

INSPECTION REPORT

NATHANIEL NEWTON INFANT SCHOOL

Hartshill, Nuneaton

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125513

Headteacher: Mrs A Brown

Reporting inspector: Mrs P Silcock
21261

Dates of inspection: 1st – 4th July 2002

Inspection number: 213340

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Victoria Road Hartshill Nuneaton Warwickshire
Postcode:	CV10 0LS
Telephone number:	024 7639 2236
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs G Roberts
Date of previous inspection:	May 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21261	Pauline Silcock	Registered inspector	Mathematics History Music English as an additional language Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught?
15181	Meg Hackney	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
13805	Lynn Lowery	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology	
24342	Denise Franklin	Team inspector	English Physical education Religious education Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?
8552	Wallis Hart	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated just north of Nuneaton, close to open countryside, but within an old industrial landscape. It caters for pupils between 4 and 7 years. At the time of the inspection, 236 pupils were on roll, including 78 in Reception. It is similar in size to other primary schools. Children start in September of the year they are five. At the time of the inspection, a significant number (around 20 per cent) were not yet five. A similar number had learning difficulties. While attainments on entry vary, school assessments show that most children have skills well below those expected in social, personal and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Approximately 23 per cent are identified for 'school action' or 'school action plus' for special educational needs' provision as set out in the latest guidelines. Around another nine per cent are being monitored because of concerns about their learning. About 0.4 per cent have a statement of special educational need, below the national average. In total, the proportion of pupils with identified learning needs is higher than average. Most have general learning difficulties, speech and communication problems or emotional and behavioural difficulties. About 2 per cent are learning English as an additional language, somewhat higher than in most schools. Just over half of these, at an early stage of English language learning, get extra support through Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant funding. About 22 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, broadly in line with the national average. The school maintains that this conservative figure does not present a true picture. There is a rising trend in the movement of pupils starting and leaving school other than at the normal time (3.7 and 6 per cent respectively according to figures for the last school year). Two fixed period exclusions were made in the year prior to inspection because of behavioural problems.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Nathaniel Newton is a good school. Standards in English, mathematics and science are rising with notable gains in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Prior to inspection, the school received a government award recognising much improved standards, especially in reading and mathematics. Pupils of all ages often do well in all subjects relative to their ages and abilities, because of improved teaching, which is now mainly good. Their achievement is also owed to the school's very good leadership and management. Under the headteacher's direction, the school has taken strides forward towards better provision and higher standards. Her close liaison with a very able deputy and support from a key senior teacher have been crucial. In fact, a strength of the school is the teamwork amongst all teaching and support staff. The Chair of governors gives the headteacher and her staff sterling support through her knowledge of the local community and her leadership of the governing body. There is a very strong, shared, commitment to continuing school improvement from all concerned. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- It teaches well, especially in the Reception classes and Year 2.
- From Reception upwards, pupils mostly enjoy school and achieve well because of frequently stimulating activities that engage their interest and imagination and build well on previous learning.
- There are very evident strengths in the partnership between the headteacher and senior managers.
- Provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good.
- The care and welfare of pupils is very good. They feel safe and secure in their relationships with adults, knowing that what they have to offer is valued.
- Parents are given very good information about the school's work and what their children are learning.
- Governors are keen to participate in school life, grasping well the school's strengths and where improvements might be made.

What could be improved

- Aspects of provision for special educational needs.
- The quality of teaching to reach greater consistency in line with best practice seen.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Very good improvement is observed since the school's last inspection in May 1999. Standards in English, mathematics and science continue to rise. Initiatives in the teaching of reading introduced by the headteacher have had a marked impact on standards. Reading skills are better applied to subjects across the curriculum, while more parents support their children's reading at home. Pupils also now apply writing skills to tasks across the curriculum. All aspects of provision for mathematics have improved considerably, including teaching. In science, there is suitable stress on correct scientific terminology and strengths are seen in the teaching of physical processes. More able pupils are suitably challenged by tasks. Huge improvements have been made to almost all aspects of provision for children in the Reception classes, although the school still regards this area as one for further development. The management of the school has improved markedly. Thorough assessment procedures are well used to inform planning, although this area is still set for further development since procedures can be sharpened. School improvement planning is very good and set out accessibly, showing what needs to be done in the short and long term, how this will be achieved and how success will be monitored and assessed. Parents have very good information about the school's work and receive better annual reports on their children's progress. Pupils take suitable initiative in learning and in undertaking small tasks. Appraisal systems are securely in place. Staff at all levels share a strong commitment to continued improvement and their capacity for this is judged very good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
Reading	E	E	D	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	E	E	E	D	
Mathematics	E	E	E	E	

The table shows that pupils reached standards below average for pupils in all schools in statutory reading tests in 2001. Standards were well below average in writing and mathematics. Comparisons with results in similar schools find pupils rise above the average of peers in reading, are below average in writing and well below average in mathematics. Teachers assessed pupils as below the national average in speaking and listening at expected levels. In science, these assessments show pupils were above the average, overall, at expected levels. The school reached targets set by the local education authority in the 2001 tests. The latest results for 2002 show that a rising trend is maintained and built on. Inspection evidence reinforces this picture of improvement. Although evidence also shows that pupils remain below average in English, overall, good gains in learning generally are being made. This is clearest in reading where standards are close to expectations for seven-year-olds, with the more able doing better. Standards of speaking are below those expected for seven-year-olds, but listening skills are average. Although standards in writing are below average, samples of work reveal that Year 1 pupils do as well as expected for their age, suggesting that a focus on writing is starting to work. The school's hard work in improving mathematics provision is also bearing fruit, with standards rising markedly. They are now broadly average, with, again, more able pupils doing better. In science, too, pupils achieve broadly in line with expectations. Children make very good progress during Reception and most should reach the Early Learning Goals by transfer to Year 1, in most areas, including those where they are found weak on entry to school. Pupils of all ages apply literacy and numeracy skills well across the curriculum. They reach satisfactory standards, overall, in design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education. There is insufficient evidence to form an overall judgement on standards in music, although standards in singing are at least satisfactory by Year 2. Pupils reach good standards in art both in relation to skills acquired with a range of media and in their application of skills to other subjects (for example, when they draw plants from close observation in science). There was no evidence of standards reached in information and communication technology

because of continuing difficulties in the installation of computers. Pupils do well in all subjects relative to their ages and abilities in all areas of learning in the Reception year and in many subjects across the curriculum in Years 1 and 2. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils enjoy school and concentrate on tasks for appreciable periods.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils respond well to adults' instructions, especially where high standards of work and behaviour are made explicit.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils most frequently work productively with one another when sharing tasks or playing together. They relate well to adults, whom they respect.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

From the youngest in Reception through to Year 2, pupils mostly enjoy coming to school. They are generally well behaved in lessons and during outside play and their movement in and out of the hall for assembly is exemplary, especially when they sit and listen peacefully to music until everyone gathers. At times, a very few pupils in Year 1 present really challenging behaviour. Teachers' strategies for including them in lessons do not always work, however well these strategies are deployed. Yet pupils' good relationships with one another and with adults are frequently to the fore, enhancing classroom ethos. A significant number of pupils take holidays in term time and a small number of parents fail to provide the school with reasons for absence. The school works extremely hard on attendance matters and both attendance levels and unauthorised absence have improved significantly over the past year. Nevertheless, these remain a high priority for its school improvement planning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Almost all teaching is satisfactory with almost two thirds good or better. Only a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was seen, the result of insufficient firmness in dealing with a few pupils' behaviour. Strengths are seen in Reception and, particularly, Year 2. In the better lessons, teachers manage pupils well and make explicit that everyone should listen and pay attention. For example, in a very good Year 2 literacy lesson, a teacher held the attention of all pupils by discreet signals and occasional firm reminders about her expectations. Consequently, all pupils made good gains in learning what a 'book critic' does and in understanding the nature of the review task they were to do about the story the 'Ugly Duckling'. The teaching of English, mathematics, science, art and design, history, music and physical education is good or better in many Year 2 lessons. The very good teaching arouses pupils' enthusiasm, accelerating progress over time. In lessons where teaching is only satisfactory, a lesson's pace is sometimes too slow. This was seen in a Year 1 science lesson when it took too long to arrange for all pupils to discover whether shiny objects could be seen in total darkness, so pupils' interest waned. No teaching was seen in information and communication technology because of difficulties installing computers. Specialist teaching helps support pupils' music to very good effect in Reception and Year 1. Pupils with identified learning needs (such as those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language) are generally well taught by specialist teachers and other support staff. This is particularly the case where support is given within the classroom or where pupils are withdrawn from a lesson and work is linked closely to classroom tasks undertaken by other pupils. Teachers across the age-range plan well for pupils' different

learning needs and tasks are most frequently matched appropriately to these.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Teachers frequently plan a stimulating range of activities well geared to capturing pupils' interest and building on previous learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Provision is good when linked to a lesson's content with a clear focus on relevant skills. But pupils are often taken out of lessons for support and so miss ongoing work in subjects across the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. It ensures that pupils have access to the full curriculum. Suitable stress is placed on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy as crucial to other areas.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good, overall, with strengths in moral and social development. Approaches to these are consistent across the school. Pupils are taught right from wrong in ways they understand and can apply to their daily lives.
How well the school cares for its pupils	To very good effect. Child protection procedures are very good. High levels of commitment from all senior managers make sure these are followed.

The school works hard at its good partnership with parents. At times, withdrawing pupils for specialist support disrupts the learning of all pupils, causing behaviour-management problems, as seen in a religious education lesson in Year 1. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, but curricular opportunities for widening pupils' knowledge of the diversity of its own and the wider society are limited. The school is working hard to make new equipment for information and communication technology ready for use at the start of the autumn term. It keeps to the fore its belief that high order provision for the care and welfare of pupils is vital to successful learning. Because it does, it has very good systems for assessing pupils' attainments and monitoring their progress from entry to school in Reception. Learning needs are identified early and systematically planned for throughout their schooling. All aspects of this area of its work reveal considerable strengths.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good, overall. The headteacher has a clear educational vision for the school, shared by her deputy. Well supported by a senior teacher, they provide a formidable team, leading the school forward well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily. Many governors are recently appointed. They have a good grasp of the school's strengths and where improvements can be made.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Rigorous systems are in place for monitoring teaching and learning in classrooms and evaluating all aspects of the school's work.
The strategic use of resources	Good, overall. Very good financial management ensures that priorities in school improvement planning are properly supported through budgetary decisions. Specific grants are satisfactorily deployed for their designated purposes.

There are sufficient teachers to meet curricular demands for the age-range taught. Support staffing is also adequate, although budgetary constraints have meant a cut in levels. Governors are monitoring this decision carefully to assess its impact on pupils' learning. Subject co-ordinators usually give a strong lead in areas of responsibility. They have a good insight into classrooms through carefully structured monitoring strategies. Accommodation is good, overall, but provision for outdoor play for children in the Reception year is very plainly unsatisfactory, as highlighted in school improvement planning. Resources for learning are sufficient and often of good quality. The library is excellent, well used during school time and after school by children and their parents. The school applies principles of best value to good effect. It makes sure that its purchases give value for money and, as outlined above, monitors the impact of its spending decisions closely.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy school and make good progress. • Teaching is good and teachers know children well. Teachers have high expectations of children. • The school informs them fully about its work and about children's progress. • Teachers and the headteacher are easily available at the start and end of the day. ▪ The school listens to and respects their views. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school working more closely with parents. • Information about the school and children's progress. • The range of activities available outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with the positive views of most parents. They disagree that the school does not work well with parents since it strives very hard in this area. Parents spoken to agree that prompt action is taken where concerns are raised. Also, as noted, the school provides very good information about its work and about children's progress. Inspectors consider the range of activities out of lessons is good, especially considering the age of the pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Although attainments vary on entry to school in the Reception year, school assessments show that most children are well below levels of attainment expected for their age in social, personal and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Towards the end of the year (that is, almost a year later) these same assessments show that most achieve only just below what is expected for their age in these crucial areas of learning compared to children in other local authority schools. Inspection evidence supports this promising finding, suggesting that a majority are likely to achieve almost all the Early Learning Goals in these three areas before transfer to Year 1 in September. There are clear indications of above average attainment by some children. Strengths in communication, language and literacy are seen in the development of children's early reading and writing skills. The speech of many, though, is still hesitant. Generally, a limited vocabulary inhibits children's interactions with adults and with one another, with many still finding it hard to express ideas at length and sustain conversations. Nevertheless, it is noted that a significant proportion of children (around 20 per cent) are very young and will not be five until just before they transfer to Year 1. A similar proportion is also assessed as giving concern in relation to learning and receives additional support for a variety of purposes linked to important curricular goals.
2. As well as in the areas of learning outlined above, most children are set to achieve the Early Learning Goals in creative development and in some aspects of physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, with regard to physical development, they can control many tools for writing, painting and moulding materials such as play dough and they build with construction toys confidently. In lessons in the school hall, they run at speed without bumping into one another and control their bodies in response to a teacher's instructions. In their knowledge and understanding of the world, they are beginning to understand passing time, as when they think about how they are different now from when they were babies. They make simple maps to show different places in and around the school buildings and they investigate the natural world around them, to learn about plants and mini-beasts for instance. They do not, however, currently use computers because of difficulties the school is experiencing with the installation of new machines. Also, unsatisfactory outdoor play provision hampers children's progress, particularly (although not solely) in extending their knowledge of the world and in their physical development. However, assessments and inspection evidence underline the very good progress made by all children during their first year in full-time schooling, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. All children achieve well relative to their age and abilities. This is owed to much improved provision since the last inspection, including the overall good quality teaching.
3. In statutory tests last year (2001), seven-year-olds achieved below the average of pupils in all schools in reading and well below this average in writing. Compared to pupils in similar schools, they achieved above the average in reading and below this in writing. In mathematics, results were well below the average of pupils in all and similar schools. Over a period of three years, boys performed significantly less well than girls in all three tests, but most especially in reading and writing. Over a period of five years, results vary, reflecting the strengths and weaknesses of different cohorts, but show a rising trend, overall, especially in reading, which is close to the national average in 2001. Closer analysis of test results last year shows, in fact, that most pupils achieved in line with levels expected (Level 2) in each test. They also did quite well at the higher Level 3 in reading, particularly, but in mathematics, too. It is the relatively high proportion falling in the lower range of Level 2 and below that 'drags' overall results down. Teachers assessed pupils as below average in speaking and listening at expected levels and well below the average at Level 3 compared to pupils in all schools. They assessed pupils as above the national average in science at expected levels and broadly in line with this average at Level 3. Indications for the latest tests (2002), show that the rising trend in reading, writing and mathematics continues. Further gains at Level 3 again show in reading and mathematics and results in writing have improved, overall, including in the higher range of Level 2. Comparisons with national results cannot yet be made and teachers' assessments in speaking and listening and in science are also not yet available.

4. The school reached targets agreed with the local education authority in the 2001 statutory test results. The latest results (that is, for 2002) show it has, in fact, exceeded targets set for mathematics whilst again achieving those for other tests. The school takes good account of a wide range of assessment information when setting and agreeing targets. Just prior to inspection, it received an achievement award from the government in recognition of the 'value added' to pupils' learning in relation to results in reading and mathematics, especially, in the 2001 statutory tests.
5. Inspection evidence supports the positive picture of improving standards, overall, in spite of below average standards still seen in English at the end of Year 2. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the generally poor language skills evident on entry continue to affect pupils' progress in each year group across subjects and clearly affect achievement in statutory tests. Standards in speaking remain below those expected for seven-year-olds, but listening skills are average. The recent initiative regarding the organisation of reading groups is working and reading standards are rising significantly. They are now close to those expected, in the main, with the more able improving on this. Although standards in writing are below average, samples of pupils' work reveal that Year 1 pupils achieve as expected for their age, suggesting that a focus on writing is beginning to produce results. Standards in mathematics are broadly average with, again, more able pupils doing better. The school has worked hard at improving all aspects of its provision in mathematics under the leadership of the deputy head for the past 18 months and this work is clearly starting to raise standards. In science, pupils also succeed broadly as expected. In some aspects of science, many achieve well (for example, when working on electric circuits in the programme of study for physical processes). No differences in attainment between boys and girls were seen during the inspection, although more boys are currently in the top set for mathematics (which suggests a reversal of previous trends). Overall, pupils make good progress in their learning in English, mathematics and science, revealing good levels of achievement, relative to their different abilities. This judgement includes pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. It is noted that the school's 'tracking' of pupils' progress over time shows that those who have been in school since the Reception year did particularly well in statutory tests in 2002, the first time it was possible to follow individuals in this way.
6. When talking to the rest of the class in subjects across the curriculum, approximately half of seven-year-olds express their ideas fairly well, using phrases or simple sentences. Still, few speak clearly and their vocabularies are noticeably limited. Listening skills are better developed, as seen in a personal, social and health education lesson when pupils listened attentively to discussions about their proposed visit to the junior school next day. These oldest pupils read simple texts correctly, with expression. They call on a range of strategies for reading unfamiliar words, as when they sound out initial letters or study a picture for clues. More able pupils write in a lively manner, holding the reader's attention. Basic punctuation is usually correct and handwriting is neat and joined. Although lower ability pupils can develop ideas within short passages, they need much adult support for this. For example, during a writing session most pupils knew how to structure a letter to someone based on the 'Jolly Postman' and with adult support could write, asking the character questions. By the end of Year 2, many still do not sustain ideas or develop them for writing purposes because of limited vocabularies. Pupils in mathematics sets in Year 2 are generally keen to participate in question and answer sessions. More able pupils manipulate number fans quickly when calculating 'near doubles' (such as 15 add 16) and explain their thinking clearly in mathematical language. Average pupils can sequence three digit numbers, placing 132, for example, in a number sequence and explaining their reasoning ("it is bigger than 130 but smaller than 140"). They can apply number skills to constructing a block graph and know that this has horizontal and vertical dimensions, although they are still uncertain about the term 'axes'. Pupils of lower ability work out a 'missing number' to complete a triangle of numbers, demonstrating secure understanding of addition and subtraction below 10. Seven-year-olds reach better than expected standards in science when asked to link cause and effect (for example, see why a lamp fails to light when they explore electric circuits). They are developing a sound understanding of what constitutes a fair test, as a result of many stimulating activities, teachers' good questioning skills and attention being paid to how lessons are structured to build on prior learning.
7. Pupils of all ages apply their literacy and numeracy skills well across the curriculum. For example, Year 1 pupils record their scientific observations simply, showing their understanding of tasks. They produce block charts in geography to show the number and kinds of different vehicles seen in a traffic survey outside the school gates. By Year 2, pupils write about the Great Fire of London for history

and compare life in cities 350 years ago and life to-day. More able pupils write at some length showing a good grasp of the sequence of events linked to the Great Fire. Work is neat and well presented, with good attention paid to grammar (such as full stops and capital letters). Pupils reach satisfactory standards, overall, in design and technology, geography, history, physical education, religious education and in singing in music. Skills in listening and responding to taped music are at least sound, as seen in a Year 2 music lesson (though an overall judgement on standards in the subject is not possible because too little work was seen in composing and performing with instruments). Pupils reach good standards in art relative to skills they acquire via a range of media and in their application of skills to other subjects (for example, drawing plants in science from close observation). There was no evidence of standards reached in information and communication technology because of continuing difficulties in installing computers. The school was dealing with this as a matter of urgency throughout the inspection period and firmly intends to put the matter right for the start of the new academic year in September. Pupils achieve well in all subjects relative to their age and different abilities and, in addition to the subjects outlined above, good achievement is noted in art and design, geography, history and music.

8. Pupils who find learning or conforming to the school's behaviour policy hard make good progress, overall, in their learning and achieve in line with their prior attainment. This is especially true when they get good classroom support from either a specialist support teacher or from teaching assistants, or when they are withdrawn from literacy lessons for specific adult support for a limited time. However, progress is less good when pupils are withdrawn from other lessons. This is because they not only miss out on valuable learning opportunities where class teachers pay good attention to all pupils' language skills in relation to the content taught, but also because their withdrawal causes general disruption, inhibiting learning for their classmates and slowing a lesson's progress.
9. Pupils learning English as an additional language are well supported by a visiting teacher provided by the local education authority. Support is very closely linked to ongoing learning, whether within classrooms (which is most frequently the case) or outside. As a result, pupils make good progress in acquiring necessary English language skills and attain in line with their peers.
10. Setting aside judgements on information and communication technology because of the problems explained (and where progress was found to be good and standards in line with expectations previously), the above picture marks an improvement since the last inspection for pupils across the age-range. This is especially the case in the Reception classes in the Foundation Stage and in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Most pupils have good attitudes towards school and behave well, as at the last inspection. Parents agree that children like school and most feel that behaviour is good. Almost all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, are enthusiastic about learning. Many examples were seen. For instance, in Year 2 history lessons pupils listened carefully to their teachers and to each other and were keen to contribute to class discussions. In a Reception year mathematics lesson, pupils worked hard at playing number games with partners or at building with bricks of different shapes and sizes. A boy was very proud of his construction, saying excitedly "I have never done that before" as he placed a triangular block on top of a curved one. In most lessons, pupils concentrate on tasks, showing good independence and co-operation when given the opportunity. They respect teachers' generally high expectations of their work and behaviour and that they finish tasks set. In a few lessons, pace is lost when a few pupils ignore a teacher's instructions, leading to a more general loss of interest and attention. At times, in spite of a teacher's best efforts at managing potentially disruptive pupils and interesting, planned activities, a lesson is impeded by the poor behaviour of a few. This was seen in a Year 1 design and technology lesson. Such behaviour has a negative effect on these pupils' learning and that of others. Much more commonly, the school is an orderly environment where pupils are happy and familiar with daily routines and life proceeds smoothly.
12. Pupils in all classes know school and classroom rules, which are prominently displayed in classrooms and central areas. Their acceptance of the school's high expectations of their self-discipline gives good impetus to their general progress and achievements. For example, in a Year 2 physical education lesson, pupils demonstrated a series of expressive dance and drama movements

very sensibly, at a teacher's request, while the rest of the class watched with real attention.

13. Behaviour in lessons and while pupils move around the school or play outside at break times is generally good. In the Reception year, it is often very good. Pupils mostly respond well to provision for personal and social education, as seen in 'circle time' sessions when they talk about personal matters and take turns at expressing their ideas. They also happily accept the school's good system of reward and its recognition of success and achievement. They like being congratulated by the headteacher in a weekly achievement assembly. They know the difference between right and wrong and are generally sensitive to the effects of their actions on others. At times, however, some children find it hard not to act on impulse when upset and so may 'hit out' at a perceived offender. Such incidents are always dealt with promptly and in ways pupils find consistent with the school's policy on behaviour matters. In the playground and at lunchtime, pupils behave well on the whole. Most play harmoniously together and support each other. Some high-spirited behaviour results in boisterousness and lack of self-control at times, but it is not intended to be harmful to others. Although there is occasional bullying, pupils know staff will deal with this appropriately. Pupils can explain procedures for dealing with bullying incidents and link these to relevant events. Most are polite, friendly and helpful towards adults and keen to talk about their work. There have been two fixed term exclusions owed to unacceptable behaviour and involving one pupil during the last academic year. No incidents of bullying or harassment were seen during the inspection.
14. Throughout the school, relationships are very good amongst pupils and between staff and pupils. This fact represents a marked improvement since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language are well integrated into all activities and enjoy working in small groups alongside peers in lessons. For example, a bilingual pupil worked productively in a group with a specialist teacher in a Year 1 mathematics lesson. Pupils share resources sensibly and willingly in lessons, especially in the better lessons that are planned and managed well. This was seen in a Year 2 science lesson, where pupils (including those with special educational needs) co-operated happily in groups making lamps light up and completing drawings to explain how this happened. Very good relationships throughout the school make a strong contribution to pupils' personal and academic progress and to the raising of standards.
15. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory, overall. It is closely linked to the school's aims of ensuring that pupils reach their full potential. Since the last inspection, opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and to show personal initiative remain satisfactory. In all classes, pupils help as register monitors, take messages around the school and collect sandwich boxes. In the Reception year, they wash their own beakers at snack times. Throughout the school, pupils take their responsibilities seriously and perform their jobs efficiently and confidently. They like doing small jobs. However, children in the Reception year find it hard to tidy up after lessons and still need a considerable amount of adult support. In fact, across the age-range pupils are not always as responsible in such matters as might be expected. Adults have to make sure things are tidy, or they have to chivvy pupils to complete tasks. Year 1 pupils take a long time to change for physical education and to get dressed after lessons so that time spent on teaching and learning is notably affected. Pupils enjoy visiting places of interest connected with their studies, as when Year 2 walked to the local war memorial when studying the First World War in connection with Remembrance Day. Such opportunities benefit their personal and social development.
16. The most recent attendance figures (93.8 per cent) are just below the national average. This represents a marked improvement over the previous year and reflects the school's hard work. Unauthorised absence is also much improved and is now below the national average. A significant number of pupils take holidays in term time and a small number of parents fail to provide the school with reasons for absence. Such absences are constant problems for the school as it seeks to improve attendance. Most pupils are punctual, but a small number are regularly late and their lateness is being well monitored. Registration and lessons start on time and there is an efficient and orderly start to the day, contributing positively to pupils' attitudes to school and to their personal and academic progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. Teaching is good, overall. This judgement marks a significant improvement since the last inspection. Across the school, 98 per cent of teaching was found satisfactory with 41 per cent judged good, a further 20 per cent very good and two per cent excellent. The remaining two per cent were unsatisfactory. Strengths are seen in the Reception year and, notably, in Year 2.

18. In the Reception year, teaching is not less than satisfactory and is good, overall, which represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection. In fact, one in three of the lessons seen were very good. Teachers work together closely to ensure consistency of planning across the three classes, with children moving from one room to another carefully, since each room has a particular learning focus. Good levels of co-operation are also found between teachers and support staff so they understand the work in hand and can help individuals or groups productively towards planned learning goals. At times, however, a group works out of sight of a teacher who cannot then oversee what is done. For example, in a very good mathematical activity members of a small group compared their own heights by building towers of large plastic bricks. They were quite able to count and build the bricks themselves, but a well-intentioned teaching assistant did much of this for them. Towers were dismantled and remade, making it impossible for all towers from shortest to tallest to be compared, to reach an important teaching goal. Teachers make good use of assessment information gained in the course of lessons to build on prior learning and move children forward in small, achievable, steps. This is especially true for mathematics and literacy. For instance, a teacher worked with a class on sequencing numbers and one child was heard to comment to another "I expect she'll put seven in front of six" as they watched her placing the numbers on a white board. Such positive relationships between teachers and children typify the best lessons, revealing learning as a joint venture between teachers and taught. On occasion, however, opportunities to develop children's skills are missed. For example, children did not really make progress in their role-play when pretending to be travel agents and holidaymakers because they lacked language skills. Adult intervention might have helped move matters along. More commonly, teachers have secure knowledge of all areas with strengths in the teaching of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and physical development in the school hall. Currently, planning and teaching are constrained because teachers cannot extend learning outside sufficiently, due to unsatisfactory provision for outdoor play. This relates to priorities for school improvement planning.

19. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good generally with a very small amount of unsatisfactory teaching seen. This latter was the result of insufficient firmness in dealing with the behaviour of a few pupils, which led to a lot of time spent in managing this behaviour and poor progress for all members of the class. In Year 2, a high proportion of teaching is good or better with some excellent teaching seen in one history lesson. A teacher's subject expertise helped focus questions very beneficially, especially at the end when pupils thought about what they had learned, so that leaps forward in their thinking were almost palpable. More generally, where teaching is good or better, teachers organise a lesson's content to make sure that resources support teaching points and are readily to hand for group work so time is not lost. In these better lessons, teachers manage pupils well and make explicit a need for everyone to listen and pay attention. For example, in a very good Year 2 literacy lesson, a teacher held the attention of all pupils by discreet signals and occasional firm reminders about her expectations. Consequently, all pupils made good gains in learning what a 'book critic' does and in understanding the nature of the review task they were to do in relation to the story of the 'Ugly Duckling'. In these lessons, too, teachers consistently check pupils' understanding of key vocabulary, especially where this is new to them (such as the term 'book critic'). They deploy additional support effectively in ways influencing the smooth running of lessons. For example, in another very good Year 2 lesson (science) a teaching assistant made sure a group understood the task for making a lamp light up and also kept a good eye on other groups, providing useful help when difficulties arose. The teacher could concentrate on her own planned work with individuals and small groups, establishing a good working atmosphere enjoyed by all.

20. At times, a lesson's impetus falters when teachers have to ensure that classroom helpers are clear about work in hand. For example, a teacher arranged group tasks after a good introduction to a Year 1 mathematics lesson, but stopped when a teaching assistant arrived unavoidably late and needed to know which group she was to support. In this instance, checking in a class 'daily diary' about such matters had not worked, although the teacher had left notes for the assistant in line with school procedures. Where teaching is only satisfactory, a slow pace may result from a lesson's rather

protracted organisation. This was seen, for instance, in a Year 1 science lesson when groups had to wait their turn to go beneath the only table where they could discover whether shiny objects could be seen in total darkness. In a number of potentially good (or even very good) lessons, pace falters yet is picked up again when things 'come together' towards the end, as pupils assess what they have learned. This was the case in a Year 2 games lesson when, unsurprisingly, interest in group tasks waned after a reasonable time spent on them, but picked up after the teacher gathered everyone together to discuss how work might be improved. A very good feature of many lessons is the way its objectives are shared at the start. In the better lessons, teachers also leave enough time at the end to check whether objectives have been met. In Year 2 classes, teachers regularly ask pupils to read out what is to be learnt and establish, briskly, how well pupils grasp this before proceeding.

21. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, overall. It is good where pupils receive extra support in lessons or where they are withdrawn for specific teaching during the literacy hour. For example, a small group of Year 1 pupils is taught letter/sound skills well by a teaching assistant during the activities' time of the literacy hour. While support at other times is generally sound because it fixes appropriately on targets set in pupils' individual education plans, its organisation can mean that lessons are frequently disrupted, affecting all pupils. Pupils taken out of a Year 1 design and technology lesson missed a very worthwhile introductory activity that was well taught and centred on extending pupils' vocabulary, describing fruit they would use for a fruit salad. Movement in and out of classroom often disrupts teaching and causes behaviour-management issues. This was noticeable in a Year 1 religious education lesson and contributed to its being judged unsatisfactory. Although class teachers meet regularly with the co-ordinator for special needs and the specialist teacher to review targets set in pupils' individual education plans, they do not help write literacy targets for these pupils, nor do all teachers use pupils' individual plans consistently when preparing lessons.
22. Pupils learning English as an additional language benefit from specialist teaching from a local educational authority service. This is of very good quality. In the limited time available, support is especially well targeted at helping bilingual pupils acquire crucial English language skills when class teachers organise groups to include native speakers of English who model good language use and are, themselves, of similar academic ability to their bilingual peer. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, all members of a group, including a bilingual pupil, made good progress in consolidating and building on number concepts through the support teacher's ability to keep them on task and involve them in talking about work being done.
23. Literacy and numeracy skills are well taught in all classes. Teachers frequently provide pupils with good opportunities to apply skills to subjects across the curriculum, as seen in history, geography and science workbooks and in classroom displays of pupils' work. The teaching of English, mathematics, science, art and design, history, music and physical education is good. It is better than this in a significant number of lessons in Year 2. Teaching in design and technology, geography and religious education is satisfactory, overall. No teaching was seen in information and communication technology because of difficulties installing computers. Since difficulties have affected work formerly done by pupils on computers, it is not possible to assess the quality of teaching, either, through a scrutiny of what has been achieved in the past. Teachers are mainly confident in their subject knowledge and have good expertise in some subjects in addition to English and mathematics (for example, history and science). Specialist teaching helps support pupils' music to very good effect in Reception and Year 1. Such provision also aids the teaching of physical education in Years 1 and 2 for planned periods of time across the school year. This has had a good effect on class teachers' skills and knowledge about how to prepare and teach lessons.
24. Homework is used systematically to promote learning across the school to very good effect. The youngest children take reading books home every day and this good practice continues until they leave in Year 2. Pupils have really good opportunities to change their books, acknowledging the importance of reading for pleasure. As pupils move through the school, homework increases, according to age and ability. Tasks are linked to classroom learning in ways pupils can understand.

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

25. The curriculum is satisfactorily broad and balanced and meets the needs of all its pupils. Notwithstanding current difficulties with information and communication technology, statutory

requirements for all National Curriculum subjects and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are met. The school also largely fulfils recommendations from latest Foundation Stage guidance. The need to improve provision for outdoor play is rightly highlighted in school improvement planning. Otherwise, the quality and range of curricular provision are good. Lesson activities are frequently stimulating. The school prepares its pupils well for transfer to Junior school. This general picture is better than at the last inspection, especially for Reception year children, although no clear judgements on curricular provision were made then.

26. Good emphasis is placed on the teaching of English and mathematics. National literacy and numeracy strategies are well implemented with corresponding rising standards in these subjects. Pupils also have good opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills to other subjects, leading to a fuller understanding of these skills, as seen in their history and geography work for instance. Additional curricular time is used well for a very good personal social and health education programme, covering topics such as sex education, the dangers of harmful substances and road safety. Pupils learn about dimensions of citizenship, such as being community members and taking associated responsibilities (as when they think about taking care of the environment in assemblies). However, too little time is allocated to music, especially in Year 1, which means that pupils do not explore ideas in sufficient depth during lessons. The use of information and communication technology is unsatisfactory because a new computer suite is still being made operational. This fact has obviously affected opportunities to extend learning both within the subject and in relation to applying skills to other subjects since just before the end of the spring term. Computer systems are expected to be in place for the new academic year when, for example, pupils should have secure access to their personal work. Provision has been good in the past (as reported in the last inspection) and the intention to make up for time lost during the updating of machines and the installation of the suite is very firm. Specialist teaching effectively enhances physical education for Years 1 and 2 for planned programmes of work and music in Reception and Year 1 classes.
27. Planning for the Foundation Stage is now good. Teachers have been helped by very effective external guidance and by in-service training programmes. The co-ordinator for the Early Years has a very good grasp of how to promote good quality learning for the youngest children. She is clear about strengths and where improvements (such as outdoor play) are needed. Good care is taken to check that individuals do not miss out or repeat work unnecessarily. Each room, in a suite of three, has a different focus so children get a good balance of adult-led activities and purposeful, independent play linked to these. More able children are properly challenged by tasks matching their needs. Yet the organisation of rooms can lead to missed opportunities for teachers to plan strategically for future work. For example, in the 'mathematics' room children from one class were observed working very productively at building constructions with bricks of different sizes, shapes and colours. Because the room had to be tidied at the end of the session in readiness for the next class, and since space is limited, these constructions had to be dismantled and could not be kept for teachers to explore pupils' thinking or record achievements.
28. Planning in Years 1 and 2 is also good. Where subjects are taught in half-termly 'blocks' of time (as with history and geography) care is taken to cover curriculum content in depth. This coverage helps pupils build well on prior learning so they understand content taught. For example, a scrutiny of work shows that pupils across Years 1 and 2 achieve well in history and grasp the nature of chronological time by the end of Year 2. Planning builds successively on this important concept. Links across subjects are also made where feasible. For example, pupils study plants and animals in science and make close observational drawings of these, using skills learned in art and design. Tasks set mostly challenge pupils and serve well to extend their understanding, especially in Year 2. At times, however, more able pupils in Year 1 are not sufficiently challenged (for example in recording ideas and experimental observations in science).
29. Extra provision for pupils with special educational needs who find learning difficult is satisfactory on the whole. At times, pupils are withdrawn appropriately in small groups for literacy work with a specialist teacher, addressing specific skills after participating in the whole-class literacy session. This happens at a time when the rest of the class is involved in follow-up tasks, so the teacher can help these pupils reach targets on their individual education plans. Two Year 2 pupils were seen enjoying such close attention and made good progress. However, at other times, withdrawing pupils in this way undermines rather than guarantees the school's commitment to inclusion, since pupils may well not participate fully in lessons in all subjects. This is especially the case during afternoon

sessions. There is good provision from an outside specialist for pupils who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The school's personal, social and health education programme also supports these pupils to very good effect (for example, during circle times). Both these approaches have benefited pupils, ensuring that good progress is made towards targets set in their individual education plans.

30. Provision for the small number of pupils learning English as an additional language is good, overall. Although the time allocated is limited, there are strengths in the specialist teaching support from the local education authority for pupils requiring extra help. The teacher concerned has a clear grasp of the efficacy of working with small groups of pupils of similar academic ability who, moreover, can provide proficient models of spoken English and so help bilingual learners acquire crucial English language skills.
31. Equality of access to the curriculum is generally satisfactory. Work is planned carefully by teachers across each year group to ensure that parallel classes cover the same work in all subjects. This is a strength of curricular planning. Also, grouping within classes is fluid and well aimed at allowing pupils to build on prior attainment (as seen in a Year 2 science lesson for instance). Such fluidity underwrites teachers' good use of assessment information, gathered during lessons and more formally through tests. Information is used very well to pick out pupils with particular needs. For example, in Year 1, early literacy support boosts some children's crucial skills. Additional support for all reading groups across Years 1 and 2 is very successful at raising achievement generally. Similarly, 'setting' for mathematics in Year 2 works well. However, as already noted, withdrawing pupils from lessons for different sorts of extra help does give rise to some concern. For example, in a Year 1 geography lesson, a small group was taken out for library skills taught without reference to the subject being studied or to any related personal, social and health education (where links with road safety were possible). Again in Year 1, pupils with special educational needs were taken out of religious education lessons for reading and writing support. Moreover, the coming and going of pupils disrupts a lesson's flow as well as excluding the pupils themselves from valuable learning experiences. Two pupils were returned by a teaching assistant to a Year 2 music lesson well after it started. Some time later, another was taken out by a specialist teacher for special needs, missing the rest of the lesson.
32. Extra-curricular provision is judged good, overall, especially in view of pupils' ages. Approximately one third of pupils in Year 2 are regularly involved in clubs for physical fitness, art and music. It is envisaged that the computer suite will be used for club activities when it is fully up and running. A good range of outside contacts and planned visits widen the scope of classroom learning. For example, Years 1 and 2 pupils write letters to and get replies from children in other schools. Year 1 pupils carry out traffic surveys outside the school gates for their geography studies and visits to a local park have inspired work across the curriculum from Reception to Year 2. Good use is also made of visits further afield, such as to museums to learn about life in past times.
33. The school has effective links with its local community. In addition to parents helping in classrooms, local community members work there voluntarily. For example, a frequent volunteer was seen enthusiastically getting resources ready in one classroom well before the start of the school day. Links with the on-site nursery and with the junior school where most pupils transfer are harmonious. Pupils settle into their new schools readily, as was seen in the Reception year during the 'induction' day when nursery children came to meet their new teachers.
34. Overall, the school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as it did at the time of the last inspection. Provision for moral and social development is very good - an improvement since the last inspection.
35. The school makes sound provision for pupils' spiritual development. A daily act of collective worship benefits this aspect of pupils' development. For example, they were asked during the inspection week to reflect (albeit briefly) on its theme of 'caring for the environment'. Visits to a local church and further afield to Coventry cathedral, related to classroom studies, extend awareness of a spiritual dimension. During weekly celebration assemblies, pupils are encouraged to value the work and efforts of others. In a Year 2 music lesson, an intense quality of listening was created by the teacher, provoking some

especially thoughtful responses to taped pipe music. The quality of some artwork on display contributes valuably to the school's ethos and supports pupils' spiritual development. There are also opportunities for pupils to experience the wonders of the world so that a sense of awe develops, informing related work. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were fascinated when they watched a demonstration of paper recycling in an assembly and thought about what resources are used to make paper. Reception children were equally amazed by water pouring down guttering constructed in the playground to aid their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

36. Provision for moral development is very good. The school has put a lot of thought and effort into this aspect of its work. Assemblies deal regularly and to good effect with moral issues such as how dropping litter and neglecting the environment affect everyone. Through personal, social and health education, pupils are helped to consider others, to be kind to each other and to animals. In geography, pupils think about the beauty of our world and the need to preserve and sustain it. They compare their lives with those of children in less economically developed countries. They realise how lucky they are and that they should help others less fortunate than themselves. This was seen, for example, in work done by Year 2 pupils about Ghana. Pupils are made aware of what behaviour is acceptable and what is not, even though a minority do not always apply what is learned. They are encouraged to respect their own and other peoples' possessions. They can tell right from wrong in different situations. Practice in the teaching of these important moral precepts is consistent across the school.
37. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. Pupils work co-operatively in lessons and are encouraged to help each other. There are frequent opportunities for them to work in pairs and small groups. There is a comprehensive and well-planned programme of personal, social and health education lessons. In these, pupils learn about healthy eating and the importance of personal hygiene. They discuss their feelings and how to control anger. They are given strategies for helping each other feel good and accept the importance of listening to others. Religious education also aids pupils' social development, enabling them to realise and respect differences in beliefs among the wider similarities and differences they explore.
38. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory with some good features. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn about a range of musical traditions in assemblies and during lessons and to look at the work of different artists during art studies. However, they do not study the work of non-western artists and the music heard in assemblies is limited in terms of other cultures. In literacy lessons across the age-range, teachers use a good variety of stories, many geared to extending pupils' knowledge of traditional tales and the wider world. For example, Reception children enjoy listening again to a story about a little girl in an African village as part of their induction into Year 1. Ensembles of professional brass and string instrumentalists visit the school to play and talk about their instruments each year. Pupils have also had a chance to take part in dance and drama productions with multi-cultural themes. They learn about the impact of the First World War by thinking about the poem "In Flanders Field" and looking for local connections among the names listed on the war memorial close to the school. There is little on display around the school, however, to reflect the diversity of languages, faiths and cultural practices of the multi-ethnic society within its walls and beyond its gates.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. Since the last inspection, provision for pupils' welfare and pastoral care has improved and is now very good. By far the majority of parents are well satisfied with the care their children receive. Pupils across the age-range feel safe and happy in a well-organised learning environment. Children in the Reception year benefit from very good induction arrangements, which helps them settle quickly, as seen in a 'taster' induction day during the inspection. Indeed, all pupils benefit from this introduction to new classes near the end of the summer term. Pupils in each year group participated keenly in lessons, enjoying their 'special' day. Teachers and support staff know pupils and many of their families very well. They are alert to pupils' individual, physical and emotional needs. This familiarity contributes to pupils' progress and their positive attitudes to school.
40. Procedures for monitoring health and safety are very good and closely followed by all staff. Governors take a real interest in this aspect of school life and are conscientious in fulfilling their responsibilities. A formal risk-assessment is completed each term and physical education equipment is inspected

annually. Currently, the school knows well the need to improve provision for outdoor play for children in the Reception year, not only because this is limited, but also because health and safety aspects are in urgent need of attention. This is a high priority in school improvement planning. A very committed caretaker is pro-active in supervising the site and staff ensures vigilantly that any potential safety hazards are reported and dealt with promptly. During lessons and in the playground adults make pupils suitably aware of safe practices. However, mid-day supervisors, while taking care to watch playground spaces with obvious concern for pupils' welfare (for example, by recording any inappropriate behaviour, however minor) are not trained to engage pupils' interests in play activities so as to help them play together purposefully. The school highlights this as an area for development and the headteacher is actively seeking ways to provide related training. Provision for first aid is satisfactory with qualified staff on site. Currently, though, a heavy load is placed on the headteacher because of circumstances beyond the school's control. A need to increase the number of first aiders is identified.

41. Child Protection procedures are very good and issues of concern are well monitored and recorded. A good proportion of staff is highly trained with the headteacher the designated person with overall responsibility, and the deputy head and a senior teacher also trained in this aspect of pastoral care. All staff members, including lunchtime supervisors, are kept updated and know they must follow systems in place. The school works closely with outside agencies, as necessary. Good up-to-date personal and medical records are kept and these are used well to fulfil pupils' personal needs.
42. The school has improved its monitoring of pupils' academic progress substantially since the last inspection, especially in the core subjects of English and mathematics. Assessment and monitoring procedures are now judged very good, including for children identified as having special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. Children are assessed on entry to the Reception year and before transfer to Year 1 to discover both their levels of attainment in critical areas at the start of full-time schooling and the progress made over their first year. Subsequently, teachers assess pupils regularly in English and mathematics, using level descriptors in the National Curriculum programmes of study. Information gathered informs target setting in reading, writing and mathematics at individual, group and class level to very good effect. It also helps raise standards in statutory tests in Year 2. Results from these are analysed thoroughly so as to inform decisions about school improvement priorities and target setting. In fact, where children have entered and remained in school throughout the relevant period, the school 'tracks' individuals from their first assessment in their Reception year through to statutory tests. Individuals' progress over time is worked out so as to assess 'value added'. Evidence reveals this policy works well with particularly marked success in mathematics and reading, and the school has received an achievement award in recognition of its good gains.
43. Year 2 pupils are set for mathematics, an arrangement which works well across all levels of ability, including for pupils identified as having special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. The organisation of reading in Years 1 and 2 literacy lessons whereby all pupils are helped by adults in small groups has also noticeably affected standards since it was introduced two years ago. While pupils are assessed in the core subject of science and in non-core subjects (such as history, geography and religious education) over a school year, this is not done as rigorously as in English and mathematics. Consequently, teachers do not grasp pupils' levels of attainment in these subjects so well and cannot easily make decisions about the 'next steps' in learning relative to National Curriculum programmes of study. Nevertheless, pupils' 'Progress Books' provide clear records of work over time, giving insight into the range of activities covered, as seen in samples of history work.
44. The school makes very good use of assessments at an early stage to pick out those pupils who find learning difficult and who are placed on the register for special educational needs. The information is used to set targets for pupils in their individual education plans. These are reviewed regularly and new targets set as necessary. However, class teachers are not involved in writing targets linked to literacy learning although they do write those for mathematics and these are of good quality and well focused on the needs of individual pupils. Very good links are made with other agencies where these are involved in pupils' learning. For example an educational psychologist visits the school regularly to assess individual pupils in line with requirements and the school receives programmes of work from a speech therapist for pupils who have problems with speaking. There are good links with specialist support teachers provided by the local education authority (for example, for pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties). Provision for pupils with a statement of special educational need is very good.

Teachers make sound judgements about when these pupils can work unaided over periods, learning to reach targets set in their individual education plans with a degree of independence and when they need help from a teaching assistant. This is of very good quality. Some pupils have individual education plans to target their behavioural problems prepared by the co-ordinator for special needs and teachers monitor these satisfactorily.

45. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. Behaviour management is carried out consistently throughout the school. Staff work hard to improve pupils' behaviour, which also impacts well on teaching and learning. There is a good system of reward and celebration and pupils win stars, certificates and prizes for good work, behaviour and attendance. So their self-esteem rises and confidence improves. Procedures for eliminating bullying or harassment are also very good. Issues are dealt with quickly and are well recorded. No such incidents were seen during the inspection. The school has recently drawn up a draft policy for positive race relations to meet the latest statutory requirement, currently being considered by the governing body. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' educational and personal development are very good. As noted, staff members know pupils very well and their personal achievements are well recorded both formally and informally.
46. Very good procedures are followed for recording and improving attendance. These have begun to show good results with much improved attendance rates over the past year. The school works hard with the help of an Education Social Worker on attendance matters and follows up unauthorised absence promptly. Attendance is a priority in school improvement planning. Registers are computerised and completed correctly and consistently. Parents are reminded regularly of the importance of good attendance and punctuality and how these affect pupils' progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The school has a good partnership with parents, which marks an improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher works hard to extend parental involvement in school life, although (according to responses in the parents' questionnaire prior to inspection) a number feel that the school does not work closely enough with them. Inspectors find no evidence to support this view. Most parents are very satisfied with their children's progress and speak highly of the school's work. They freely approach staff with questions and to discuss concerns they may have. They believe the school listens and responds well to these. They like the way the headteacher and staff are readily available to speak informally at the start and end of the day.
48. During the inspection, many parents were seen bringing children into classrooms or collecting them at the end of the day, looking at work and changing library books, as well as chatting to teachers and other staff. The school is very welcoming and rightly prides itself on its 'open door' policy. Most parents assist teachers by listening to children read at home and helping with homework. Pupils progress correspondingly and they develop good attitudes to learning. There are, however, a significant number of parents who do not easily join a home-school partnership and feel unable to support their children's learning at home. The very well organised 'induction day' (a regular part of school life across the local education authority towards the end of the summer term) welcomes parents into the Reception year and positively encourages them to help with their children's learning. As part of this day, parents were observed meeting the headteacher and Early Years' co-ordinator in a very positive manner which ensured that parents not only gained crucial information but were also made to feel part of the educational process. Reception teachers visit children in their own home before beginning full-time schooling at the start of the autumn term. This further establishes a good relationship with children and parents and helps children settle quickly.
49. Most parents of children having special educational needs take full part in discussions and setting targets when their children's individual education plans are reviewed. Copies of targets are sent to parents as a record and to keep them suitably informed where a child gets additional support. However, letters to parents are very formal and a child's needs or difficulties are not explained in ways they can easily understand in order to give help at home. For example, one letter said that a child had apparent problems 'retaining high frequency words', 'comprehending stories' and 'answering questions about these appropriately'.
50. A small group of parents help regularly in classrooms and more parents help when pupils are taken on visits in connection with their classroom studies. All pupils have a home/school liaison book to

maintain regular links between home and school, but very few parents use them for communicating with their children's teacher. Governors send out an annual questionnaire seeking parents' views on the school and suggestions about what could be improved and this attracts a good response. Questionnaire findings are used well to follow parents' ideas as far as practicable and are displayed prominently to show parents' views and actions taken. The Parent Teacher Association has recently been re-formed by a small and energetic supportive group that raises substantial additional funds for the school through a range of social events. Activities are well supported and the Association provides the school with resources as welcome 'extras' to provision.

51. The quality of information for parents is very good, having improved since the last inspection. Parents' notice boards are placed strategically. They contain school news and guidelines about aspects of school life as well as other more general information of local interest. Weekly newsletters are written in a 'user friendly' style, which parents appreciate because it is direct and easy to understand so parents stay up-to-date about school activities and aspects of its organisation. Teachers give parents curricular information each half-term and make suggestions about how pupils can be helped at home - another improvement since the last inspection. Regular parent/teacher consultation evenings are further good opportunities for reviewing children's progress. Teachers explain the targets set for pupils and make sure that parents understand whatever is raised in discussion, especially where written information may be involved. Curriculum evenings are also organised on occasion, although attendance at these is varied. The school offers an afternoon of 'meet the teacher' sessions each term, but so far only a small number of parents have responded.
52. Reports to parents about their children's progress over a school year are good, which marks another improvement since the last inspection. They cover all areas of learning for children in the Reception year and all subjects of the National Curriculum as well as religious education for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Reports are handwritten and personalised, with a format recently much improved. Helpful information is provided about what has been taught together with good information about targets set for improvement and pupils' attitudes. Pupils evaluate their own learning and parents are invited to comment on the content of reports. Although clear details are given about pupils' progress a significant number would like more detailed information, according to responses on the parents' questionnaire prior to inspection. It is difficult, however, to know what is meant by this response in light of inspection evidence and the fact that parents do not reveal what extra information they would like. Some parents also feel that the school provides insufficient activities outside the planned curriculum to extend their children's learning, but inspection findings do not support this view. As noted earlier, there is a good range of activities on offer, considering the age-range taught. In addition, the school policy is to ensure that the library is open to pupils of all ages and their parents every day after school. It is then a centre of busy activity and is clearly popular.
53. The school prospectus meets statutory requirements and provides a good amount of information about school organisation and the curriculum. Although unauthorised absences are correctly reported in the governors' annual report to parents this does not include actual details of attendance, as required. The school is aware of the need to remedy this matter.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The leadership of the school by the headteacher and her senior managers is very good, indicating another significant improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher, supported most ably by her deputy and a senior teacher, is a very good leader with a clear sense of direction for her school. Since her appointment two years ago, she has forged good relationships with all staff, governors, parents and the local community. Of special note is her very good alliance with her deputy, whose expertise complements the headteacher's and whose classroom practice in support of school aims is exemplary. Also of note is the contribution of the Chair of governors, who knows the school and its community well and unstintingly supports its work. The senior management team, directed by the headteacher, is managing needed changes very effectively. The head is a caring leader whose high level of professionalism is reflected in all her work. She is also keen to increase her expertise and, together with the Early Years' co-ordinator, is following an advanced certificate course in Early Years' education. The Early Years has been a main focus in the school since her appointment and huge improvements have taken place. By following this course, both show a high commitment to ongoing improvements, making the foundations of children's learning in the early years a cornerstone of success. The head teacher has introduced effective systems to monitor and evaluate all aspects of

the school's work and keep high standards to the fore. She is strongly committed to a caring ethos, whereby each individual is valued for her or his contribution to school life and pupils can relate positively with each other and with adults.

55. The management of the school, too, is good, overall, indicating improvement since the last inspection. School self-review procedures and decisions about where changes might usefully be introduced are strengthened by the very good work of the headteacher and senior managers. Issues raised in the previous inspection have been addressed and, more recently, recommendations in the 'Partnership Review' (undertaken by the headteacher with inspectors from the local education authority) have been followed. These include making the literacy co-ordinator part of the senior management team because literacy remains a high priority. As a result, a senior manager now co-ordinates English and has already effected very good management of the subject. All co-ordinators understand their roles and have suitable job descriptions. A key feature of the school is the way teachers work together very effectively. Subject co-ordinators generally have a good grasp of strengths in their area and where improvements can be made, partly because of this. As well, there are good systems, whereby teachers regularly evaluate subject co-ordinators' lesson planning on the basis of the outcomes of pupils' learning. So co-ordinators monitor teaching and learning quite effectively even when they cannot observe classroom practices directly. Such co-operation, along with the capacity to succeed, underpins a very good, shared commitment to raising standards. Budget constraints have prevented some co-ordinators from monitoring classroom practices for their subject this year, but evidence strongly suggests that this has occurred in the past across the curriculum, not simply in the core subjects of English and mathematics. The school is intent on re-instating such practice when finances allow.
56. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, with some good features. The co-ordinator for special educational needs studies each class teacher's special needs file and makes pertinent recommendations about the organisation and management of paperwork. All review procedures for pupils with individual education plans, including those with a statement of special need, are followed to good effect. Liaison with outside agencies to support pupils where necessary is good. However, the role of the co-ordinator and that of the special needs support teacher are not well defined, which results in an overlap of work and raises questions about the use of the co-ordinator's time away from the classroom. For example, during the inspection, a meeting between the co-ordinator and specialist support teacher occurred where the latter gave reports of her work with class teachers. In fact, the co-ordinator can gain much of this information through her own direct dealings with class teachers as well as through other means (such as her scrutiny of files). The purpose of the meeting was therefore not at all clear and rather appeared as a mismanagement of valuable release time. Some parents have shown concerns about the release of the co-ordinator from the classroom to carry out her role because of the number of different supply teachers used by the school in consequence. Since the school cannot control the availability of supply cover, the headteacher now takes the class concerned to ensure greater consistency. At times, though, unforeseen events occur, which means that the headteacher is not available as planned, so the arrangement is not without its difficulties. The school realises the role of the special needs support teacher has to be reviewed to make sure that the school fulfils its commitment to the full inclusion of all pupils in all areas of the curriculum.
57. Governors are enthusiastic, although many are fairly new to their roles. In fact, there are still vacancies on the governing body because it is hard to recruit parent governors. Governors fulfil their statutory duties satisfactorily and are extremely keen to be involved more in the running of the school. There is a good committee structure. They meet regularly with a clear grasp of their functions. Some governors visit lessons, hold discussions with teachers and co-ordinators and gain an overview of the standards and areas for development in subjects they are linked with. For example, the governor for numeracy watched several lessons and talked to staff before reporting to the full governing body on the need to improve mathematics resources. This improvement happened successfully. Strategies are now in place for sharing information with governors better and they feel that the headteacher and her senior managers are guiding them very well. Governors are especially pleased with the format of current school improvement planning, which they feel will help them monitor the school to greater effect. They are also aware that, to date, they have made little input into planning and would like to be more involved in producing next year's development plan, now they have a better understanding of the process. The chair of governors perceives the strengths of the school and areas for development clearly. Her views are shared with other members of the governing body met during the inspection.

58. There is now rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by the head teacher and senior management team. Teaching and learning are correspondingly improving, particularly in areas prioritised for development. The new school improvement plan reveals very well the headteacher's firm grasp of the needs of the school. Priorities for development are appropriate and action taken in meeting the school's targets is very effective. For example, the school recently re-organised its management of the teaching of reading by introducing a structured reading scheme. Statutory test results (including the most recent) and inspection judgements indicate that standards in reading have risen significantly and are on an upward trend. The headteacher was instrumental in implementing the new strategy for reading. Staff training is closely linked to the outcomes of the headteacher's and senior management team's monitoring. Extra support for teachers is also provided as a result of monitoring. For example, some teachers have been helped with their lesson planning.
59. The school's strategy for performance management is appropriate. Procedures for inducting new staff are very good. The school ensures that teachers appointed for the start of the autumn term attend the induction day in July, as seen during the inspection. Because of the way lessons are planned through teamwork, new teachers quickly learn about the school's expectations with regard to planning. The school does not have a staff handbook, but all teachers have copies of all school documents before taking up their posts.
60. Arrangements for financial control and administration are very good and the most recent audit recommendations have been addressed. The school's administrative officer and bursar use good financial procedures, very helpful to the headteacher and governing body – especially its finance committee. The bursar oversees the management of the budget very effectively through her fortnightly visits, making very detailed reports to governors. The headteacher, senior management team and governing body, therefore, have very clear information on which to base decisions. For example, budget constraints have forced the headteacher and governors to make difficult decisions about staffing levels over the next year. These should still meet the needs of the pupils in the school although they have meant a cut in the hours of teaching assistants. Specific grants are used for their designated purposes. The school strives at all times for 'best value' in the services it seeks, comparing its performance to that of similar schools and monitoring spending decisions closely. For example, it is intent on ensuring that the impact of cuts on support for pupils in classrooms is minimised.
61. Administrative officers provide a welcoming 'front of house' for parents and visitors. The school office is well run and day-to-day management is overseen efficiently by the senior administration officer. New technology supports the management of the budget well and is beginning to be used for storing other information, particularly assessment data.
62. The school is well staffed with sufficient experienced teachers suitably qualified to teach the National Curriculum and Foundation Stage. Good subject expertise is evident amongst staff. Although numbers of support staff have reduced, these remain sufficient to provide adequate support for groups and individual pupils. They are deployed well to this end. However, at times, support given to pupils out of classrooms means that they are removed from lessons in ways disruptive to ongoing work.
63. Accommodation is good and well maintained. The large site is attractive with grassed areas, trees and shrubs as well as a hard-surfaced area for Years 1 and 2 marked out with games. The conservation area is well used as a learning resource. Attractive displays of pupils' work and artefacts create a very stimulating and interesting learning environment, both in classrooms and public spaces. Classrooms and central work areas are sufficient for the number on roll. The new Reception classroom, totally refurbished, provides very good accommodation for the youngest children. The computer suite is a potentially good resource. The excellent library is a really attractive area which pupils want to explore because of its high quality displays of books, videos and story tapes. The large hall provides a good amount of space for physical education lessons and a variety of other purposes. The provision of secure outdoor play space for Reception classes is unsatisfactory and unsuitable for developing children's physical skills.
64. Learning resources for the curriculum are mostly good. The range of instruments from different musical traditions to extend pupils' learning in music is limited, however, and the need for a wider range of resources for the teaching of history is identified (for example, items for role-play). In addition, there is insufficient outdoor play equipment for the Reception year. There is a good number of computers and the school is working hard to resolve its technical problems in readiness for the new school year. More generally, resources are used effectively and are readily accessible to staff and pupils.

65. In view of the rising trend in standards, the improving quality of teaching and the marked improvements in the leadership and management of the school, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The headteacher, staff and governors should ensure that:

- (1) Provision for special educational needs is reviewed in order to:
- clarify the role of the co-ordinator and the specialist support teacher so that the management of special needs is more effective;
 - ensure that teachers are involved in setting all targets for pupils' individual education plans and that the latter are used consistently in lesson planning; and
 - ensure that the withdrawal of pupils from lessons does not affect their entitlement to the full curriculum and matches best practice seen.

(Paragraphs: 8, 21, 29, 31, 44, 56, 86, 107, 115)

- (2) Further improve the quality of teaching and learning in line with best practice by:
- developing teachers' understanding of how to manage additional support in classrooms to best effect;
 - developing teaching assistants' understanding of their role, so that they involve pupils they support throughout a lesson;
 - ensuring greater consistency in teachers' management of pupils' behaviour;
 - ensuring that the pace of a lesson is maintained; and
 - reviewing how pupils are withdrawn from lessons for support teaching purposes.

(Paragraphs: 11, 15, 18, 19, 20, 31, 85, 86, 91, 107, 129, 133)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses¹ should be considered for inclusion in an action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs: 2, 7, 16, 23, 25, 26, 27, 40, 46, 63, 64, 74, 77, 87, 93, 107, 114, 119, 120, 121.

- Ensure that provision for information and communication technology is fully 'up and running' for the start of the new academic year in September.
- Improve outdoor provision in the Foundation Stage.
- Continue to focus on attendance matters.
- Develop lunchtime supervisors' understanding of their role.

¹ It is recognised that the three minor issues marked with an asterisk are not, in fact, unimportant. However, the school is already taking action with regard to provision for information and communication technology and improving attendance and these, together with planned improvements for outdoor play for Reception children continue to figure as priorities in school improvement planning.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

56

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	11	23	20	1	0	0
Percentage	2	20	41	36	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

YR – Y2

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	236
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	52

Special educational needs

YR – Y2

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	55

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5
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Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.2
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.49
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	45	36	81

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	30	34
	Girls	32	32	31
	Total	64	62	65
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (61)	77 (70)	80 (79)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	35	41
	Girls	32	30	36
	Total	65	65	77
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (66)	80 (80)	95 (92)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	236
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	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 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.71
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.2
Average class size	26.3

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	7.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	189

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	531 336
Total expenditure	537 242
Expenditure per pupil	2,257
Balance brought forward from previous year	29,428
Balance carried forward to next year	23,522

Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	238
Number of questionnaires returned	41

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	32	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	39	5	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	39	17	5	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	54	7	0	2
The teaching is good.	44	49	5	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	39	12	7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	34	7	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	46	7	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	32	44	15	5	5
The school is well led and managed.	34	51	5	2	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	41	2	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	49	10	10	5

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

66. Most children enter full-time schooling in the September of the year they will be five with nursery or play group experience. A small number come into a classroom environment for the first time. A significant proportion (around 20 per cent) will reach their fifth birthday only just before transfer to Year 1 after the end of the school year. A similar proportion is identified for additional support because of concerns about their learning. Two children are learning English as an additional language. Children settle quickly into school routines because the environment is stimulating and because of teachers' carefully planned activities. Such good features were seen throughout the inspection, not only as children were greeted and settled into classrooms each morning, but also in the busy working environment. They were also seen to very good effect during the induction day when new children came with parents or carers to be introduced to teachers. The children settled with remarkable speed, happy to leave adults because they could see things of interest to them and felt comfortable with their new teachers and support staff. Very soon, they were donning astronaut helmets to repair the 'space rocket' ready for launch or engaging with model trains, making sure these ran on time. A very pleasing atmosphere developed, with parents made welcome and teachers getting on with their work, already beginning to establish important routines for children and noting responses. Good teaching expertise is evident in the Reception year, which is a key factor in the improving provision noticed since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator is a very good exemplar of practice with a sure insight into where further improvements might be made. For example, she sees the need to ensure that planning is informed by assessment information, taking account of the stepping stones for learning, in each area, so as to work towards the Early Learning Goals. She is well supported by the head teacher, who has considerable knowledge and understanding of Early Years practice. Together with the co-ordinator, she seeks to improve this through studies at advanced certificate level, furthering the school's aims generally for the benefit of all learners. Provision for the Foundation Stage is good, with some very good features.

Personal, social and emotional development

67. Children learn to show appreciation of one another's efforts. They all cheered in a physical education lesson to celebrate the success of winning teams and the efforts put in by losing teams. They have good opportunities for most of the day to make choices and decisions about what they are going to do and for how long. Most do this sensibly and behave well. At other times, they are asked to work in a small group on tasks set by the teacher and to contribute to a class discussion when questioned at the end of sessions. Here, too, they understand what is expected of them and generally respond well. While most children tidy away toys and equipment they have used and make sure a room is ready for the next class some are seen to ignore adults' instructions and to need help. For example, at the end of a maths lesson a significant minority were very noisy when asked to tidy up and did not show much respect for the efforts of their peers until helped by an adult. They are most frequently attentive to adults and listen respectfully, as seen in music lessons when a specialist teacher came in for her usual sessions, which happened to be during the induction day. The children (proud Year 1 pupils for the day) were glad to see a familiar face and really enjoyed their music making. They worked hard to please the teacher and followed her lead in modulating their voices to show that they could sing softly. Similarly, in competitive games, children mostly respond well to changes in permitted noise levels and to requests that they consider the needs of others.
68. During outdoor play, a group of boys and girls were totally involved in channelling water over some distance through plastic guttering. At times, they appeared oblivious of everything around them, so intrigued were they in their activity. While this was a particularly good example of concentrated exploration, children were often seen playing productively for considerable periods of time (for example, when building with bricks and drawing a final construction for mathematics). However, there were also times when there was competition for vital pieces of equipment. Then, pupils tended to do their own thing rather than co-operate.

69. Teaching is good. Teachers have high expectations of children's work and behaviour. Children make good progress, because all adults have good routines and use a consistent approach. When a small group lost self-control in a physical education lesson in the hall, it benefited greatly from 'time out' with a teaching assistant who reinforced important teaching points about behaviour. Eventually, pupils were able to return to the main activity with new, more positive attitudes. Children respect their teachers and take interest in a wide range of good quality activities. Each day invariably ends on a high note. Where lessons are especially lively, these may end with children enjoying a quiet prayer and time for thought, or a good story.

Communication, language and literacy

70. Teaching is good, overall, with some very good teaching seen. Teachers make their high expectations of children's work and behaviour very clear. They skilfully focus attention on the work in hand during whole-class sessions and children show good listening skills in these lessons, although they find it hard to use more than one or two-word sentences in response to adults' questions. When asked about things a little beyond their daily experience they lack the words to offer ideas without adult support. For example, in the music lesson outlined above, children could suggest "cars" or "aeroplanes" to describe forms of transport to fit into a favourite song but had less to say when probed for ideas about noises in a woodland environment, although they had heard and recognised birdsong on a tape. Many do not engage in conversation on a one-to-one basis confidently, even when talking about a book they obviously enjoy. All like books and many are beginning to read sentences in familiar stories, if hesitantly. They enjoy taking books home to share with an adult. They love a story from a big book, read with a teacher, and ask pertinent questions at the end or make comments, showing that they have listened carefully. A bilingual child is making good progress in reading, in part because of the very good support he receives from a specialist teacher during small group work each week. For example, he knows that print carries meaning and that English is read from left to right. With support, he can read simple sentences. In a very good literacy lesson, a teacher helped children match sounds to the letters or groups of letters being studied very effectively by offering clues and allowing children to help each other. They obviously understood when she used the technical term 'phoneme'. They had fun correcting her and pointing out a 'mistake' she made when writing a sentence. They were also unafraid of saying the whole sentence to make sense of unfamiliar words. For example, they knew a picture showed children playing in the 'sand', not 'band' - which didn't make sense.
71. Almost all children write their own names, linking sounds to letters. When showing what they have written, most can say what their marks mean immediately afterwards. Some already write complete sentences for a specific person as when a child writes "I have got blonde hair and I want to see you" in a letter to her teacher for next year. Some more able children match pictures of objects with names that rhyme and in so doing take an important step to writing their own rhymes or poems. Work on display shows that children do well for their ages and abilities in writing, with some reaching good standards.

Mathematical development

72. Most children should reach the Early Learning Goals before they begin Year 1 and the more able should exceed them. Particular strengths are evident in number work. Almost all children count successfully up to 10 and back to one or zero and many know their numbers to 20 and can count forwards from zero and back again. The less confident manage well with a teacher's support. Many realise how numbers are sequenced along a number line. For example, in response to a teacher's question they state 16 fits "in between the 13 and 17" and can explain "because it is bigger than 13" when questioned further. More able children can say precisely where a number should be placed, using the format "17 comes before 18 and after 16" and demonstrate this by putting the number in the correct space. More able children are starting to sequence numbers between 20 and 30 correctly. Children can recognise patterns of two when added each time to numbers in a line. When working independently, children of average ability can thread the correct number of pasta shapes on to a string to match a given number below 10. They can name circles, triangles and rectangles when pointing to shapes in the bricks they use for building towers. They know words such as 'tall' and 'taller' or 'short' for such activities.

73. Teaching is good, overall, with some very good teaching seen. For example, in one very good lesson children did so well that the teacher congratulated them, saying “I am going to have to make it harder”, which visibly raised their self-esteem. In this lesson, mathematical language was used to underline important concepts, which is a good feature seen in other lessons, too. On occasion, however, opportunities to extend mathematical skills to other areas of learning are missed. For example, children investigating how far some toy vehicles would travel were not encouraged to measure the different distances in order to compare them or to record their findings on a simple chart to look for possible patterns.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

74. Whilst a small number of more able children are set to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they start in Year 1, most are judged unlikely to do so. This includes children who have difficulties with learning as well as those learning English as an additional language. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, with examples of good teaching also seen. Some aspects of provision are good, but opportunities for children to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world, particularly with regard to outdoor play, are limited. For example, there is little space for outdoor activities, but, more importantly, there are constraints on its use because of safety matters. The school is well aware of these problems and is working on them. In practical terms, the safety issues affect staff putting equipment outside at the start of each day in readiness for use and mean that extra vigilance is needed in monitoring some activities. For example, the sand-pit cover is not hygienic and some parts of the hard surface are uneven, which affects the use of wheeled toys among other things. There are also problems with storing large equipment securely.
75. Children enjoyed working with an adult outside in a small group to discover which toy vehicles travel fastest and furthest down a ramp. They made simple predictions when questioned by a teacher showing some awareness of possible links to speed, as when a child said “the big one (will win) because it has got big wheels.” Discussion about what actually happened, though, revealed some flaws in their understanding. Although most grasped that the size of wheels might be important, they could not really articulate this and one child persisted in thinking the wind was responsible for pushing the ‘winner’. Opportunities to extend questioning and thinking were lost because of limited choice of vehicles and the fact that findings were not always recorded. More generally, the outside area does not stimulate learning by linking with the wider world (for example, via ‘road markings’ with ‘Stop’ and ‘Go’ signals for bike and tricycle riders and numbered spaces for ‘parking’ vehicles when not in use). As already discussed, children thoroughly enjoyed investigating how water runs downhill, using guttering and milk crates to devise a raised water-course.
76. Within the classroom devoted to this area there is a good variety of things to do of interest to children. For example, they select materials to make hand puppets of animals seen on a zoo visit, although an adult selects the tools for them to use. They show a good grasp of how to use a stapler when an adult demonstrates. Teachers plan interesting visits in connection with themes of work, such as the zoo visit. They also set up attractive series of photographs, showing what children do at different times in their lives, comparing ‘then’ when the children were babies to ‘now’ when they are much older. Children also enjoy simple map-making. They made maps to help them find their way from familiar classrooms to the Year 1 classrooms for the ‘induction day’ and were keen to use these. During the inspection, few tools and little equipment for children to use were seen, especially computers and programmable toys.

Physical development

77. Attainment in physical development is varied. Most children, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language are set to achieve the Early Learning Goals with regard to their fine motor skills. They handle a range of small tools and equipment well. For example, they cut with scissors in a precise way to assemble their animal puppets and when holding pencils for writing or colouring purposes. They use glue spatulas reasonably correctly for sticking pieces of paper. They balance wooden blocks carefully when building tall towers and use many other construction materials effectively. They roll, pull and pat play dough into shape and make very lifelike snails with clay. However, they have too few chances to extend their gross motor development by, for example, pulling and pushing large-scale toys or balancing along raised beams and climbing on climbing frames. This is largely because they are restricted by the poor provision for

outdoor play. In consequence, few are judged likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this aspect of their physical development.

78. Within the constraints encountered, teaching is good, overall. In fact, teachers compensate well for deficiencies in outdoor provision by taking physical education lessons in the school hall each week. A very good lesson was observed where children made notable gains in controlling their bodies and working together co-operatively in teams, practising for the school sports day. While many children (especially boys) found it hard to balance bean-bags on their heads and hop, most proved able to run at speed without bumping into others.

Creative development

79. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good, overall. By the end of the Reception year, most children are judged likely to meet the Early Learning Goals. This includes children assessed as having special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. Most make attractive three-dimensional models of snails, produce face-masks and makes good quality glove puppets. They quickly learn to make sounds with simple instruments at the right time in a song and can sing familiar songs from memory tunefully. They learn new songs really well by listening to a teacher and following a melody and words line-by-line. Their lively drawings of animals such as snails and 'Mummy Bear and Daddy Bear going for a walk' were stimulated by teachers' good planning of interesting visits and story reading as well as by the chance to watch large snails moving over a sheet of glass. Children have used a wide range of media to make paintings and collages of things they study and explore effects they can make. They apply paint thickly, showing good brush control and an ability to keep colours clean.
80. Children are less confident when asked to use their imagination - for example when playing in a role-play area. Provision for this sort of activity is not yet fully developed, partly because these areas are temporary and do not allow children to 'escape' in their imaginations from other classroom activities. Also, children's rather restricted vocabularies constrain their involvement in such things. Teachers see there is room for development in the way they engage children with role-play by taking part themselves at times. Still, children enjoy exploring ideas linked to practical activities as when they make big rockets and imagine how these operate.

ENGLISH

81. Standards of work in English are below the national average by the end of Year 2. The school has a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and many pupils enter school with very low language and communication skills. Improvement in literacy attainment is, therefore, a high priority in the school improvement plan and this needed stress is beginning to raise standards. The recent initiative regarding the organisation of reading groups, too, is working and reading standards are rising significantly, especially for more able pupils. Overall progress in learning is good. All pupils do well. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language.
82. Pupils' attainment in speaking is below the national average by the end of Year 2. Listening skills are average. These findings are similar to those of the previous inspection. Many enter Year 1 with limited communication skills in spite of good progress in the Reception year. By the end of Year 2, approximately half can talk to the rest of the class, using phrases or simple sentences, but few speak clearly or have noticeably expanding vocabularies. Many find it hard to express or explain their work. For example, during a religious education lesson, Year 1 pupils could name some of the features of a church, but not in any detail (for example, regarding a stained-glass window). When Year 2 pupils talked about a familiar story they used only short phrases or single words in spite of a teacher's good questioning skills. Most listen carefully to the teacher and to each other in various situations. For example, during a personal, social and health education lesson pupils listened attentively to what was discussed about their proposed visit to the junior school next day. In literacy lessons most pupils listen well to stories. In one lesson, the teacher invited individual pupils to take on the roles of characters from a story and encouraged others to ask questions about the characters. This proved a good strategy for developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. However, few opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their speaking skills through role-play and drama activities. Pupils with specific language and communication difficulties are making good progress through planned programmes of work provided by a speech and language therapist.

83. Standards of attainment in reading are close to the national average by the end of Year 2, which is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Most pupils, by the end of Year 2, can read simple texts accurately and with expression. They can call on a range of strategies for reading unfamiliar words. They also know how to use punctuation when reading. They can retell familiar stories such as 'The Ugly Duckling' and know about 'book critics'. They have a satisfactory knowledge of a number of authors and show interest in the 'author of the week'. Two Year 2 pupils were withdrawn from a literacy session for additional support from a specialist teacher and used their knowledge of vowel sounds well to complete and read simple keywords. For example, they identified the correct vowels in 'back, man, put' and then read them out as the teacher pointed. Many pupils know how the school library is organised and can choose books by their favourite authors or browse to find books that interest them. They all enjoy talking about books they have chosen. Below average pupils in Year 2 make good use of picture clues to explain what is happening in a story and can pick out some simple words from an accompanying text.
84. By the end of Year 2, attainment in writing is below the national average, although samples of pupils' work reveal that standards in Year 1 are as expected for this age, suggesting that a focus on writing is beginning to produce results. Many pupils are starting to write in the correct format for specific purposes. For example, pupils in Year 1 can sequence familiar stories, can describe a story character and begin simple poems. More able pupils communicate beyond a simple statement, but ideas are not yet developed well enough to sustain a reader's interest. Average and some lower ability pupils write mainly using short statements and phrases. All are starting to see when to use full stops and capital letters although their practices are inconsistent. More able Year 2 pupils are learning to write in a lively manner, holding the reader's attention. Basic punctuation is usually correct and handwriting is neat and joined. Average pupils are starting to think about a reader when they write. Spellings are often plausible in the choice of letter sounds used, but the use of punctuation is less consistent. Although lower ability pupils can develop ideas within short passages, they need much adult support for this. For example, during a writing session, most pupils knew how to structure a letter to someone based on the 'Jolly Postman' and with adult support could write asking the character questions. A small group who find learning difficult could formulate simple questions with extra support. However, many pupils by the end of Year 2 do not sustain ideas or develop them because of limited vocabularies.
85. Teaching and learning in English are good generally and all pupils do well, relative to their abilities. Teachers understand the literacy strategy and adapt its framework to the school's needs. Lessons are well planned and objectives shared with pupils so they know what is expected of them. Good question-and-answer sessions tap into pupils' prior knowledge, building on this to generate discussions. However, teachers rarely revisit a lesson's objectives to help pupils to assess whether these have been achieved. At times, introductions are too long. For example, in what was potentially a good lesson in Year 2, two teachers shared the reading of a story to begin an extended writing session. The pace of the lesson slowed because of the turn-taking and insufficient time was given to writing a letter correctly – the real point of the activity. This was rushed and several pupils became confused.
86. Teachers' management of time is generally satisfactory, but, sometimes, pupils sit too long on the carpet for the whole class parts of the literacy strategy. This happens because precise timing is needed for organising reading groups, which have additional adult support two or three times a week in each class. Teaching assistants are used effectively during most activity sessions when whole-class work is followed up by tasks and where assistants understand the focus of their work. During some whole class sessions, teaching assistants make sure that pupils (especially those who find learning hard) are fully involved, but this practice is inconsistent. Pupils withdrawn for additional support with literacy are taught satisfactorily. Support is particularly effective when pupils are either supported in the classroom or when they are withdrawn for a short time during the literacy hour for a specific purpose linked to literacy learning.
87. Literacy skills are used well across the curriculum. This is particularly true for writing in history, but opportunities to develop speaking skills are often missed (for example in religious education and dance lessons). The value of cross-curricular links has been suitably highlighted by the co-ordinator in her action plan. There was no evidence for the use of information technology to support literacy because the school has met problems introducing its new computer suite.

88. Management is very good and this is having a very positive impact on raising standards in English. Teaching has been monitored effectively and training needs of staff identified. The co-ordinator gives colleagues good support with planning, particularly this year in Year 1. Patterns of attainment have been examined via samples of pupils' work. The Early Literacy Strategy is being reintroduced and writing corners in all classrooms are having a positive effect. Resources are good and are used well to support learning. Opportunities for visits from theatre groups or authors are limited owing to budget constraints, which the school regrets.

MATHEMATICS

89. Standards are average by the end of Year 2 with most more able pupils (representing approximately a third of the cohort) rising above the average. Lower ability pupils achieve well relative to their prior attainment even though they do not reach levels expected for their age. This group includes a significant number of pupils with special educational needs. All make good progress because of very good teaching, which includes additional support from teaching assistants working with particular pupils (for example, those having a Statement of special need). Children learning English as an additional language also make good progress and achieve in line with their peers. Their success is in no small measure owed to the way they benefit from teachers' careful planning and extra help in lessons.
90. In Year 1, pupils count confidently in twos from zero to 50 and most seem able to count together in fives in unison. They find counting in threes harder, but more able pupils and some of average ability can work out the next number in a sequence on the white board when a teacher asks questions. Since this activity is new, it represents good achievement for these pupils. About a quarter go on to complete number sequences on a worksheet where most of these are in patterns of two and five. More able pupils show good understanding of the more varied patterns they complete (including counting in threes), as evident in the speed they do this. The less confident are slower although, when asked, they can count "three more" using their fingers or "in my head". However, some are hampered by working on blank paper and find it hard to keep their numbers in a sequence they can follow easily. Lower ability pupils are well supported by a class teacher when working on patterns of two, using cubes to show how the numbers go up in even steps. Elsewhere, pupils are helped to see that the order of numbers does not matter for addition sums as they take turns to roll dice for the teacher, to record numbers in groups of two or three, then work out the answers. Later, a boy is excited when he can explain that sums such as $4 + 7$ and $7 + 4$ will always give the same answer. More able pupils in Year 2 enjoy using number fans and manipulate these quickly when doubling numbers such as 20 and 15. They work out 'near doubles' and know, for example, that $15 + 16$ is only one more than a target number. A boy explains "multiples of 10" in a way showing secure grasp of the concept and mathematical language involved. In another lesson, pupils explain how to sequence three digit numbers correctly. They know that 110 is 10 more than 100, and a boy says that 135 comes "in the middle of 130 and 140". Lower ability pupils are intrigued when asked to work out the missing number for the corner of a triangle. Through skilled questioning, most deduce that the number three goes in the 'empty' corner because they understand they have to add the 5 and 2 together from the other two corners and subtract from the number 10 in the middle of the triangle. The teacher records this as $5 + 2 = 7$ and $10 - 7 = 3$ to reinforce points made. Pupils enjoy working out other examples and are delighted as these get progressively more challenging.
91. Teaching varies from satisfactory to very good and is most frequently very good. It has a marked impact on pupils' progress both in lessons and over time. There are strengths in Year 2. Teachers generally use whole-class sessions and plenary sessions at the end to very good effect to promote speaking and listening while exploring mathematical concepts, especially in Year 2. These older pupils use their writing skills well to explain how they solve problems. A good feature of all lessons is teachers' consistent use of mathematical language (an improvement since the last inspection) and their insistence on neat presentation. Again, this is especially true of Year 2 where pupils are developing a good awareness of how to set their work out logically. At times, a lesson's pace slows progress generally, sometimes leading to some pupils becoming distracted. This was seen, for example, in Year 1, when pupils became fidgety as they waited for some time to take turns in throwing dice. When engaged later in related number work in groups, quite a few found it hard to concentrate and were noisy, so further time was lost in recapturing their attention. By contrast, Year 2 lessons are marked by a good pace where pupils respond to teachers' high expectations of their work and behaviour. In a very good lesson, for example, pupils concentrated hard throughout, first on

developing fast calculating skills for doubling numbers and then working on 'time', linked to using analogue and digital clocks. Across the classes, there are opportunities to use mathematical knowledge and understanding in other subjects, as when Year 1 pupils make a tally count of vehicles passing the school in their geography lessons.

92. Planning takes good account of the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy through the use of a commercial scheme. The co-ordinator chose this to guarantee consistency of planning within and across year groups, especially with less experienced teachers. Teachers are encouraged to adapt the suggested content in ways best matching the needs of individuals or groups. Such adaptations are seen in daily lesson plans where teachers delete sections of work and add extensions or reinforcements for pupils with particular needs. In this way, work is pitched at a level stretching the more able as well as supporting lower ability pupils. As a means of raising standards, the school took the decision to 'set' for mathematics across Year 2. This works well because sets are organised carefully in line with pupils' abilities. Also, teachers skilfully match work to pupils' needs so that all make progress in building on skills, knowledge and understanding successively. Lower ability sets benefit from good, appropriate support from additional staff.
93. The subject is led and managed to very good effect by the deputy head, who took on the role about 18 months ago. She conducted a thorough audit resulting in a major overhaul of resources to match curriculum demands. As part of this audit, she liaised with the co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage to make sure that provision properly supported mathematical development for all pupils, with everyone concerned working to common aims. She has monitored teaching and learning in classrooms and expects to do so again when current budgetary constraints are lifted. Her own classroom practice in mathematics is exemplary. Currently, she gains a good overview of the subject by monitoring teachers' planning regularly and sampling pupils' work as well as by talking to colleagues about classroom events. There has been substantial improvement in provision since the previous inspection, with steadily rising standards to register the good work done. The school is well aware of deficiencies in the use of information and communication technology to support the learning of mathematics due to difficulties with establishing new computers.

SCIENCE

94. Inspection findings show that most Year 2 pupils are working at levels broadly expected for their age. Better than expected standards are reached when pupils are asked to link cause and effect (for example, see why a lamp fails to light when they explore electric circuits). Teachers' secure subject knowledge and ability to motivate pupils highly has a marked impact on their learning. Standards have risen since the last inspection when they were judged mainly below or well below those expected. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve in line with their prior attainment. Those learning English as an additional language also make good progress and achieve in line with their peers.
95. A scrutiny of work finds all Years 1 and 2 pupils doing well, relative to their ages and abilities. There are notable strengths in Year 2, especially for pupils of lower ability (including those with special educational needs) who benefit from good adult support. Pupils are given good opportunities to work across all relevant programmes of study. Lesson observations as well as work scrutiny reveal that their interest in science is owed to the good quality and range of activities. For example, visits to a local science park and to a nearby country park stimulate pupils' scientific curiosity across the age range. By the end of Year 1, they record their observations simply, demonstrating their understanding of tasks set. By the end of Year 2, they know how to record information on bar charts and are attempting to think up predictions they can test, showing a growing awareness of what constitutes a fair test. They extract information from charts to show, for example, the biggest and smallest hand spans. However, they are not asked to look for connections between hand span and height. Work shows the skills needed to make such inferences are available but not yet tested by the science activity sequence.
96. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good, overall, with strengths in Year 2. In a satisfactory Year 1 lesson, all pupils wanted to investigate whether shiny things can be seen in total darkness. Groups took turns to work under the one table that was blacked out, using a torch to shine on the objects. Most said subsequently that objects could not be seen when it was quite dark, but

some persisted in saying they could. A good opportunity to compare the two points of view by listing the arguments put forward was missed. Nor were differences between luminous and non-luminous materials explored to prepare for the next step in learning. In a very good Year 2 lesson, a group holding hands 'passed the squeeze' around its circle, to illustrate via a practical, role-play method, the flow of charge one way or the other around a circuit. Because the teacher did not indicate which way 'the squeeze' would travel (by, for example, holding up + or – cards for each hand) pupils anticipated either possibility, clearly enjoying the experience. They also had a good grasp of key words such as lamp, circuit and battery. In another stimulating Year 2 lesson, a teacher made sure that all pupils recorded in groups how a circuit was completed, to light up a lamp, by re-arranging the groups so everyone had a good chance to finish in the allotted time. In both lessons, good links were made with previous learning so pupils could say what they already knew and confidently take the next learning step.

97. Marking is of good quality across the two years, although it is somewhat generous at times, suggesting an uncertain grasp of how criteria for levels of attainment in the science curriculum should be applied. Literacy and numeracy skills are included quite often in science, especially in Year 2 where pupils routinely write at greater length to explain their findings and use mathematical skills consistently (for example, when making charts). At times, pupils' knowledge of science procedures appears hesitant. One able older pupil wrote, for example, that his and his friend's investigation was good because they had each had two goes! Pupils do more writing in science than before (as when they write about plants they have seen and visits they have made). Yet they do not always report well what they did to collect evidence and what they found out. At the time of the inspection, computers were not operational, as said elsewhere, but teachers appear well aware of the role these might play in improving subject provision.
98. The co-ordinator has an informed understanding of what needs to be done to take the subject forward. A new co-ordinator is taking over at the start of the next academic year and has already been well briefed. Deficiencies with regard to the use of computers are known. So, too, is the need to further improve existing good assessment procedures by matching pupils' work better to National Curriculum level descriptors in order to determine future planning more precisely. Resources are good and well used. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection. With regard to future trends, it is worth saying that the best lesson seen involved concepts from physical science which had until now been regarded as one of the most difficult aspects of science to teach. The newly-appointed science co-ordinator revealed very good subject expertise during the lesson covering these concepts.

ART AND DESIGN

99. This subject has a high profile and is seen as an important part of the school curriculum. As a result, high standards mentioned in the last report are maintained and pupils' attainment is better than usually expected of pupils by the end of Year 2. Class lessons are supplemented by art days each half term, giving pupils a chance to concentrate on selected skills and to see a project through from start to finish in a day. Pupils' work is thoughtfully presented, particularly in Reception and Year 2 classes, creating a stimulating learning environment. Year 2 pupils can attend an art club and the work produced by these pupils is of an especially high standard.
100. Year 1 pupils use a broad range of materials including paint, pastels, crayons, clay, fabrics and dyes. They work on a large and small scale and in two and three dimensions. In Year 1, they weave with a variety of fabrics, producing decorative effects with embroidery threads. They like working at different types of portraits and have used skills developed by such activities to paint stamps for the Golden Jubilee. These are of a good standard. Pupils make good progress in Year 2 and do a lot in the time available. They learn about a good range of artists, including Mondrian, Klee, Picasso and Miro. Their work in the style of these artists is notably good. Their pictures, using metallic pastels in the style of Gustav Klimt, show very good attention to detail and a good understanding of his work. They have close-observation skills, seen in pencil and ink drawings of natural objects such as plants and shells. Pupils mix paint for desired effects. For example, they paint wild animals naturalistically and then camouflage them against a background. They know how to overlay tissue paper to produce subtle changes of colour, as seen in their silhouettes of wild animals (stimulated by Paul Gerraghty's book 'The Hunter').
101. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in lessons. They get help they need from

teachers and learning support assistants, so progress in line with their peers. Those with English as an additional language similarly make good progress because they are included fully in lessons. They receive support matched to their learning needs.

102. Although it was not possible to observe the teaching of art during the inspection, the wealth of evidence available through displays and pupils' art folders suggests that teaching is at least good. Teachers are secure in the subject and have high expectations of pupils. They teach basic skills and techniques well. Teachers use lesson plans produced by the co-ordinator and this ensures that pupils in parallel classes have consistent experiences. It also ensures that all aspects of the National Curriculum programme of study are taught and that pupils build upon prior knowledge and skills. Varied and interesting activities provoke pupils into putting a lot of thought and effort into their work. There is a good range of resources and pupils are encouraged to select among these imaginatively.
103. The co-ordinator is effective, with a good knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She plans to develop the subject suitably, especially in Year 1. She runs a popular art club, where pupils produce some very interesting, high quality work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

104. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with that expected for pupils of this age, suggesting that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. They make satisfactory progress throughout Years 1 and 2. Pupils with special educational needs get extra help from teachers and learning support assistants. As a result, they take a full part in lessons and make progress suited to their ability. Similarly, pupils with English as an additional language are well supported in lessons. They progress in line with their peers.
105. Pupils build on solid foundations established in the Reception year. Years 1 and 2 pupils can apply a design process systematically. Although their designs for an intended product are simple, they make sensible choices about the materials they will use. Year 2 pupils make lists of the materials and tools needed for their products. Pupils acquire appropriate practical skills as they move through the school and have the chance to work with a broad range of materials, including food, wood, fabrics and junk materials. They take suitability for purpose into account when choosing materials and methods to use. A good example of this was seen in a Year 2 lesson during the inspection. Pupils thought about safety when deciding how to attach eyes on the puppets they were making for younger children. They also considered what wear and tear a puppet might receive and this caused them to test the strength of materials. Pupils evaluate what they have made. They say what they do or don't like about it and can often say how it could be improved. They are more competent orally than their written work suggests.
106. Year 1 pupils were heard developing a vocabulary for describing texture. They held a fresh pineapple and could suggest a very good range of words to describe what it felt like. This, combined with the expectation that pupils will write descriptions of how they make products, aids the development of literacy skills. Year 2 pupils see the need to make prototypes before starting on a final product. Finger-puppets enabled them to practise skills and find out what might be hard about making and using glove puppets. Individual templates for the glove puppets benefited pupils' spatial awareness. A need to measure materials, for example wood when making vehicles, contributes to their numeracy skills.
107. Teaching, overall, is satisfactory, with a number of good features. Teachers base their lessons on planning produced by the co-ordinator. As a result, there is consistency of experience for pupils in parallel classes. This system also ensures that the design process is taught systematically and that pupils build upon prior learning. However, the withdrawal of some pupils for learning support, library lessons or to be heard reading not only disrupts a lesson's flow and pupils' concentration, but also means that those who go out miss key aspects of work in hand. These pupils do not then have the same opportunities as the rest of the class to develop their design and technology skills as intended. Teachers are well organised and activities are interesting. As a result, pupils enjoy what they do and usually try hard. Teachers allow pupils to make independent decisions. They ask questions skilfully, getting pupils to think about their work and make needed changes. Teachers consciously include opportunities for pupils to acquire literacy and numeracy skills. They are secure in the subject so provide clear explanations and demonstrations. Pupils get on with tasks quickly, making good use of

time available, although, on occasion, they are over-enthusiastic and difficult to manage so a lesson's progress is impeded. Teachers manage an appropriate balance between activities that involve making and those for designing or evaluating, so they generally keep pupils' interest. Opportunities to use computers for design and technology are limited and the school is aware of the need urgently to address this issue.

108. The school has good resources for design and technology and these are well used. The co-ordinator is competent and knowledgeable. She has a clear idea of strengths and weaknesses in the subject and her monitoring is effective. She gives good guidance to teachers through well-written lesson plans.

GEOGRAPHY

109. Because of time-tabling, history and geography are taught as alternate half-term 'blocks', so it was not possible to observe any geography lessons in Year 2. Two lessons were observed in Year 1. An analysis of pupils' work in books and on display, however, indicates that attainment is at least in line with that expected for seven-year-olds. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, achieve well.
110. In assembly, Years 1 and 2 pupils revealed a good understanding when answering questions about the proper handling of waste and when discussing how products can be recycled. Older pupils, as might be expected, were very good at explaining that trees are used to make paper and that paper itself can be recycled. When asked what should happen to pulp the headteacher had squeezed and flattened on to a frame, these oldest pupils said it could be dried and would then be paper. Their younger peers were less certain about this and suggested it should be "chucked away."
111. Year 1 pupils enjoy doing traffic surveys outside the school gates, making tally-chart records, with understanding. They know that double yellow lines show where drivers cannot park their cars, seeing that this is to preserve people's safety, ensuring that other drivers' vision is not blocked (for instance, at corners). Pupils know about weight limits on bridges and recognise road signs showing a school is nearby. They cannot explain the difference between a crossing sign and a stop sign for drivers, although they know these are different. Classroom displays show that pupils have made bar charts about different vehicles, using the road in front of the school. These charts are informative, although it was not clear whether pupils had considered why, for example, more cars are seen than lorries. Pupils know why the 'lollipop lady' is important in helping them to cross the road safely. They record what they have seen on simple maps, showing where parking is restricted and where the school crossing is positioned. They do not, however, check the correctness of their maps.
112. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, pupils can compare their own locality with places further afield as when they study a small town on the Norfolk coast. They explain why life on an island is different from that of an inland town. They also compare their locality with places in other continents (for example, a village in Ghana). Work shows a good grasp of the effect of environments on the life style of a Ghanaian family. Pupils discuss in their writing how priorities for peoples in harsher conditions relate to the necessities of life, such as looking after a horse (which will be very important to a family) or making porridge from millet stems. They make keys for the maps they draw so that others can use them to locate for example the countries sending tomatoes or beef to the United Kingdom. They write at some length and give good reasons for differences between different locations.
113. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, with some good features. For example, the traffic survey was well planned and organised so pupils achieved their main objective of recording vehicles they saw and talking about things they observed. They were kept well involved with good support from adults. They might, however, have begun to extend their ideas by considering possible reasons for car drivers making their journeys. Elsewhere, opportunities to extend learning were also missed when a teacher did not engage pupils at the end of the lesson in reviewing what had been learned against targets. Good subject expertise is evident in Year 2, positively enhancing planning for the sequence of activities and lessons for each unit taught, and the work in pupils' books. It also has a good effect on assessments for the next steps in learning and where difficulties might be further addressed in light of curricular demands. Unsurprisingly, pupils build good levels of confidence, understanding and enthusiasm for the subject as they move through Year 2. They also learn to use subject-specific vocabulary such as 'landscape' or 'sea route' correctly because teachers organise displays well, labelling these suitably and marking pupils' work effectively. Year 1 displays are also good. For

example, teachers make good use of photographs of pupils working in the local environment to boost interest. As indicated, pupils across the age-range have good opportunities to apply literacy and numeracy skills in geography lessons.

114. The leadership of the subject is sound. A policy is being updated to ensure greater consistency across classes (for example, in reviewing a lesson's progress and pupils' learning outcomes so future planning is better informed). Good plans ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Resources are good and well used. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Little use is made of computers but the school is well aware of this deficiency.

HISTORY

115. Because history and geography are time-tabled for half-term 'blocks' in Years 1 and 2, no lessons were seen in Year 1. Three were observed in Year 2 so judgements are based on these, on a scrutiny of work across the age-range, on a scrutiny of teachers' planning and on a discussion with the subject co-ordinator. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach at least satisfactory standards. At times, standards across levels of ability are better than might be expected for this age. For instance, in an excellent lesson, a teacher's expertise led to extremely high levels of concentration on tasks set and an unusual depth of thought in answering questions in a session at the end. All pupils make good progress in their history learning, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language.
116. Year 1 pupils consider similarities and differences between 'old' and 'new' houses and the appliances used in them. They cut out pictures of kitchen furniture and equipment such as kettles and irons and group them in sets accordingly. They place cut out paper figures of children dressed for sea bathing in 1900, 1950 and the present, and place them along a time-line. Teachers' comments on pupils' work suggest they handle artefacts for some of this work, yet also draw on their own experiences (for example, talking about sea-side holidays). Unfortunately, the poor quality of the photocopied material used detracts from the overall quality of the work.
117. In Year 2, pupils learn about the Great Fire of London and think about why it spread such a distance so quickly and why cities are safer to-day. In recalling previous learning, they talk knowledgeably about Samuel Pepys whose diary, they know, is a major source of information about the fire and surrounding events. They realise that houses were built very closely together and were mostly made of wood in the 17th century. A boy insists on being precise and states a "spark from a fire (heating the oven) in a baker's shop" caught light and was fanned into flames by a strong wind. Pupils recall how fire spread rapidly because of a very long, hot, summer resulting in timber walls and straw roofing being much too dry. Pupils are amazed that water had to be got from the river a bucket at a time, when today it can be pumped efficiently by firemen using sophisticated equipment. Their recall is helped by teachers' skilled questioning, but also by their own learning experiences. For example, it is quite clear that pupils in all classes watched a video about Samuel Pepys and learned a lot that interested them from this. More able pupils can place the fire more or less accurately in time as happening approximately 350 years ago. More generally, pupils sensibly compare the way people lived a long time ago with people's lives to-day.
118. As well as the excellent lesson discussed above, teaching is good. Planning is set out clearly to show how pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding will grow over a series of lessons for the unit being taught. Teachers display many photographs, books and, where feasible, artefacts attractively to support work. For the Fire of London studies, they had small card models of wooden framed houses which provoked pupils into talking about what they already knew and stimulated further interest as teachers explained how these were constructed. Pupils knew some were called 'jetty' houses and explained with great relish how residents could empty chamber pots into a street below without flinging the contents into their own downstairs windows because of the 'overhang' of the top part of the house. They were suitably disgusted to learn that timber frames were in-filled with a mixture of cow dung and mud over strips of 'bendy' wood, and made sure they mentioned this when doing their recording tasks. They liked the phrase "wattle and daub" and used it to describe what they had learned when talking about this. They enjoyed colouring in templates for their own model houses and knew these would have to be crushed together to replicate a street in Pepys' time. Because this prospect motivated them, pupils persevered and finished other work quite quickly. Teachers consistently use relevant subject vocabulary, stressing a need for pupils to recognise the importance

of basing their studies on reliable evidence. As well as promoting pupils' speaking and listening skills to very good effect through discussions, teachers also make sure pupils apply literacy skills for written work. In addition to lessons outlined above, there were interesting examples of writing linked to other themes. Of particular interest was work on the Great War and World War II. Year 2 pupils had obviously gained a lot from looking at the local war memorial and considering what it meant. Although their writing is not lengthy, it is frequently thoughtful and carefully set out, reflecting good quality discussion of the kind seen in lessons. Numeracy skills are reinforced as pupils consider time, relative to the present day.

119. Co-ordination of the subject is very good with subject expertise to the fore. The co-ordinator has based the scheme of work on the latest subject guidance, adapting it to the needs of the school. She has a clear understanding of what works in practice for pupils in the age-range taught and whose speaking and listening skills need consistent development. She takes a keen interest in how teachers and pupils respond to planned lessons, reading teachers' evaluations at the end of each unit of work and talking to colleagues about classroom activities. She also monitors classrooms to see how things are going when work is in progress, so has a good view of the subject as it is taught. She has a good picture of subject strengths and where improvements might be made. For example, she wants to promote role-play opportunities to explore past times, especially in Year 1 and to build up a 'bank' of artefacts linked to themes of work. Although interesting visits are made in connection with these themes (for example, to a museum where pupils pretend to be children in a Victorian classroom), the co-ordinator is keen to extend the range of visits and visitors to school. The school is very aware of deficiencies with regard to the use of computers in the subject, owed to problems with new machines. There has been a good level of improvement in the subject since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

120. It is not possible to judge standards reached by pupils as the school had no working computers during the inspection and no evidence of pupils' past work. This is because, on the advice of the Local Education Authority, the school has very recently taken delivery of new machines. However, their delivery and installation were delayed and are now well behind schedule. Pupils' work was not saved when the old computers were removed just before the end of the previous term, as it could not be transferred from these to the new machines. Consequently, the school has almost no evidence of pupils' past work and pupils could not demonstrate their skills in the absence of computers. For the same reason, no judgement can be made on the quality of teaching.
121. The school has dramatically improved its resources for information and communication technology since the last inspection. Its new computer suite will enable whole classes to work on computers at the same time. In addition, all Year 1 and 2 classrooms and the room used for small groups of pupils with special educational needs have two networked computers and printers. The school is intent on ensuring that pupils' computer skills are applied to subjects across the curriculum as part of ongoing classroom work. An administrator for the subject employed by the school is working very hard to ensure that all machines are up and running before the end of term. He is familiarising himself with new programs available, so that, with the recently appointed subject co-ordinator, he can produce a scheme of work that takes fully on board the most recent subject guidance. The school has sensibly organised training for teachers in the use of the new computers, but they will not be fully trained until the end of the autumn term. The school is well aware that all subject co-ordinators should plan the use of computers into their schemes of work in order to meet National Curriculum requirements. It highlights information and communication technology as an ongoing area of development in its school improvement planning. Such development includes, for example, a policy for use of the Internet.

MUSIC

122. Because time-tabling was affected by induction day, only one Year 2 lesson was seen. However, since her weekly visit was on this day it was possible to observe a specialist music teacher working with Reception children who were being introduced to Year 1. Pupils of all ages were heard singing in assembly and in a hymn practice. Judgements are based on these experiences and on talking to the subject co-ordinator. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach at least satisfactory standards in singing. In the lesson seen, they also achieved well when listening to and responding to taped music but too little work was seen in composing and performing with instruments to make a judgement about standards reached in music, overall. Pupils with special educational needs were taken out of the Year 2 lesson

and, once again, this raises questions about the consistency of their learning and consequent progress. These pupils do, however, participate in singing in assemblies and hymn practices. Pupils with English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers and achieve in line with them.

123. Children at the end of their Reception year are well prepared for transfer to Year 1 in terms of their musical learning. Although the two lessons observed were short (lasting only a half-hour each), they covered all curriculum elements satisfactorily. This was owed, not only to the teacher's subject expertise, but also to the brisk pace and a range of activities they clearly enjoyed. In a particularly effective lesson, the specialist was well supported by a class teacher. Pupils sitting in a circle waited with keen anticipation for the lesson to start and good momentum was kept up throughout as the class teacher worked in partnership with the music teacher to make sure that pupils gained the optimum from time available. Pupils make good progress learning a new song, listening carefully to each line sung by the teacher and then copying her. They quickly pick up the chorus and show a good modulation of their voices as the teacher models this to very good effect. They quickly stop banging or shaking instruments continually to accompany a song when she reminds them to strike on three beats only and also gives a timely demonstration of striking a tambourine correctly for the most pleasing sound.
124. In Year 2, pupils listen with great intensity to a piece of taped piped music. They offer sensible ideas about the kind of weather invoked by the sounds. One boy paints quite a vivid picture of what a very hot country such as Egypt might be like, sitting in the sun, which the music suggests to him. Pupils can name the flute, oboe or recorder as the instrument they listen to and a boy knows these belong to the woodwind family. The teacher listens to ideas and reinforces good guesses by saying the pipes are certainly woodwind instruments, but are South American and the music is about wind in the trees and rain falling. Pupils recall making thunder 'rumbles' and 'pitter patter' sounds in previous lessons and make 'sshshhing' wind noises with their voices. They choose instruments for working in small groups and co-operate well to make weather sounds for their agreed theme. Some pupils cannot resist banging hard on tambourines, although they know this is unacceptable and respond promptly to the teacher's reminder about playing with care. They then demonstrate they know how to hold and strike instruments correctly.
125. Teaching is good, overall, with some very good teaching also seen. In lessons observed, teachers consistently made sure pupils knew what was required and demonstrated very well to reinforce points (as seen in the use of instruments). They build carefully on previous learning and explore ideas thoroughly, so that pupils are confident about what to do (as in the Year 2 lesson when pupils thought up possible weather sounds and instruments which might make these in group work). Teachers also intervene judiciously to reinforce important teaching points, as when a teacher working with the youngest children stopped everyone to show how to clap three beats in time to the song. In hymn practice in the hall, pupils were similarly stopped and reminded to sing tunefully and not shout a well-known hymn. This produced a better sound. Pupils learn new hymns effectively by listening first to a line or a part (for example, the chorus) and then practising with the piano accompaniment. They know how to clap in time, using two fingers on the palm of a hand and can maintain the beat throughout a verse. All pupils from Reception upwards sing well together in assemblies, though the new Years 1 and 2 pupils sang especially well when their older peers had gone to their new Junior classes for the day.
126. The co-ordinator runs an after-school weekly music club for Year 2 pupils, providing good musical experiences along the lines of lessons organised in school. It is attended regularly by up to 20 enthusiastic pupils. Professional brass, wind or string ensembles visit the school annually to play and talk to pupils about their instruments. Provision is further enhanced through specialist support bought in from the local education authority. In addition to that outlined above, this support is also generally available for Year 2 classes. Currently, circumstances beyond the school's control have meant such support has not been in place for some time. The school looks forward to its planned reinstatement at the start of the next academic year. The school recognises that this additional provision ensures that the curriculum is covered in some depth during Year 2 and that it has given class teachers' confidence in teaching the subject. Yet inspection evidence suggests too little time is given to the subject in Year 1. Music is played as pupils enter and leave assembly each morning and there is a particularly good quality of listening on entry, as pupils wait for everyone to gather. Music adds significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development.

127. Co-ordination of the subject is very good. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure that curriculum demands are met. She has produced a scheme of work in the form of weekly lessons based on the latest subject guidance, making sure that all elements are covered as required. Resources are adequate for curriculum demands and well used. She has expanded the range of available instruments and made them accessible to teachers and pupils. However, she sees there are few instruments from different cultural traditions. Most of the budget allocated to music goes on enhancing provision through specialist skills, as outlined above. At present, the co-ordinator does not monitor teaching and learning in classrooms because of budgetary constraints, but does look at teachers' evaluations of lesson after each unit of work and also talks to colleagues more informally. She plays the piano for assemblies and hymn practices and so gains a good overview of singing across the school. She has planned a varied programme of taped music to be played throughout the year during assemblies and is working on notes for each piece so pupils are given basic information about these. At the moment, where notes are lacking, pupils are told the name of the week's composer and the title of the music and this information is displayed prominently. In recent times, the practice of pupils' performing in public venues beyond the school has lapsed and the co-ordinator would like to see this reinstated. Further, she rightly identifies a need to improve teachers' confidence in adding to specialist provision by taking lessons themselves in Year 1.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

128. Standards in physical education are as expected for the end of Year 2 and have been maintained since the previous inspection. During the inspection, pupils were seen in dance and games lessons. Evidence from teachers' planning indicates that all areas of physical education are appropriately covered during the year. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress as a result of good teaching, which has improved since the last inspection.
129. Pupils in Year 1 compose simple sequences around different kinds of walks. They walk, for example, in a 'jelly-like' way, 'like a giant' and 'along a tightrope'. They work well in groups on their sequences before demonstrating to the rest of the class. Other pupils practise linking air to floor movements, making satisfactory progress. Most pupils realise that they need to warm up at the start of lessons to prepare their bodies for exercise. In Year 2, pupils begin to make up a dance based on leaving their families for a journey. With support, most can plan a simple sequence around this theme. During this lesson, the first in a series of three, progress was generally good. Most pupils evaluate the work of others positively. In a games lesson, most can use skills learnt in previous lessons to participate in simple games involving kicking a ball towards a goal. Pupils work well in threes and all understand the role of each person in the group. Most are able to control a ball properly.
130. Teaching and learning are good and all pupils are achieving well. Teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure, mainly because of good training from specialists involved in a national initiative (TOP PLAY) and a good scheme of work prepared by the co-ordinator. Learning objectives are shared with pupils who usually keep a brisk pace when trying to fulfil these. However, pace can, sometimes, slow up towards the middle of lessons, picking up towards the end. Teachers help pupils improve their performance by making relevant and useful teaching points. Pupil-demonstrations are used well, expectations are high and behaviour management is good. Pupils mostly behave well and enjoy their lessons. However, for one outdoor games lesson, pupils were not asked to change their clothing other than their footwear for the lesson. Some teachers do not dress appropriately for physical education lessons (particularly their footwear) which does not set a good example for pupils.
131. Management is very good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has been instrumental in helping colleagues gain confidence and improve their teaching. Half-term evaluation sheets are monitored effectively so that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are built on. The co-ordinator observed lessons when the subject was a priority for development, but only one has been observed this year because of budgetary constraints. However, the co-ordinator monitors through discussions with teachers and by looking at lesson plans. Resources have improved and are now good. The school also makes good use of specialist athletics coaches who run regular after-school clubs for pupils in Year 2. These activities extend pupils' learning well.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

132. Given the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 2 are average. All, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
133. By the end of Year 2, pupils are starting to grasp the significance of some important beliefs and practices of Christians and members of other world faiths, particularly Islam. Many pupils in Year 1 know some key features of a church. Many know that the font is used for christenings and recognise what christening means to Christians. One pupil commented that a christening is important so that 'God knows that a new baby has been born'. They know that the church is a special place and talk about their own special places. Several can pick out an altar and pulpit. Pupils also know that they belong to their own family and to the family of their school. They know about caring for animals and the value of expressing feelings such as kindness and 'feeling good'. Year 2 pupils can name four special features of mosques. They know Muslims go to a mosque to pray and approximately three-quarters of the class know that many Muslims pray five times each day. They recall that the Qu'ran is a special book for Muslims, that the Torah scroll tells Jewish people how to lead their lives and that the Bible is important to Christians. Many can to some extent appreciate the wonders of nature and some Year 2 pupils write a simple thanksgiving prayer for Harvest.
134. Teaching, learning, and achievement are satisfactory. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and lessons are well planned. Learning objectives are appropriately shared with pupils, while praise is usually effective in aiding learning. However, where behaviour management is inconsistent, some pupils' behaviour hampers both teaching and learning. Teaching time is wasted dealing with them and the lesson's main focus is lost. In these circumstances teaching is unsatisfactory and no learning takes place. Resources are used appropriately. For example, in Year 1 lessons, photographs taken in a local church were used to help pupils recall what they had learned during a visit there. These provided a good stimulus, but opportunities were missed to develop pupils' language and communication skills by talking about the photographs, although pupils were eager to engage in this sort of discussion.
135. Management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has produced a scheme of work, successfully meeting the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and including short-term planning to support colleagues. This is the first year that the present scheme has been used and teachers are evaluating the planning for strengths and any areas of difficulty or concerns at the end of each half term. The co-ordinator's action plan is appropriate and the school is awaiting guidance for assessment procedures from the authority. There has been some monitoring of teaching in the past, but very little in the last year, due to budget constraints. Resources are satisfactory, but there are few displays of artefacts around the school to support pupils' learning. Visits to the local church are regular, but pupils seldom visit places of worship of other faiths or have people visiting the school to share their religious beliefs.