artists, for example, the sculptures of Henry Moore.
127. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards appropriate to their prior attainment and make satisfactory progress. Pupils from travelling families are given sound support and also make satisfactory progress.
128. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. It is now satisfactory, with an example of good teaching at Key Stage 2. Weaknesses in teachers' planning have been rectified. The school has provided good quality training and this has helped teachers to improve their knowledge and confidence in the subject. Pupils enjoy the practical work in art and design lessons and behave well. For example, pupils in Year 1 are careful when printing using a range of objects. Strengths in teaching are the way teachers' involve pupils by explaining clearly what they are expected to learn at the start of lessons and demonstrating techniques effectively. In the best lesson in Year 3, the teacher gave pupils good opportunities to evaluate each other's work and asked good questions to deepen their understanding.
129. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, and weaknesses in the curriculum at the time of the last inspection such as a lack of three-dimensional work and insufficient study of famous artists have been remedied. A scheme of work is used effectively to support members of staff in their lesson planning. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' knowledge of other cultures when they study art from around the world. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 made stunning masks after looking at an example from Columbia and pupils in Years 1 and 2 made careful and colourful paintings using aboriginal designs. Teachers have started to record pupils' strengths and weaknesses on their lesson plans but do not always use this information when planning future work.
130. The effective subject co-ordinator has a clear job description and monitors teachers' planning and evaluations of topics to see how the subject can be further improved. Art resources were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. The school has worked hard to ensure that recently purchased resources are accessible to members of staff, although there are still some shortages in pictures and posters to provide pupils with professional examples.
131. The difficulty of a lack of space in some classrooms identified at the time of the last inspection remains and in one lesson time was lost organising the safe distribution of resources. Effective use is made of information and communication technology to support work in the subject. This is particularly evident in Year 3 where pupils have made some attractive computer-based patterns.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

132. During the inspection no lessons were on the timetable. Judgements on attainment and progress have been made by scrutinising pupils' work, photographs and teachers' planning and by talking with members of staff.
133. Pupils' attainment is satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 and they make satisfactory progress throughout the school. This was also the case at the time of the last inspection. In Year 1, pupils show the materials they intend using on their plans and are good at following their designs accurately. Year 2 pupils make effective pop-up mechanisms and pupils in Year 3 draw clear plans when designing torches, considering the needs of the user effectively. In Year 4, pupils design practical money

containers, showing the intended dimensions and materials to be used. Pupils' ability to evaluate finished products is less well developed than their designing and making skills.

134. The teachers plan a broad and balanced curriculum and this provides pupils with an appropriate range of skills and knowledge. The subject makes a good contribution towards pupils' cultural and social development, for example, all pupils worked together designing and making fabric squares for a whole-school wall hanging, and developing food technology skills. Teachers have started to record pupils' strengths and weaknesses but are not using this information consistently to plan work for individuals or groups of pupils.
135. The subject has not been a recent area of whole-school focus. The subject co-ordinator has a clear vision for the future development of the subject and monitors teachers' lesson planning effectively.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

136. Pupils' attainment is satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were unsatisfactory. The improvement has been brought about by the introduction of a new scheme of work based on official guidelines, an increase in the quality and range of resources and a subsequent raising of teachers' expectations. Pupils with special educational needs or from travelling families make progress in line with that of other pupils. They follow the same curriculum and teachers give them effective support in matching work to their needs.
137. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 because the curriculum is well constructed to develop their understanding across a broad range of topics. There has been an improvement since the last inspection in the amount and quality of recorded work. Pupils make a tally of shops and other amenities found in the village and draw good maps of the locality using symbols for main features. They identify differences between their village and other locations studied through stories and pictures. In considering the climate of other countries, they show a sound understanding of why houses, clothing and lifestyles differ. The study of climate zones is further developed in Years 3 and 4 and the best work is carefully illustrated. Technical terms are used appropriately and accounts are detailed. Mapping skills develop well, which is a good improvement since the last inspection. By the end of Year 4, pupils can find locations on Ordnance Survey maps and interpret common symbols. Their descriptions of rainforest conditions show strong imaginative projection, supported by sound factual information. In finding this information, they make good use of their research skills.
138. Teaching was satisfactory in two lessons seen and good in another. Lessons are based on clear targets drawn from the programme of study so that pupils' progress is secure. Discussion is used to review previous learning and, as a result, pupils are confident in their knowledge. They are able to identify continents and countries on a world map and show a good understanding of climate zones. Lessons are well resourced to catch pupils' interest and pupils show a keen interest in maps, photographs and video clips in computer software. They take a pride in knowing correct terminology, identifying the important points in data and in making positive suggestions about improvements to the environment.
139. Teachers use questioning well to check on understanding and encourage closer analysis of information. They give clear instructions for practical activities and manage their organisation effectively. However, tasks do not consistently challenge higher-attaining pupils or extend pupils' literacy or numeracy skills. In one lesson in Key Stage 2, most pupils were expected to carry out a simple cut-and-paste labelling of a line drawing before going on to a more demanding writing task, which they could not then complete in the time. However, a good feature of a Year 4 lesson was the stimulating task of discussing in pairs what they knew already about life in a village in India, comparing it with their own experience and planning questions to research. The teacher circulated the class, giving extra attention to pupils with special needs and those with lower attainment so that they were able to take part successfully. Pupils found this stimulating and interesting and all were actively involved. They helped each other and sustained concentration, producing a good list of questions. The teacher then explored these questions with the class, using the board to focus on issues, develop contrasts and deepen understanding.
140. Management of the subject is sound. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory, but the use made of

the information to guide the planning of suitable tasks is not consistent enough. Two year-groups study the same topics at the same time, but tasks are not always matched closely enough to the needs of groups at different levels of attainment across the two classes. There are good links with history and religious education to consolidate pupils' learning. Effective use is made of visits into the local community to give pupils experience of fieldwork. Attractive displays around the school of artefacts, photographs and maps stimulate pupils' interest and make a good contribution to their cultural development.

## **HISTORY**

141. Pupils reach satisfactory standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Standards have been maintained at this level since the last inspection. Pupils with special needs make good progress. They are given tasks that match their levels of attainment and additional support so that they play a full part in class discussions and activities. Pupils from travelling families are given sound support and also make satisfactory progress.
142. Pupils in Year 2 have a clear sense of what has changed over time in the context of their own families and everyday life. Using the evidence of factual accounts, pictures and photographs, they identify similarities and differences between seaside holidays today and a hundred years ago. They study the life of Florence Nightingale and pupils with higher attainment write detailed biographies, explaining her contribution to medicine. Tasks are well designed to develop their skills in interpreting reasons why disasters such as the Plague and the Fire of London happened. By the end of Year 4, pupils have a sound understanding of several contrasting periods, including the Roman and Saxon invaders and Britain since the 1930s. They have good skills in identifying and interpreting evidence from a range of sources, including documents and objects from the periods studied. Some of their extended accounts show an impressive grasp of factual detail. Good literacy standards are used well in their imaginative writing, for instance, when they project into the lives of child evacuees in the Second World War. The work of all pupils becomes progressively more precise and accurate in recording and interpreting evidence. However, an overuse of worksheets means that, on occasions, opportunities to extend pupils' literacy skills are missed.
143. History was not taught during the inspection, so no judgement can be made of the quality of teaching. In pupils' work seen, many tasks offer a high level of challenge to pupils with higher attainment, particularly those that require independent research using information books and extended accounts to explain the causes and effects of historical change. However, on occasions, pupils across the range of attainment are given a task, such as colouring in drawings, that does not challenge those pupils with potentially higher attainment.
144. Management of the subject is satisfactory and has secured an improvement in curriculum and assessment since the last inspection, when they were unsatisfactory. The scheme of work is based on nationally recommended guidelines and planned to provide progression in understanding from simple to more sophisticated concepts. However, two year-groups study the same topics at the same time and tasks are not always well matched to the full range of age and attainment across the two classes.
145. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory, but not enough use is made of the information in planning suitable work. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development, with effective use of special events involving practical drama and visits to sites of historic interest. Good use is made of classroom displays to motivate good work and stimulate interest in the subject.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

146. Pupils' attainment is satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Standards have risen since the last inspection when they were below average. Since then, the school has improved resources and has introduced a suitable scheme of work to support pupils' learning. Teachers are more confident about teaching the subject, making more use of computers in lessons; this is having a positive impact on standards.

147. Throughout the school, pupils develop sound word-processing skills. By the end of Year 2, pupils can type simple texts using a computer, although many pupils lack familiarity with the layout of a keyboard. This slows the pace of their work. Pupils successfully play a range of language and mathematical games using the keyboard and mouse. By the end of Year 4, pupils have further improved their word-processing skills. They change font-type and the colour and size of their text, and use their skills to present their work in a way that is attractive to an audience. Most pupils in Years 3 and 4 are able to use clip-art to make their writing interesting or to produce greeting cards and book covers. Pupils in Year 3 successfully used their word-processing skills to make a display linked to work in design and technology. Pupils are beginning to develop an understanding of spreadsheets and data handling. They produce graphs and understand how computers can be used to present information in different ways. For example, higher-attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 are beginning to use computers to prepare presentations on their work in mathematics. Pupils understand that machines can be programmed to follow instructions. However, this aspect of their learning is less well developed than others because of the lack of suitable resources.
148. Pupils have a good knowledge of the many applications of information and communication technology and understand that it involves more than just working on the computer. Even the youngest pupils confidently use tape recorders, and understand how information and communication technology can be used in everyday life. Pupils understand that the internet can be used to find information, although the school currently has only limited access to it.
149. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards appropriate to their prior attainment and make satisfactory progress. Pupils from travelling families are given good opportunities to work on computers both in lessons and when they are being given additional support by a teacher from the local authority support service. At these times, pupils develop appropriate skills as their confidence improves.
150. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with one unsatisfactory lesson seen during the inspection. A significant strength of the school's work is the very effective way that teachers ensure that the use of information and communication technology is built into all curriculum areas. Teachers take care to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to the curriculum and the use of computers and other resources is carefully planned into everyday work. Pupils were observed developing their skills in a range of subjects, including literacy, numeracy, science and geography. Very good quality displays of pupils' work show how skills are used in different subjects. These displays help to make learning purposeful to the pupils and show the progression of skills across the school.
151. The school has a small computer room with four computers. The small number of computers available means that the use of this resource is not always effective. Teaching is unsatisfactory when all of the pupils try to work on the computers at the same time, with five or six pupils grouped around each machine. When this happens, pupils lose interest and some become disruptive, slowing the pace of learning. In contrast, in a successful lesson in Year 1, the teacher planned activities so that some pupils worked in pairs on the computers whilst the rest of the class worked on a different activity that did not require access to a computer. Groups swapped over as they finished an activity. The quality of learning in this lesson was good, with pupils quickly acquiring new skills and showing good attitudes to the work that they had been given.
152. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. The school has introduced an appropriate format for evaluating learning at the end of each of half term and recording this information on planning. However, this does not provide sufficient information to help decide what individual pupils need to learn next. In particular, the needs of pupils who bring good skills from home are not identified and planning does not show how these higher-attaining pupils are to be challenged.
153. Management of the subject has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The subject co-ordinator provides good support to her colleagues and has helped to raise the profile of the subject throughout the school. This is having a positive impact on pupils' standards of attainment. There is a good awareness of how provision in the subject can be further improved in the future. This includes the need to improve assessment procedures so that the attainment and progress of individual pupils is more closely monitored.

154. Resources have been improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. The purchase of new hardware and software has considerably improved the profile of the subject throughout the school and pupils are benefiting from these new resources. However, the school still does not have sufficient resources for the aspect of the curriculum that involves programming and controlling computers and other forms of hardware such as sensors.

## **MUSIC**

155. Pupils' attainment is satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. At the time of the last inspection pupils' attainment was above average. However, the pupils in the present Year 4 attained satisfactory standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and have made satisfactory progress overall. Throughout the school, pupils are now making at least good progress in lessons. Younger pupils make very good progress in singing. They vary the dynamics by singing loudly and softly and have good diction. Pupils' attainment in Year 1 is above average and they have a good knowledge and understanding of pitch, rhythm and dynamics. Older pupils compose and perform various rhythms well and devise their own notation, but find it difficult to keep a steady beat.

156. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards appropriate to their prior attainment and make satisfactory progress. Pupils from travelling families are given appropriate support and also make satisfactory progress in developing musical skills.

157. The quality of teaching is very good in Key Stage 1 and good in the one lesson observed at Key Stage 2. Effective use is made of the good subject knowledge and specific skills of two teachers to work with all classes. The quality of teaching at the time of the last inspection was inconsistent, ranging from good to unsatisfactory. Teachers now have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and provide a good range of interesting activities. In the very good lessons, the teacher maintained pupils' interest and good behaviour very well by keeping a quick pace and changing the activities frequently. Specific questions for individuals ensured that pupils of differing prior attainment were all challenged well.

158. Pupils enjoy music lessons, join in with all activities enthusiastically and behave sensibly. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attitudes varied from class to class. Older pupils co-operate with each other well when devising their own rhythm sequences. Pupils enjoy listening to music in assemblies.

159. There are two subject co-ordinators who work together well to improve provision in the subject. There was no subject co-ordinator at the time of the last inspection. The school has ensured that pupils learning to play the violin now have access to the full curriculum and group violin lessons take place during the lunch break. These lessons effectively enhance the musical knowledge of the pupils who participate. A suitable policy and a commercial scheme of work are used successfully to support teachers in their lesson planning.

160. Pupils have good opportunities to perform in public at school concerts and in local music festivals, and they develop their social skills when singing to senior citizens. An attractive display of instruments from around the world helps to increase pupils' cultural development. Visiting musicians give pupils the opportunity to extend their knowledge about how instruments are played. The school has a suitable selection of percussion instruments, although there are shortages in pre-recorded music and programs for the computers.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

161. Only dance and games lesson in Years 1 and 3 were observed during the inspection. Judgements on the attainment of pupils in these year groups have been made from the work seen in the one timetabled lesson and through discussions with pupils and members of staff. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on attainment in Years 2 or 4.

162. In Year 1 and Year 3, pupils' attainment is satisfactory for their age, with most pupils learning new skills at an appropriate rate. The school has maintained the standards found at the time of the last

inspection. In Year 1, pupils catch and throw with increasing accuracy and work with a partner to bounce a ball to each other. In Year 3, pupils show greater body control when dancing. They develop simple sequences using rolls, jumps and turns. Older pupils are beginning to show a good awareness of the effects of exercise on their bodies.

163. Pupils with special educational needs or from travelling families participate well in lessons and make satisfactory progress.
164. Teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are carefully planned and activities are fun. Good use is made of pre-recorded tapes to provide pupils with a range of stimuli that hold their attention. Teachers have a good awareness of health and safety requirements and ensure that pupils are given appropriate opportunities to warm up at the start of sessions. Pupils are given some opportunities to evaluate each other's work. However, this is not always effective because the opportunity arises at the end of a lesson and does not allow pupils to improve their skills in the light of comments. Teachers work hard to ensure that pupils behave sensibly in lessons. They are largely successful in this, although on occasions small groups of pupils do not behave appropriately. As a result, some time is wasted repeating instructions or waiting for quiet and this slows the pace of pupils' learning.
165. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. It includes opportunities for all pupils to learn to swim in the school's own outdoor swimming pool during the second half of the summer term. The availability of the swimming pool and a very large and spacious hall make accommodation good for the teaching of physical education. Appropriate use is made of commercial schemes of work to support teachers in their planning. Teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress by evaluating learning at the end of each half term. This is effective in identifying how well a class has worked but does not yet give enough information about the attainment and progress of individual pupils. As a result, in some lessons there is a lack of challenge for more able pupils, with too much time spent consolidating skills rather than learning new skills.
166. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and has identified the need to develop consistent assessment procedures across the school as a priority.
167. Extra-curricular provision in physical education is satisfactory. Pupils have good opportunities to compete against each other and against local schools in football. There is a gymnastics club organised by a teacher, as well as a football club, which is organised by a parent. These are well attended and give pupils good opportunities to practice and develop skills outside lessons. Occasional visits from outside coaches also enhance provision. For example, a local football league club occasionally holds training sessions at the school.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

168. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment meets the expectation of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. They make satisfactory progress in developing an appropriate knowledge and understanding of several major world faiths, for example, how Muslims worship and the symbolism in Passover meals in Judaism. They successfully learn about why certain places and people are special and show sensitivity and respect for the beliefs of others. However, pupils in Year 3 demonstrate a limited knowledge about the life of Christ. Younger pupils develop an appropriate knowledge of various festivals and the purpose of religious artefacts.
169. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards appropriate to their prior attainment and make satisfactory progress. The small number of pupils from travelling families are given sound support and also make satisfactory progress.
170. The quality of teaching was satisfactory in the one lesson observed. There was a good pace to the lesson and questioning was used effectively to encourage pupils to think about the impact Jesus had on the people he met. Whilst the attitudes of most pupils were satisfactory, some pupils were inattentive and this reduced the effectiveness of the teaching. Teachers' lesson planning shows that much use is made of drama to make lessons interesting. However, samples of pupils' work show that throughout the school, insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to write independently and much of their written

work is copied or on simple worksheets. This means that higher-attaining pupils in particular are not always given sufficient challenge. In Year 4, there was an example of good practice when pupils used their research skills to answer questions about places of worship.

171. Collective worship makes a valuable contribution to pupils' understanding about faith and beliefs. For example, in one assembly, older pupils helped other pupils learn about the birth of Buddha by performing a short play.
  
172. There is a satisfactory curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus provides good coverage and support for teachers' lesson planning. The new subject co-ordinator has developed a draft policy and has a clear vision for the future development of the subject including the improvement of assessment procedures. Religious education is not a current area for school development. Whilst the subject co-ordinator has started to monitor teachers' planning, there has been no opportunity to monitor teaching in lessons. However, a member of the governing body has looked at provision for religious education and supported the school in developing the subject. Members of staff evaluate the suitability of work at the end of a topic and the subject co-ordinator keeps a careful log to show how the subject is being developed. There are satisfactory educational resources to support learning in the short term, although gaps in provision remain from the time of the last inspection.