

INSPECTION REPORT

Park Infant and Nursery School

Shirebrook, Nottinghamshire

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112672

Headteacher : Ms J Rogers

Reporting inspector : Mrs M J Lewis
22787

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 4th July 2001

Inspection number : 213596

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Orchard Close Shirebrook Nottinghamshire
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Telephone number:	01626 742487
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Stuart Yates
Date of previous inspection:	June 1999

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22787	M Lewis	Registered inspector	English Art and design Religious education The Foundation Stage	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Key issues for action Other features of the school
8988	J Cross	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
3240	D Wilkinson	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Special educational needs	Quality and range of learning opportunities
30954	B Ashcroft	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Music Physical education Equal Opportunities	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated on the edge of Shirebrook near Mansfield. It is in the North East Derbyshire Coalfields Educational Action Zone (EAZ). It serves an area of mainly rented local authority housing and housing association properties with a proportion being privately owned. The school has pupils from three to seven years. It has 177 pupils on the full time school roll (84 girls and 93 boys). There are 60 part-time children in the nursery and 60 full-time in the reception classes under six years of age. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average at 36 per cent. Pupils are all from white, English speaking families. Fifty-two pupils are registered for special educational needs, which is above the average proportion. Four have statements of special educational need. This is higher than usual. In addition to these pupils thirteen nursery children are identified as having special educational needs. The attainment of children on entry to the reception classes is well below the average for their age although there is a wide range of ability amongst them. When they arrive in the nursery many children have levels of attainment that are well below what is expected for their age in language and literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. The energetic headteacher leads the school well and is ably supported by a committed staff and governors. Standards have risen in reading, writing and mathematics over the past three years and now are at the national average. Parents express very high satisfaction with the school. The school has a high level of funding which it spends wisely to benefit pupils' learning. It provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils learn and achieve well. They make good progress in English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching is good. There is a high proportion of good and very good teaching for pupils in the nursery and reception classes, which gives pupils a good start to their education.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they make good progress.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school and behave well in and out of lessons.
- The school's provision for personal, social and health education is very good.
- The school has very good links with parents. This makes a good contribution to pupils' learning.
- The school is led well by the headteacher and deputy headteacher who have a very good grasp of what needs to be done.

What could be improved

- The progress of higher attaining pupils.
- Attendance rates which are well below the national average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1999 and was judged to have serious weaknesses in a number of key areas including the quality of teaching in the infant classes. This is no longer the case and the school has made improvements in all the key issues identified. Teaching has improved in the infants and is now good overall. Standards have risen in English and science to be at the national average. Pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well. There have been significant improvements in the school development plan. It is now more straightforward to use and is familiar to and used by governors as a working document. The school has developed the role of the co-ordinators

who now play a full part in the development of their subjects. The school provides very well for pupils' personal development and pupils now have more opportunities to find out for themselves through practical enquiries and investigations, especially in mathematics and science.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
reading	E	E	C	A	well above average A
writing	E	C	C	A	above average B
mathematics	C	D	C	A	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

Standards in the school have risen over the last three years. In comparison with all schools across the country, test results in 2000 for 7-year olds, show that standards were close to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in reading rose dramatically from well below the national average in 1999 to the average compared with all schools nationally. In mathematics they rose from below average to average, and in writing they sustained performance at the national average. When compared with schools with a similar number of pupils with free school meals, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well above average. The inspection findings show that 7-year-olds perform at the national average overall in mathematics, science, reading and writing. They make good progress in their understanding of sounds and spelling for reading and writing and in their use of number in mental mathematics. The school has challenging targets in place for the current and subsequent years in English and mathematics. Pupils reach the expected level for their age in all other subjects of the curriculum by the time they leave the school. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the local guidelines. Children in the nursery and the reception classes achieve particularly well in personal, social and emotional, communication and language and mathematical development. They make good progress. However, standards are still below the levels of attainment expected for their age by the time they begin in Year 1. Higher attaining pupils reach the levels expected from them by the end of the reception class.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes at all times. They are eager to learn, respond well in lessons and are keen to take part in their activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and playtimes is good. There was no evidence of anti- social behaviour, racism or bullying. The youngest children want to please their teachers and this continues through the school.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils themselves and between pupils and adults are good. The school successfully promotes pupils' personal development.
Attendance	Rates of attendance are poor and falling behind the national average. Some pupils miss school through taking extra family holidays during term time. This holds up their learning.

The school has a well-developed programme of personal, social and health education. This works well and has a good effect on pupils' behaviour and learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching is good and no unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Of the 35 lessons seen, 23 per cent were satisfactory, 60 per cent were good and 17 per cent were very good. In most lessons the good teaching is characterised by good knowledge of the subject and good relationships and communication with pupils which makes learning meaningful to them. Teachers use the national strategies effectively for English and mathematics. In Years 1 and 2 the teaching of mathematics is good overall and it is satisfactory in English. A strength of mathematics lessons is the introductory section dealing with mental arithmetic and in English the teaching of letters and sounds. Review sessions at the end of lessons are used well to consolidate what pupils have learnt. In science lessons teachers give good opportunities for scientific enquiry, encouraging pupils to think as scientists and to come to conclusions. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities in information and communication technology but teachers do not teach skills on the computer in small systematic steps to help them learn sequentially. In English and mathematics, pupils with special educational needs benefit from extra help each day from teachers, nursery nurses and classroom assistants. However, the school does not identify very able pupils and does not promote their learning and progress enough as they move through the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Children in the nursery and reception classes receive a stimulating curriculum. A broad and relevant curriculum is planned for the infant classes with an emphasis on literacy, numeracy and personal, social and health education. This means that some areas such as art, and music have less time.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are helped effectively in lessons and make good progress towards the well-devised targets in their individual education plans. These are reviewed regularly.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development.	Good overall. Pupils' social, moral and spiritual development are good and cultural development is satisfactory. Although pupils are provided with good opportunities to develop an understanding of cultures and religions different from their own, knowledge of their own culture is less well developed in music and art.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for the health and welfare of its pupils. Staff show a high level of concern for pupils' well being. Good procedures are in place for monitoring the progress of pupils' academic work and their behaviour.

Parents think very highly of the school and it involves them very well in their children's learning from before they start in the nursery and afterwards. It provides good information about pupils' progress and what is happening in the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership and has a clear sense of purpose for improvements in the school. She shares her vision and fully involves staff and governors. The school development plan is a good document to guide the work of the school and is used by all.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities effectively. They take a keen interest in the school and are committed to its improvement. They are well informed about the school and support the headteacher and staff well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school evaluates well how pupils are doing and the quality of teaching. It analyses its results and prioritises areas for development and improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Financial management is sound. The governing body ensures that spending decisions benefit pupils and provide the best value.

The school has a sufficient number of teachers and skilled learning assistants to help pupils. Accommodation varies from a high quality infant and separate nursery blocks to shabbier buildings in need of renovation.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and behaviour is good • The teaching is good and their children make good progress. • The school expects the children to work hard and helps them to become mature • The school is well led and managed. • They feel comfortable to approach the school with any concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant number of parents expressed dissatisfaction with any aspect of the school.

The inspection team agrees with all the positive views of the school held by parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of attainment at the age of seven have improved since the previous inspection in reading, mathematics and science. Test results in 2000 showed a dramatic improvement in the level of pupils' reading, which rose from being well below to reaching the national average. In mathematics standards rose from below the national average to meet it. In comparison with similar schools, (judged to have the same level of free school meals) standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well above the average.
2. The school has maintained this improvement since the 2000 test results and inspection findings show that 7-year-olds reach the standards attained nationally for their age in English, mathematics and science. Standards have risen in science and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The 2000 results of teacher assessment in science, where there are no tests, showed that standards were close to the national average in comparison with schools nationally and above the average compared with similar schools.
3. The overall improvement that has taken place in the school over the past two years is due to several factors. These are: the good management by the headteacher, and the vigorous implementation and constant review and evaluation of a good school development plan; an emphasis on raising the standard of teaching and pupils' learning and on the highlighting of the teaching of literacy and numeracy and science. The implementation of a good personal, social and health education programme including the provision of snack time in all classes has helped raise the levels of pupils' concentration and behaviour during lessons.
4. When children start in the nursery classes they have levels of attainment which are well below those expected of three-year-olds in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development. A significant number of children in the nursery have speech difficulties. Children are taught well and make good progress in the nursery and reception classes. Most achieve satisfactorily and reach the learning goals expected of them for their age in, physical and creative development, in knowledge and understanding of the world and in personal, social and emotional development. However, attainment in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development is below average by the time they begin in Year 1. Taking into account their starting point when they begin the National Curriculum, pupils make good progress and achieve well in Years 1 and 2.
5. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are helped to make good progress. They achieve well and make good gains, in relation to their prior attainment, in skills, knowledge and understanding particularly of reading, writing and mathematics. With the careful deployment of learning assistants and the use of the early literacy strategy, the school has worked successfully to ensure that standards have improved for pupils with lower levels of attainment in literacy. However, similar provision has not been made to raise the levels of higher attaining pupils.
6. A slight rise in standards took place in reading and writing in 1999. However, more noticeable improvements were evident in 2000. The standards of attainment in reading rose for both boys and girls. The differences in boys' and girls' attainments in writing and mathematics are no different than that found in most schools.

7. The school has challenging targets in place for pupils in the current Year 2 class for English and mathematics. It exceeded its targets in English for the year 2000 and came very close to reaching them in mathematics. Pupils' results for 2001 indicate that targets for the proportion of pupils to attain at the expected level 2 have been achieved and exceeded in both English and mathematics. The school analyses the results of pupils' performance in standardised tests carefully. As a result of this analysis it has targeted specific areas for improvement. In English these have included the development of writing throughout the school and raising the standard of boys reading. In mathematics the school has identified and worked successfully to ensure that girls' performance matches that of boys and in science to identify strategies to support girls.
8. In English although pupils' skills in speaking and listening are satisfactory overall, for some pupils speaking skills are limited. This is particularly so for the significant proportion with special educational needs in Year 2, many of who are hesitant to speak in longer sentences or to use a varied vocabulary. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in spelling. Attainment in this area of English is better than is found in most schools. This is due to good methods used by teachers and learning assistants to teach letters and sounds, and to target teaching for groups of pupils with special educational needs. In reading, pupils in Year 2 show a good understanding of information texts and are able to find information independently. In mathematics, pupils gain confidence in the addition and subtraction of single digit numbers in Year 1. In Year 2, they show a good understanding of such processes as doubling and halving larger numbers. However, pupils are often restricted in methods they experience by the narrow focus of some of the worksheets they use.
9. Pupils attain satisfactorily in science and other subjects of the curriculum, including religious education, at the age of seven. They reach similar standards to those in other schools. In science, pupils learn to predict, observe and consider what has happened in their scientific enquiries and their skills in science investigations have improved considerably since the last inspection. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have been maintained as satisfactory since the previous inspection. The school has kept pace with the increasing expectations for ICT and improved the quality and quantity of machines and programs available. In religious education, pupils in Year 2 show a good understanding of each other's feelings and in particular of the meaning of symbols and special items, which people of different religions regard as significant.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' behaviour and personal development have significantly improved over the last two years but there is a widening gap between the school's level of attendance and the national average for infant schools. This is a weakness and affects standards of attainment for some pupils because they miss too much schooling.
11. Parents are very clear that their children like school. This is apparent as pupils arrive at the start of the school day and they happily settle down to work. There is no disruption in lessons now. This was a weakness reported two years ago, that was attributed to the high level of unsatisfactory teaching at that time.
12. In the nursery and reception classes children have positive attitudes towards their learning and are well behaved. They try hard to please their teachers and the adults who help them with their work and play. They get on well with their classmates and enjoy the interesting activities provided for them. For example, in a reception class lesson promoting mathematical development, pupils were spellbound as the teacher communicated instructions for mathematical challenges through a large soft toy. The children did their very best to complete the tasks correctly.

13. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are equally keen to learn and they concentrate hard on the tasks they are given. They work well both independently and co-operatively and are particularly good at getting on without a fuss. Those with special educational needs are fully integrated into the life and work of the school and are helped by learning assistants who give them every encouragement to succeed. Pupils of all abilities show a high level of interest and involvement in their work. For example, in a science lesson for pupils in a Year 1/2 class, pupils gasped in amazement as they observed the difference that water can make to a thirsty plant. They tried very hard to come up with suitable descriptions for the wilting and revived versions of the plant. Girls and boys work well together in lessons and mix freely and easily at other times.
14. Inspection findings agree with the views of parents that behaviour is good throughout the school day. The atmosphere in lessons, assembly and snack time is calm and orderly yet purposeful. At break and at lunchtime, pupils play happily together in the playground. No-one appears isolated. Pupils play in friendship groups and are actively encouraged by supervising adults to engage in a range of activities using play equipment and playground markings. No anti-social behaviour or harassment was seen during the inspection and this is not an issue of concern to the parents. One pupil was excluded from the school for a fixed period during the last year.
15. Pupils' personal development and relationships throughout the school have improved greatly since the last inspection and are now good. Two years ago pupils had little sense of responsibility and younger ones in particular found it difficult to socialise. Pupils of all ages relate well to each other now and to all adults in the school, including visitors who they are keen to talk to about their work. They are justifiably proud of their achievements and willingly celebrate the successes of others in class and during the Gold Book assembly. Pupils learn to respect other people's feelings and beliefs. This was seen in recent work undertaken by Year 2 on the Sikh religion, which involved visiting a Sikh temple, a faith centre and a school with pupils from a variety of different ethnic backgrounds. Snack time and lunchtime in the dining hall are civilised social occasions when pupils enjoy their refreshments and engage in pleasant chatter. Monitors take their responsibilities seriously and pupils tidy away at the end of lessons effectively and speedily in the classes as a matter of routine.
16. Attendance is poor and this hinders the progress that some pupils make because their learning is disjointed. To an extent the learning of all pupils is affected because teachers have to spend time explaining work that has been missed at the expense of new learning. Whilst school attendance has remained fairly static over the past four years it has fallen increasingly behind the national average, which has risen steadily over the same period. The school's low attendance level now ranks near the lowest division of infant schools nationally. Authorised absence of an unavoidable nature, such as illness, accounts for much of this but the school is concerned about the high rate of absence caused by families taking holidays in term time. Unauthorised absence is also higher than usual and is rising. Some of this is caused by parents failing to give the school suitable explanations for absence and some is due to families taking more than the maximum allowable ten days holiday during the year. These absences occur despite the many reminders to parents about the importance of regular attendance and the types of absence that the school cannot authorise. Pupils generally arrive at school punctually and lessons begin on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The overall quality of teaching is good. In 60 per cent of the 35 lessons it was good, in 17 per cent it was very good and in the remaining 23 per cent it was satisfactory. The larger proportion of very good teaching is in the reception classes although very good lessons were also seen in one Year 1 class and in one Year 2 class.

18. Teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory overall and a number of lessons were poor.
19. This improvement is due to an emphasis the school has given to raising the quality of teaching and pupils' learning as detailed in the action plan following the last inspection and the good and thorough current school development plan. There have also been staff changes in the Year 1 classes, and the supplement of an experienced teacher on a part-time basis makes an additional and very good contribution to the quality of teaching in one reception class. Unlike at the time of the last inspection, all teachers are now employed on a permanent basis and show a strong commitment and dedication to improving the standards of pupils' learning.
20. Monitoring of teaching by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and literacy consultant has had a good effect on raising its quality. Staff have been provided with good quality in-service training in literacy by the local authority consultant and literacy teachers from the EAZ who have worked alongside teachers with good effect. Effective guidelines for literacy and numeracy have also contributed to the improvement in pupils' learning and the rise in standards.
21. The school employs a number of skilful learning assistants. This results in a high number of adults working closely with pupils so that they have enough help in lessons to make sure that they understand and complete their tasks successfully. This raises pupils' self-esteem and confidence and makes a good contribution towards improving all pupils' learning especially for pupils who find learning more difficult. Learning assistants are well deployed by teachers during lessons and are carefully briefed beforehand.
22. The teaching of pupils in the nursery and reception classes has been maintained at good quality since the last inspection and there is now no unsatisfactory teaching in the foundation stage. As a result children have a good start to their education and make good progress. Most achieve well in the nursery and the reception classes in relation to their earlier attainment, which is very low for many when they begin. Teachers provide a stimulating environment for children. Sessions and activities are well planned and organised. Teachers use good resources. Staff emphasise the development of children's personal, social and emotional skills from the beginning, as well as teaching them the basic skills of language and mathematics.
23. Teacher's knowledge and understanding of the teaching of literacy and numeracy is good and they teach both of the National Strategies effectively.
24. In lessons seen, the teaching of English in the infants was broadly satisfactory. Children are given a good platform for their learning in the reception classes and this approach continues through the school. A strength of the literacy teaching is the emphasis that teachers give to the pupils' learning of letter sounds, blends of sounds and groups of sounds. They provide well-structured short, sharp well-timed sessions each day for pupils of different abilities during the literacy hour to enable pupils to make progress. Pupils' learning is carefully checked and the teachers know exactly what the pupils need to practise and learn.
25. Systems and resources for teaching reading have been improved and reading is taught well. Teachers choose interesting texts to read and study with the pupils. For instance, the good choice of a non-fiction text in the form of a big book called 'My Sikh Faith' was very meaningful to pupils following a visit they had made to a Gurdwara the previous day. Pupils progressed well in learning how to find information and whether non-fiction texts answered their questions. They focused on the questions in the text and were able to decide whether or not the book succeeded

in answering them. Teachers explain new work and tasks carefully to pupils and introduce them to a range of styles for writing such as lists, and instructional writing. Lessons are generally planned well, and teachers plan to include tasks for pupils of different levels of ability in the class. However, in nearly all of the lessons in English there was insufficient challenge for the highest attaining pupils and these pupils completed their set tasks easily. This was seen in a handwriting lesson when Year 1 pupils who already knew how to join their letters were not provided with a more difficult task. In another lesson, pupils quickly completed sentences with words containing the sound 'oo' and then spent time cutting out letters for the sound in an unchallenging and time consuming task. Similarly, higher attaining pupils in a Year 2 lesson, filled in missing words in a reading comprehension task quickly and effortlessly without the need to write answers and use their own words.

26. Teachers develop pupils' skills in speaking and listening across the subjects of the curriculum satisfactorily and use subject vocabulary appropriately. For example, 'rationing,' 'evacuees' and 'Anderson Shelters' were used in a history lesson when pupils learnt about life in Britain at the time of the Second World War. Pupils have talking partners and have opportunities to discuss together. However, although teachers' questioning is generally effective they do not always insist that pupils give longer answers. They readily accept short one-word answers and do not probe sufficiently deeply in their questioning.
27. Teaching in numeracy lessons is good. Teachers use the time in lessons well and are particularly skilful at showing pupils different ways of working out problems in their heads although they do not always encourage different ways of recording their workings. They ask pupils to explain their ways of working out problems and this is good. However, sometimes teachers do not extend pupils' explanations clearly enough for others to understand. Teachers prepare for lessons well and manage and organise groups effectively ensuring that pupils with special educational needs receive good support. In group work, tasks are generally matched well to pupils' abilities but often are not sufficiently demanding for the more able pupils.
28. In both literacy and numeracy lessons commercial and teacher-prepared worksheets are heavily used for pupils' individual tasks. These are not always effective in providing the right level of work. This is particularly the case for higher attaining pupils in English and for the recording of calculations in mathematics. Teachers mark pupils' finished work consistently and give rewards for the effort they make. However, they do not always indicate what the pupils have done well and how they could do better.
29. Teachers use ICT effectively in lessons. They give opportunities for pupils to use computers and programmable toys such as 'floor turtles' from the beginning. Lessons particularly in English, mathematics and science are planned to include activities on computers and teachers make the best use of the programs available to them. For instance, in an English lesson pupils in Year 2 made good progress in their understanding of syllables and word building for making and writing sentences with the use of a word processing program.
30. A strength of the teaching is the good management of pupils in almost every class. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and high expectations of their behaviour and their attitudes to their learning in lessons. Teachers use a positive approach towards pupils and praise them accordingly for good work and behaviour. This ensures that the majority of lessons proceed well and at a good pace which allows all pupils to learn effectively.
31. Teachers plan most lessons well but in some more ordinary lessons, planning for subjects other than literacy and numeracy is too brief and does not clearly support

and underpin what they want to achieve in the lesson. This was the case particularly in lessons by one of the two less experienced teachers at Year 1. For instance, in a religious education lesson the planning of the lesson was not sufficiently detailed to ensure a coherent sequence of ideas for the pupils to understand what they were learning. Teachers use resources very well to make learning interesting for the pupils. They make many of these themselves to a high standard. They develop good strategies for helping pupils to learn, such as using games to make words from syllables. In religious education lessons, for example, knowledgeable adults dress as characters from the bible, and children question them.

32. Teachers provide homework regularly and in accordance with the school policy. This is mainly related to reading and mathematics activities that consolidate work in lessons.

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

33. The curriculum is good overall. At the time of the previous inspection, there was criticism of the lack of balance between investigative work and teaching knowledge in subjects such as science and mathematics. This has improved. The provision for the foundation subjects is now better than at the time of the previous inspection. All subjects are planned and taught separately. Teachers now focus on each subject as an individual lesson rather than a carousel of activities going on at the same time.
34. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. Teachers have worked hard to implement the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and they are now well established. The school gives emphasis in its curriculum to the teaching of literacy, the teaching of numeracy and the very good programme of work for pupils' personal, health and social development. This emphasis has been wise and has been effective in raising standards in these subjects of the curriculum. The healthy snack time provides pupils with mid-morning nourishment and contributes significantly to pupils' social development. However, the emphasis on these three areas means that the time for some other subjects is limited, for instance, in art and music. At present, the school is developing schemes of work by following nationally recommended guidelines and has sensibly chosen to make amendments to these guidelines to fit its own particular needs.
35. There are good links between subjects, for example in history and geography where teachers link the study of coastal features to work on a seaside holiday past and present. Similarly, teachers use information communications technology effectively in subjects such as science and mathematics. For example, in a science lesson pupils produced computer-generated graphs of measurements made in science.
36. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers are careful to include pupils with special needs in all class activities. They make sure that the tasks set are appropriate to maintain their interest, improve their confidence and enhance their learning. For instance, children in the nursery are rewarded with bricks to put in special containers when they learn to behave and listen well without interrupting the teacher. The school fully implements the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs and for those with statements of specific need. It receives good specialist support such as a speech therapist, educational psychologist and behaviour support teacher regularly from the local education authority. Learning assistants give good guidance and help to pupils in lessons. For instance, they ensure that they have the resources they need to help them such as cubes in a mathematics lesson.

37. Provision for out of school activities is satisfactory. Currently, in conjunction with the EAZ, the school provides an after school club which focuses upon developing pupils' artistic skills whilst at the same time enriching their language development. Educational visits to places such as the church, leisure centre, theatre, pet centre, allotments and a Victorian museum help to enrich the curriculum.
38. The school's commitment to equal opportunities is good. Staff take positive steps to promote equal opportunities, for example, the joint planning by teachers across year groups ensures all pupils of the same age have access to similar programmes of work. The school sensitively undertakes the withdrawal of pupils from class for special educational needs teaching. This is often only for short periods so those pupils might gain maximum benefit in, for example, the time given to the teaching of letters and sounds in English lessons.
39. There are satisfactory links with the community and with partner schools. The school promotes a parent and toddler group, held each week within the school. This helps to familiarise new parents with the school and most children go on to attend the nursery department. When the time comes for pupils to move to the neighbouring junior school the teachers and pupils take part in visits to adapt to the new school. The headteacher and staff are involved in a number of activities with local schools such as, in-service training. However, there are no systems to ensure that pupils' learning takes over in the juniors from where it left off in the infants.
40. The very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is a strength of the curriculum. It is based on national guidelines. Teachers plan a regular weekly programme of work, covering such areas as relationships, self-esteem, emotions and attitudes. The science curriculum offers teachers the opportunity to address sex education and to study the life cycles of plants and animals. As part of the programme of work, teachers keep a social competence record for each child in order that staff are fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses in individual pupils' personal development.
41. The ways used by the school to promote pupils' spiritual, moral and social development have improved since the last inspection and are now good. Provision for pupils' cultural development continues to be satisfactory.
42. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good and has improved since the previous inspection. It is promoted through daily collective worship and some religious education lessons such as those in Year 2 that focussed on the Sikh faith. Care is taken in assembly to allow pupils enough time to reflect on the message of the day and relate it to their own lives and experiences. During the inspection, for example, the headteacher asked pupils to think deeply about the particular quality that makes each of them special. This followed the telling of a story about Elmer the elephant, who was different from the rest of the herd. Teachers are always present during collective worship, which brings the reception and Year 1 and 2 classes together for this special time. Music is used well as pupils enter and leave the hall to set the quiet tone for the assembly and is well chosen to match the theme of the worship. In lessons, pupils are invited to think about their feelings and emotions and consider why they are special, including times when pupils sit around with their teacher for quiet discussions.
43. The good provision for pupils' moral development has been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils are taught effectively to distinguish between right and wrong through the school's positive approach to discipline which, whenever possible, highlights the expected standard by celebrating the good things that pupils do. Staff use firm and sensible discipline fairly, and indicate clearly to pupils the impact that any misconduct may have on others. The school's personal, social and health

education programme reinforces these principles effectively by devoting appropriate time in lessons to promoting strong moral messages.

44. Provision for pupils' social development is good and has improved since the previous inspection. Since the introduction of morning snack time each day, which encourages good manners from the nursery upward, there has been significant improvement in relationships between pupils. Also contributing effectively is the exchange of hugs and hand squeezes around the class following registration times and the linking of hands each day in assembly. Pupils' self-esteem is raised measurably by the staff at every opportunity through appropriate praise, small rewards, encouragement for rounds of applause and the entering of pupils' names in the 'Gold Book'. Pupils successfully make social contact at the after school club and on educational visits that take them into the wider community. All age groups are actively encouraged to take responsibility for minor tasks around the school in their role as monitors and for general tidying up.
45. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school works hard to develop the multi-faith aspects in religious education and the multi-cultural aspect of pupils' development is fostered effectively. Pupils in Year 2 have pen-pal arrangements and have visited pupils in a school with a high number of children from minority ethnic backgrounds. During the visit they worked and played together as one community. Suitable thought has been put into designing the curriculum with positive images of other races. In history, for example, pupils are taught about Mary Seacole, the Jamaican nurse who tended the wounded during the Crimean war. Pupils also visit places of worship of a different world faith, and museums. There are occasional visits to the school from arts and theatre groups to work with the children. The school's understandably high emphasis upon literacy and numeracy in recent years has curtailed the time available for foundation subjects that teach pupils about their own and others' cultural heritage. In particular, experiences in art and music such as visitors into school to improve pupils' cultural development are limited.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. The school continues to take good care of its pupils and has made improvements to the way that their academic performance and personal development are recorded so that suitable help and guidance can be provided by teachers and learning assistants.
47. Procedures for assessing pupils with special educational needs are good. These assessments initially take place in the nursery and teachers plan well to meet the children's needs, particularly in personal development, literacy and numeracy. The school, for example, is providing effective nurturing programmes for pupils with the greatest need in their personal development to help them to integrate successfully into the full life of the school.
48. All staff and volunteers actively encourage good behaviour. At lunchtime the mid-day supervisors are well trained to maintain the same high expectations of pupils' conduct as at other times of the day. They encourage this by helping pupils all they can in the dining hall and actively playing with them in the playground. They communicate effectively with the teacher of their allotted class at the start of afternoon sessions and reward pupils who have been particularly well behaved. The whole class and staff celebrate this achievement. This boosts pupils' self-esteem effectively and reminds other pupils about the expected standard. These and other rewards and sanctions are consistently and fairly applied, which helps pupils to be clear about what is expected of them. The school is highly committed towards eliminating oppression, harassment and racism. It is working alongside the EAZ towards an anti-bullying award helped by the considerable efforts of a cross section of the school

community. Parents appreciate the school's quick response to tackle the minor incidents of bullying that occur. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are suitably recorded and parents become involved at an early stage.

49. The way that the school monitors attendance and punctuality is similar to most schools, but needs to be better still if the increasing discrepancy between the school's level of attendance and the national average is to be reduced. The nursery brochure and newsletters, school prospectus, home-school agreement and occasional letters and meetings all try to press home to parents the importance of regular and punctual attendance. Holidays in school time are frowned upon unless unavoidable and request forms are suitably filed for future reference so that checks can readily be made on absence over the year of individuals for this purpose. Authorised and unauthorised absences of individuals are appropriately collated and the education welfare officer is involved in the cases of those families with the worst attendance record.
50. Full annual attendance is suitably celebrated, but very few pupils achieve this. A special week promoting good attendance through small rewards is held annually during the summer term when holiday absence is at its worst. This raises the profile of attendance for pupils and parents. There is a similar focus on punctuality in the autumn term, which suitably sets expectations for the year. At other times, however, there are no rewards for individual attendance that are attainable by the vast majority of pupils, nor any for class attendance. Whole-school attendance is not monitored closely enough during the year, and there are no targets for improvement. The school's policy on attendance is good but is not matched by the school's practice. It is in need of improvement to be applied fully. Now that the school has established an effective partnership with parents and trust is well established, it would be opportune to raise parents' awareness of how much better attendance is in most other infant schools across the country.
51. Matters relating to child protection, welfare, health and safety are given appropriate emphasis. Risk assessments, fire procedures, first aid arrangements and administration of medication are all dealt with appropriately. There is no staff handbook, however, to collate such information into a more manageable document. Staff show a high level of concern for pupils as demonstrated during the very hot weather during the inspection, when they encouraged pupils to wear sun hats and provided them with drinks of water at the end of break and lunchtime.
52. Procedures for the monitoring and support of pupils' personal development are good. Personal, social and health education receives a high priority right from the outset in the nursery where staff make brief notes about the children's personal development that are incorporated into attractively presented, informative profiles for parents. Teachers in the reception and Year 1 and 2 classes are developing a useful social competence record and have begun to make entries about how well pupils work, behave, move around school, relate to others and care for equipment, to pass on to the next year group teacher.
53. The school has good procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic performance. These procedures have been maintained since the last inspection. Assessment is good in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' work is checked thoroughly and regularly in English. In mathematics and science, progress is monitored by regular testing of topics each half-term. However, teachers' marking does not give sufficient pointers of what pupils do well and how they can improve. In other subjects assessment is at an early stage of development, but it is satisfactory. There are good assessment records for pupils with special educational needs. These are reviewed each term. All the staff are involved and individual education plans are written by class teachers, learning assistants and the special educational needs co-

ordinator together. These good ongoing records show systematic reviews of pupils' progress and the setting of new targets.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

54. The school has very good links with parents. It has strengthened still further the good partnership with parents and carers evident at the last inspection, and parents now enjoy greater involvement in their children's education. Parents had very few concerns about the school two years ago but some felt that homework was inconsistently set. This has been resolved, and parents now have very positive views generally about the school including homework.
55. Early relationship building with new families begins when nursery staff visit homes of new children to meet in an informal setting and exchange important information. Channels of communication are particularly good throughout the children's time in the nursery. These help to establish the good routines that continue in other year groups of openly welcoming parents into school and getting them interested and involved in their children's learning. Nursery parents are actively encouraged to bring their children into the classroom, help them to register and stay for the first short session of learning during the wide range of activities that are available to them. The nursery has its own informative welcome brochure and a newsletter each term that includes the topic focus, ways that parents can help at home and in school and reminders about the games, books and jigsaws that can be borrowed by families. For those parents who can get into school there is an array of children's work and photographs of pupils engaging in activities that promote the areas of learning for their age group. This helps parents understand how young children learn. Voluntary assistance in lessons and on visits is readily welcomed and much appreciated by the staff, and many parents continue to help in school as their children get older.
56. The number of parents assisting on a regular or occasional basis throughout the school is much higher than is usual in most schools. Many parents have been trained in useful basic skills. This is a significant help in raising pupils' achievements during lessons. For instance, in a religious education lesson in Year 1, the teacher planned for group discussions. The inclusion of a trained parent-helper and learning assistants meant that all groups were supported by an adult, and pupils succeeded in drawing conclusions from their discussions. Courses for parents have been run to help with reading, adult literacy and childcare, some of which have been funded by the EAZ. These have successfully raised the level of skills for a number of parents and led to them being awarded a national qualification.
57. Information for parents is good. They find out about what their children are to learn next during annual transition meetings when children move up to a new year group, and also through topic and homework information displayed on classroom doors. Some parents who are unable to get into school due to other commitments, would rightly appreciate this information being sent home. The comprehensive school prospectus tells parents much more about what is taught in the nursery and reception classes, and about National Curriculum subjects than is common in most schools. An unusually good feature of the prospectus is the comment slip for parents to return with their suggestions for improvements to the booklet or the school. Parents feel that they can readily take concerns to the headteacher and teachers with confidence that these will be dealt with well.
58. Parents have suitable opportunities to meet with class teachers to discuss their children's progress both formally and informally. Attendance at the transition meetings and formal consultations with class teachers is good. The annual written reports about progress are suitably detailed and include personal targets for development in some subjects, particularly English and mathematics.

59. The school keeps parents of pupils with statements of specific educational needs well-informed about annual reviews and invites them to attend and participate in meetings with staff and outside agencies. Parents of other pupils on the school's special educational needs register are kept informed about their children's progress on an informal basis but also have the opportunity for a formal meeting if they wish.
60. The Friends of Park Infant and Nursery School enthusiastically and successfully organise social and fundraising events that benefit the pupils. For example, some of the funds raised have helped the school to buy new shelving for the relocated library and new computer equipment.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

61. The leadership and management of the school are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the management and efficiency of the school were requiring some improvement. This has been due in no small measure to the energy of the headteacher who, along with the deputy headteacher and governors, has vigorously dealt with the key issues from the last inspection. The quality of teaching has been raised. Standards have risen in English and science and pupils now attain levels at the national average for 7-year-olds. The school development plan is a good working document that is shared with and understood by all staff and governors. The role of curriculum co-ordinators has been clearly defined and they play a major part in influencing their subjects. Pupils take more responsibility for their own learning and work independently particularly in mathematics and science activities.
62. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher work closely and effectively together. They have a very strong commitment to raising standards. The headteacher has built a strong professional team of teachers who are dedicated and committed to school improvements. Teachers and learning assistants share a common purpose and work in teams is well established. This is helped by teachers who plan the curriculum across year groups, support each other well with resources and ensure that pupils in parallel classes have the same experiences. The school development plan is brought about by evaluation of the school's action plan since the time of the previous inspection. It is contributed to by staff and governors. Curriculum co-ordinators' action plans for subjects are integrated well into the plan. It makes clear the educational priorities for the school and staff show a determination to succeed and do the very best they can to address priority issues.
63. In order to raise and maintain standards of pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science, the headteacher and senior staff analyse pupils' test results thoroughly. They take into account the differences between boys' and girls' performance and seek ways of rectifying differences. For instance, they have successfully tackled ways of raising boys' performance in reading by reviewing the materials used with boys and the examples set to them by adults. This has been successful so that there is now very little discernible difference in performance between boys and girls. They look carefully at areas to prioritise for improvement such as developing the opportunities for using ICT across all areas of the curriculum. The school is beginning to track pupils' performance from the results of initial assessments in the reception classes and annual nationally recognised tests as well as the standardised attainment tests at age 7. The headteacher and senior staff are not satisfied with the predictions of pupils' performance from their initial test results in the reception classes but sets challenging school targets for them to achieve. Significant progress has been made for pupils with special educational needs who receive good quality help from well trained and qualified learning assistants. The quality of leadership and management is having a significant and beneficial effect on the quality of education and the improving standards in the school. The careful monitoring of standards has

enabled the school to raise the attainment of pupils to attain at the levels expected for their age. It now recognises that it needs to give more attention to ensuring that higher attaining pupils reach the higher levels of which they are capable.

64. The governors of the school support school development. They fulfil their statutory duties satisfactorily. Some members of the governing body have changed since the previous inspection and there is a shortfall of three members. However, the governing body has a clear view of how they want the school to move forwards and they share the headteacher's vision for the school. They are knowledgeable about how the school works. They gain this information in several ways: through formal governing body meetings in which they are kept well informed by the headteacher and curriculum co-ordinators; through more informal meetings with staff and through their roles as link governors for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs.
65. The school system for financial management is effective in planning and budgeting for initiatives in the school development plan. There are clear references within the budget and development plans to ensure that the school apportions money appropriately and that spending keeps to budget limits. Consequently, staff can easily identify specific grants to ensure their use for the purpose intended. The recent auditor's report indicated a number of procedural recommendations. The school is presently preparing an action plan to implement its response to the suggestions and has already adopted some individual recommendations. The school utilises best value principles. The on-going debate about spending on new computer hardware reflects the school's commitment to these. A significant debate is underway as to whether a computer suite, the provision of laptops or other options are in the best interest of pupils and which will provide the best value.
66. The efficiency and financial control are sound. The headteacher, administrative officer and finance governors work closely together to ensure the effective monitoring of the budget. The school makes very effective use of its learning assistants and they make a significant contribution to lessons. Invariably they target their support on groups and individual pupils. They are well briefed by teaching staff, which ensures that they work effectively in leading pupils forward in small steps of learning. Although pupil numbers are falling and the school is facing a contracting budget in the current year, it has been able to maintain its present level of staffing with the use of its contingency from the previous year. Outline planning is in place for future years and the governors are already making strategic plans to deal with the further anticipated fall in pupil numbers.
67. The special needs co-ordinator manages pupils' learning well. There is good support given to colleagues in writing individual education plans. The teachers review and set targets for pupils as a collective exercise on a termly basis. The supporting notes, provided for colleagues by the co-ordinator, and sharing of ideas are illustrative of the thought given to provision for these pupils.
68. The school has a sufficient number of teaching staff. They are suitably qualified and match the demands of the curriculum. All staff have received training in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and opportunities are given for them to attend other relevant courses. New teachers are inducted satisfactorily into the procedures of the school and they receive appropriate guidance and support. Mentoring systems help staff fit in quickly to the life of the school.
69. The new high quality purpose-built classroom block that houses the infants is a significant improvement to the learning environment since the last inspection. Apart from this, much of the accommodation, such as the hall, is shabby and in need of renovation, but staff do all they can to make it less drab by putting up colourful displays of pupils' work. The library has been relocated since the last inspection and

is better organised so that pupils can be more independent in their learning. The school is better stocked with both fiction and reference books than two years ago. Improvements have also been made to provision for ICT by increasing the number of computer systems and widening the range of software. Staff are very inventive and produce many attractive and stimulating homemade resources themselves to extend pupils' learning opportunities at little extra cost. Learning resources are good for nursery and reception pupils both indoors and outdoors. Resources for other subjects and for special educational needs are generally satisfactory apart from history and geography, which need additional items to meet the requirements of the new curriculum, and religious education, which is lacking in some artefacts.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

70. The school should now:

a) Promote best progress for higher attaining pupils by:

- extending monitoring procedures to include the identification of the more-able pupils
- providing them with challenging opportunities
- reducing the reliance on commercial worksheets that restrict pupils' ways of thinking
- establishing procedures for tracking and recording their individual achievement
(paragraphs 5, 8, 25, 27, 28, 78, 92, 98)

b) Improve the rate of pupil attendance to bring it closer to the national average for infant schools by:

- continuing to stress the importance of regular and sustained attendance to parents and pupils
- rigorously monitoring school attendance during the year and setting targets for improvement
- rewarding and appreciating those pupils with good attendance
(paragraphs 10, 16, 49, 50)

In addition to these key issues for action, the following less significant weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Improving teachers' questioning techniques and the marking of pupils' work
(paragraphs 8, 26, 28, 52, 88, 92, 100)
- Widening the opportunities in the curriculum for music and art
(paragraphs 34, 45, 112, 134)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	17	60	23	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	39	177
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	64

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	13	52

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	7.2
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.8
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	33	45	78

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	30	32
	Girls	38	40	42
	Total	64	70	74
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (67)	90 (83)	95 (89)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	31	29
	Girls	39	41	41
	Total	66	72	70
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (70)	92 (86)	90 (89)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	100
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	1	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)	7.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.9
Average class size	29.5

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	153

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	39

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	518542
Total expenditure	460526
Expenditure per pupil	1944
Balance brought forward from previous year	-12092
Balance carried forward to next year	45924

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	211
Number of questionnaires returned	55

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	85	15	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	78	22	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	42	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	42	7	0	4
The teaching is good.	78	20	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	44	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	33	0	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	24	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	51	40	4	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	56	38	0	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	35	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	35	7	0	18

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

71. There is good provision for children under the age of six in the nursery and reception classes. Teachers plan lessons well and deploy the nursery nurses and learning assistants very well to support the children. Teachers make good links between the nationally recommended areas of learning, and children receive a wide range of enriching experiences. There is a good programme of work for the personal, social and emotional development of the children in each of the four classes. Teachers provide an environment in which the pupils feel secure. . Formal meetings of the foundation stage practitioners are not frequent. The physical separation of the nursery makes team building more difficult than in the infants. However, further integration of the work in the nursery and reception classes is identified as an area for development in the coming year.
72. The numbers of children in the foundation stage in the nursery and the reception classes is higher than at the time of the last inspection. The nursery has 39 full time places and 78 pupils attend at either the morning or afternoon session. There are 60 children in the two reception classes. The children are taught well by three full time teachers, one part time teacher, a nursery nurse and learning assistants. Children also benefit from frequent additional help from parents and students.
73. The attainment of children when they start in the nursery is well below the average particularly in; communication and language development, mathematical development and personal and social and emotional development. Many children have speech difficulties and as a result of screening about one sixth are referred to a speech therapist. Very few have an understanding of colours, shapes and numbers. The teacher and nursery nurses and assistants provide a good range of work and opportunities that enables children to make sound progress. Children are admitted to the reception classes in the year in which they are five. The results of nationally recognised assessments for children of this age show that the majority of children start the reception classes with below, and for a significant proportion well below, average levels of attainment in; communication and language development; mathematical development and personal, social and emotional development.
74. Inspection findings show that children make satisfactory progress in both the reception classes and reach the expected levels for their age in the areas of knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; creative development and personal, social and emotional development. However, pupils' overall attainment in skills of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development is below average by the time they begin in Year 1. This shows good improvement for the majority of pupils. A small number of very able children reach the learning goals for their age in language and literacy and mathematical development.

Personal, social and emotional development

75. The provision and teaching for children's personal, social and emotional development is a strength in the nursery and the reception classes. In the nursery classes, children learn to work together and share tools in tasks in small groups with a good level of attention from the teacher and well-trained nursery staff and many adult helpers. At the beginning of the session they are encouraged to register with name cards and the help of their parents when they arrive. Interesting activities such as constructional, shape matching, computer and book activities are well prepared for the children to choose from on their arrival. They receive good encouragement from

all staff to be polite and to apologise to others when needed. Teachers reward children with praise and they clap each other when prompted by the teacher for good behaviour. This visibly raises children's self esteem. The teacher has good systems in place for managing the behaviour of those who find it difficult to meet expectations. All children are well settled into the nursery classes and understand the daily routines and systems established by the teacher.

76. Teachers and staff in the reception classes promote children's' personal, social and emotional behaviour well in lessons and at snack times. They do this by having very high expectations of children's behaviour and establishing good relationships with each other at all times. Higher attaining children for example are encouraged to work independently and to stay with their tasks until they are finished. Children have good opportunities, for instance in their creative activities in art and design and in literacy and mathematical activities, to work alongside each other in small groups with the help of an adult. At snack times children are given opportunities to talk together although few do so voluntarily and need encouragement from staff. Many are reticent at saying thank you when handed their snacks.

Communication, language and literacy

77. In the nursery and in the reception classes children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories and rhymes. The teaching in this area of learning is good and in one reception class it is very good. In this class the teacher has very good skills for teaching literacy, she directs questions very carefully to children of different abilities. For instance, she reminds them of what they have already learned such as how they 'made the parrot paint' when learning the letter 'p'. As a result, children in the foundation stage make good progress although many are still below the goals expected of them when they leave the reception classes. Able and very able children in the reception classes develop steadily their skills in talking, although not all children in these groups talk freely, audibly and with confidence. With support from the teacher they talk in well thought out sentences using the three letter words they are studying such as, 'I tipped my food into the *bin*, I washed my hands under the *tap*'. Children make good progress with their reading and writing skills and higher attaining children reach the learning goals for their age by the time they reach the end of the reception year. Able children choose their own books and read them accurately. Very able children achieve a degree of fluency. Others are more insecure and read words more hesitantly although they are beginning to recognise the three letter key words they have learned. By the time children leave the reception classes almost all have learned to recognise letters and link them with sounds. Other able and very able children use their knowledge of discriminating letters to build words such as 'tip, top and tap' accurately. They develop a sight vocabulary for words like green, blue and butterfly. With good support from the teacher and well directed questioning and probing, children are beginning to understand that a book can have information as well as a story. When reading their storybooks only the more able children can predict from pictures and text what is going to happen next in a story. Children have good opportunities for writing for a variety of purposes in the reception classes. Teachers develop this well, and in one class very able children exceed the goals for this area of their learning. They learn to use capital letters and full stops correctly and to order sentences. Able children are attaining the learning goals. They attempt to write lists, promises, sentences and instructions. Their writing is becoming legible and words are spaced regularly. However, a significant proportion of children still write under the teachers' writing.
78. Teachers and learning assistants throughout the foundation stage have good relationships with children during literacy lessons. They promote children's learning well, and use a variety of short activities to keep them motivated and interested and maintain a good balance of listening and interactive activities. However, many

activities are based on recognising letters and sounds on worksheets and children have less opportunities to write and talk freely with each other for different purposes.

Mathematical development

79. Attainment in mathematics by the age of six is below the level expected for children of this age overall. However, a small proportion of very able pupils reach the levels expected for their age by the end of the reception classes. Children start in the nursery with levels of attainment well below those for their age. As a result of good teaching in the foundation stage, they make good progress in their practical number and shape activities and learning is made enjoyable for them. For instance, in the nursery they learn to recognise and match numerals between one and three in a fishing game, to catch play fish and to allocate them to the correct bucket. In the reception classes children make good gains in their learning. There is a wide spread of ability in mathematics amongst the children in the reception classes. In one class children were encouraged to count in sequence as a whole class up to one hundred with support, and many enjoyed the challenge of this activity. At the other end of the scale a significant number of children have difficulty in matching numbers to five. The small number of very able children are confident in counting and matching numbers to ten and some to twenty. They learn for instance to count to ten and to match numbers to the number of apples on a tree. Some children can count in twos but few count up to ten successfully. Teachers provide challenging opportunities with the help of well made teaching aids and effective questioning to solve problems in their counting. For example, children learn to fill in the missing numbers for 'one more than five is six'. They are beginning to understand the use of language such as 'more than' and 'less than' when comparing numbers although they find this hard to explain in words. They learn to order ten bottles and count them as they go in a class activity. Pupils know that they can use a variety of ways for counting such as fingers and apparatus and crossing off marks to help them. Many less able children struggle with understanding their prepared activities on work sheets and although in the reception classes intervention by adults is good, worksheets focus more on what they are to learn at the expense of how the children understand what they are learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

80. The provision for the teaching and learning in this area is good in the nursery and in the reception classes. The majority of children reach the learning goals in this area by the end of the reception year. In the nursery they act out the roles of people buying and selling in an ice cream parlour, which engages them in imaginative and enjoyable activities as well as teaches them to understand the exchange of goods for money. Children have opportunities to work with computers and learn about technology. Reception class children have a good understanding for instance of sending letters and how they arrive at their destination from work they have been involved in with visitors from the Royal Mail. In a very good lesson on sound, by means of a 'sound walk' around the school buildings and grounds, all children developed a good understanding that sound is all around them. In a game using musical instruments, soft toys and blindfolds, children learn to discriminate and recognise a wide range of different sounds. They have opportunities in their activities to choose their own materials from a wide selection for making their own musical instruments. Teachers engage children effectively in lessons by offering opportunities to state their preferences and to record what they find. For instance, they are encouraged to illustrate their 'science' books with drawings of dogs, and tractors to show what they heard on the 'sound walk.' Children develop their knowledge of ICT well in the nursery and the reception classes. In the nursery, for instance, they learn to load and operate a program for recognising numbers and colours. Learning assistants are very well briefed for lessons. They know when to intervene and avoid frustration for children, when, for example, they have difficulty in cutting sticky tape.

They play an active part in supporting children especially those with special educational needs.

Physical development

81. By the end of reception children attain in line with the levels expected of the learning goals for their age. The provision for this area of learning is satisfactory in both the nursery and the reception classes. All children have opportunities to develop their physical skills through outdoor play. They learn to move with confidence, control and co-ordination although activities are not planned by teachers in detail when reception classes use the outdoor equipment.
82. Children use their manipulative skills well. For instance they handle small and large construction materials to build structures, to post letter shapes through letterboxes. In reception classes they develop pencil control to press firmly and write letters and their names. They learn to cut and to spread glue carefully. In a lesson in the hall, nursery children showed their pleasure in moving to music. They followed the teacher's instructions and showed confidently how they could move by skipping, marching and in giant's strides. Teachers and helpers gave good encouragement and used exaggerated facial expressions well to help the children understand what they were expected to do. This was successful and the children tried very hard to please the staff.

Creative development

83. The provision and teaching for children's creative development is satisfactory. Pupils reach the expected goals in this area of learning by the end of reception. They have stimulating activities in the nursery and the reception to develop this aspect of their learning. They enjoy singing rhymes and songs and reception children join in confidently in a larger group in school assemblies. Children in the nursery played a game of 'Musical Box Go Round', in small groups, each led by an adult. They explored the sounds made by different instruments, learning to match the names of the instruments to picture cards. They use their imagination in play activities in the 'ice-cream parlour' and act out the roles in play situations. Children explore the use of different colours in their art. In the reception classes, for instance, they paint pictures and make collages showing the colour 'yellow' and 'blue'. They used a range of materials, such as wool, lace, fabric, straw and sandpaper successfully when making individual pictures to develop their understanding of 'rough' and 'smooth' materials.
84. The teaching and learning in the foundation stage is good overall and there are some examples of very good teaching in the reception classes in language, and mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. For instance, when introducing 'adding' the teacher demonstrated very effectively by counting the sweets on two plates and questioning the children. The co-ordination of the foundation stage is satisfactory. The planning and assessment and record keeping for the new curriculum are good. The school has worked well to match resources to support the new curriculum.

ENGLISH

85. Standards in reading and writing have shown good improvements since the last inspection when they were below the national average at the age of seven.
86. Test results for 2000 showed that compared with all schools nationally, pupils attained at the national average for both reading and writing. Compared with schools in similar circumstances, results in reading and writing were well above average.

87. Inspection findings show that this improving trend has been maintained in reading and writing and that by the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is at the national average. A slightly higher proportion of pupils attains at the expected level (Level 2) in writing than in reading, although more pupils exceed the expected level in reading.
88. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils reach similar standards in speaking and listening to those found in most schools. Nearly all pupils respect their teachers and listen well. However, the significant proportion of pupils (24 per cent) in the current Year 2 classes with special educational needs, are reticent to speak in front of the class and find it hard to explain their ideas in longer sentences and use only the simplest vocabulary. Pupils in all classes show a good level of interest when sharing and reading big books with their teachers in literacy lessons. Most pupils in the Year 1 classes ask and pose questions successfully. For instance, when studying a non-fiction book about elephants, they ask, 'Why do they have trunks?' 'How do they grow?' Pupils in Year 2 listen well to their teachers and answer teachers' questions willingly although often in one-word answers. This is because many lack the confidence to speak before a large group and also because in some lessons teachers' questions are not sufficiently probing enough. Teachers often accept short answers and do not always encourage pupils to explain them sufficiently or direct questions to the quieter members of the class. For instance in a Year 2 lesson when pupils read from sound cards around a large group, the pace of the lesson became slow and although the teacher expanded on the sounds, the same opportunities were not given to the pupils to do so. Teachers give opportunities in lessons in other subjects, for instance in religious education for pupils to discuss in a group supported by an adult or with a 'talking partner'. On these occasions, although pupils' level of speaking is satisfactory for their age, it is limited for many by their lack of extended vocabulary and for some pupils with special educational needs by a lack of confidence.
89. The rise in standards of reading and writing is as a result of the emphasis the school has given to English in the school development plan and in the way it has vigorously addressed the key issue from the previous report. The school analyses test results carefully and uses the analysis to prioritise areas for action. For instance, it has taken steps to ensure that the performance of boys in reading matches that of girls. It has selected books specifically to appeal to boys such as a wide range of non-fiction texts. From analysis of assessments of pupils' attainment on their arrival into the reception class, the school makes predictions for individual pupils. It then targets groups of pupils to raise their achievement. This has worked particularly well for those pupils who are on line to achieve just below the expected level. This group identified by the school as the 'Bubbling under Group' has made good progress and most pupils have increased their learning to achieve at the nationally expected level for seven-year-olds. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early. Good individual education plans are prepared for them with well-devised targets to ensure that they make progress in small steps according to their levels of previous attainment. They are helped well in their individual tasks in lessons by good quality teaching from learning assistants. For instance, they work separately as a group in Year 1 and 2 classes for developing their knowledge of letters and sounds. Pupils are withdrawn for short, sharp well-timed sessions with learning assistants to concentrate on sounds and letters during the initial word study session of the literacy hour. They learned to build words with the sound 'air', successfully and to use the words in questions, such as 'Do you want to come to the fair?' This works well and most pupils make good progress in relation to what they already know. However, no similar identification of more-able pupils has taken place to raise the levels of their attainment. In some lessons at Year 1, work for this group has less challenge.
90. The teaching of reading has been successfully reviewed in the school since the last inspection. It is taught well. A wide range of good quality reading books is now

available for pupils to choose from. Pupils are heard reading regularly in school by learning assistants and teachers. The school involves parents with helping their children read and all pupils are encouraged to take reading books home every day to practise. The pupils who make the most progress are the ones whose parents hear them read at home regularly. This was very evident from examining pupils' reading records and hearing pupils read. Teachers give good reading opportunities to pupils in literacy lessons. They share an interesting and stimulating selection of books with pupils. These are well chosen to match the interests of pupils and achieve the aims of the teachers' lessons. When reading a non-fiction book, for instance, pupils were encouraged to ask themselves what it is they wanted to know about 'Snails'. They formed their questions almost immediately and with the use of the text and pictures, they succeeded in finding the answers quickly.

91. Teachers help pupils learn to read and develop an understanding of what they are reading in a variety of ways. Pupils use clues from pictures and the meaning in a text to help them. Through their specific lessons on letters and sounds, they learn to build up words for themselves. For instance pupils in Year 2 know that words can be split into several syllables. Able and very able pupils clap the number of syllables in a word accurately and are able to build up words of two, three and four syllables such as 'smiling, important, and information'. They enjoy these activities and in one class rose well to the challenge of difficult words they have been using, such as Gurdwara. The able and very able pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of the differences between fiction and non-fiction books. They use contents and indexes confidently and have favourite books such as those about, football, science and tennis. Very able pupils have favourite books and favourite authors.
92. The school has given an emphasis to writing since the previous inspection and as a result standards in writing are improving and pupils' are achieving well. Able and very able pupils in Year 2 spell accurately and punctuate their work with capital letters and full stops correctly. Some pupils are beginning to use speech marks correctly. The attention given to spelling and punctuation in literacy lessons by teachers is good. The provision of spelling aids such as word towers and word books in addition to the use of appropriate dictionaries and word processing programs contributes greatly to raising pupils' skills and confidence in writing. Teachers provide a range of opportunities for pupils to write in different styles such as descriptions, stories, re-telling of well-known fairy tales such as 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. Pupils write thank you letters and instructions, they write reviews of books they have read and enjoyed such as, 'Not Now Bernard'. However, the heavy use of worksheets for pupils' completion, results in a large collection of past work which does not provide a useful record for pupils and parents. These are not always used judiciously because the same worksheets are often given to pupils of all abilities, Teachers mark pupils' work cursorily. They tick work and give stamps for effort but do not inform pupils what they have done well or how they should improve.
93. The school has successfully raised the standard of teaching in the literacy hour since the previous inspection. In the lessons, seen teaching in English at Years 1 and 2 was broadly satisfactory. Forty per cent of lessons are now good. There have been staff changes and all teachers have had recent additional training from literacy consultants from the EAZ staff in the organisation and teaching of the literacy hour. Teachers and learning assistants use the additional literacy programme for teaching letters and sounds very well and this is impacting well on standards of pupils' work in both reading and writing.
94. The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator who has clear ideas of further development. Since the last inspection the subject has been given the priority it needed and this has successfully raised standards. Good support has been given to the co-ordinator by the headteacher and the EAZ to develop the subject.

MATHEMATICS

95. By the age of seven, when pupils move on to the junior school, their attainment is in line with the national average. This was reflected in national test results for 2000 when pupils in Year 2 matched the national standard and did much better than pupils in similar schools. This year's results show a similar pattern. Almost all pupils reached the nationally expected standard and one in five pupils did better than this. Boys and girls make equally good progress, as shown by the test results over the past few years. Whilst overall standards are similar to those reported at the previous inspection, there are improvements. More pupils are scoring higher in the tests. Pupils with special educational needs are now making good rather than satisfactory progress. Standards have risen because the teachers within the four infant classes teach to a consistent style based on the national numeracy guidance and give sensible emphasis to basic number work.
96. The pupils make very good progress. They are doing very well given that they are well below average when they begin in the nursery and below average when they start the National Curriculum. In Year 1, a variety of teaching approaches helps pupils gain confidence in addition and subtraction sums with single digit numbers. Pupils use their knowledge of double 8, to add together 9 and 8 for example. There is challenging work. When telling the time pupils are able to read both digital and analogue clocks to the hour and half past. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of number to 100, recognising numbers that come before and after others. By Year 2 they have a sound knowledge of common two-dimensional shapes and can identify their lines of symmetry. In number, they have an increasing knowledge of doubles and halves. More able pupils can give the correct answer to problems such as half of 7 and half of 90. There is good work where pupils record for themselves their own ways of solving calculations. One group of pupils when adding 11, was adding 10 first and then another 1. However, pupils have too few opportunities to record for themselves a variety of methods of mental calculation.
97. The teaching is good and this has a positive effect on pupils' learning. At the time of the previous inspection, some teaching was unsatisfactory. This is no longer the case. Teachers pay close attention to national guidelines when planning lessons and parallel classes follow almost identical programmes of work. Consequently the teaching builds on pupils' mathematical knowledge and skills term by term, and pupils in each class have similar opportunities. All teachers have established good classroom routines, so that little learning time is taken up with organisation or behaviour management. Generally, teachers use the time in lessons well. However, within some classes the oral part of lessons needs to move on more quickly in order to keep pupils challenged.
98. Teachers encourage pupils to use the knowledge they already have in solving problems in new situations. Pupils in Year 1, for example, are able to apply their knowledge of numbers that come before and after others, when calculating the passage of time. A good feature of the teaching is the way teachers asked pupils to explain how they have solved a problem. Nevertheless, on occasions the teachers need to make the explanations more explicit to the class if the pupils are to learn from each other. One such occasion arose when a pupil explained how she halved 70 by halving 60 and then 10. The teacher missed a valuable opportunity to expand on this for the benefit of others. During the group work, teachers make a distinct effort to grade the work to match pupils' stages of development. In this way pupils build on their learning in small steps. However, there are times when the more able finish their work quickly and the extension activity is too undemanding. For example, in one lesson when the teacher gave the pupils a word-search to complete. The teachers cater well for pupils with special educational needs. These pupils regularly

have the additional support of a learning assistant. The carefully planned work and additional resources, such as counters, help pupils with their understanding. In all classes pupils have too few opportunities to record mathematics in their own way. The use of worksheets and workbooks predominates. This restricts the progress of pupils to develop a variety of strategies in recording calculations for example.

99. There is better coverage of the curriculum than at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils have the opportunity to use the skills they have developed into other areas of the curriculum. In science they produce bar charts of hand spans and measure distances when testing their eyesight. Some use is made of information communications technology to support the teaching of the subject. Pupils have produced a variety of graphs on topics such as their eye colour. Teachers use simple programmes designed in the form of games to reinforce pupils' basic knowledge of number. However, teachers too often miss the opportunity to use the technology more widely.
100. In class the pupils behave well and the good teaching, allied to the good behaviour in lessons, results in good levels of achievement. Pupils are attentive to teachers and when working by themselves, do so for sustained lengths of time whilst maintaining their concentration. The pupils present their work well, which in turn leads to greater accuracy in their answers. The good levels of presentation are a significant improvement on those reported at the previous inspection. Teachers are up to date with marking and give appropriate words of encouragement. Seldom, though, does marking focus on telling pupils how they might improve.
101. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and monitors lessons in order to support colleagues. Assessment and tracking procedures are good. Due note is taken of how well pupils tackle the end of Year 2 test in order to inform the school of the strengths and weaknesses in present provision. There is a clear steer for future developments based on a sound appraisal of present strengths and weaknesses.

SCIENCE

102. Teacher assessments in 2000 indicated that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 was close to the national average. When results are compared with schools in similar circumstances, the attainment is well above the national average. These standards have shown a rise since the time of the last inspection. The proportion of children reaching the higher Level 3 is also at the national average, and in comparison with similar schools it is above average. Work seen during the inspection indicates that these results will be maintained this year.
103. Pupils have sound knowledge across all aspects of the subject, including life processes and living things, materials and physical processes. Much more opportunity is given for pupils to organise fair tests and conduct their own investigations than at the time of the previous inspection. These skills have now improved a great deal and this is helping pupils to think scientifically and encourages them to work independently to examine their own and others' thoughts and ideas.
104. In all classes there is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special education needs are supported very effectively by their class teachers and learning assistants. They make good progress in developing their basic skills in relation to their abilities.
105. Throughout the school, pupils are learning to predict, observe and reflect on what has happened. For example, Year 1 pupils were studying the effect of water on plants. They were able to discuss what happens when plants are deprived of water. Pupils are given every opportunity to enhance their scientific knowledge with practical

activities. For example, when studying plants and animals, pupils in Year 2 visited an allotment and a pond so that they could see the animals and handle the plants rather than merely looking at pictures of them. This made the learning more meaningful and helped the pupils remember what they had learned. Pupils know that to be healthy they need to eat lots of fruit and vegetables and that sugar is bad for their teeth. They understand from work on materials that some are more suited to do a certain job than others. For example, pupils in Year 1 conducted an experiment to find the best material for making a raincoat. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of what happens when certain materials are heated, but their knowledge of reversible and irreversible change is not as secure.

106. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory, and it is often good. Teachers plan the work together and this ensures that all pupils receive the same experiences. However, in one Year 1 class the teaching was more ordinary because the pace of the lesson was slower at times and this resulted in some children becoming restless and talking when they should have been listening. In the other Year 1 lesson, good, lively and enthusiastic teaching motivated pupils to work hard and to sustain their concentration. Pupils were encouraged to think scientifically and draw conclusions from the evidence. They concluded that plants need water to grow. At the end of the lesson, when the teacher produced a plant which had been watered after being deprived of water, some pupils gasped. One was heard to say 'It's beautiful now!' In a good lesson seen in a Year 2 class, the class teacher used good questioning techniques which helped pupils understand that some differences between our bodies can be measured, for example, hand spans. In this lesson a good link was made with I.C.T. and mathematics when some pupils transferred the results of their investigation into bar charts and pie charts using the computer. Teachers manage pupils well and provide interesting activities for them. This results in pupils behaving well during lessons and sustaining concentration when they are completing their written tasks.
107. In all classes a strong feature of the science teaching is the 'hands-on' approach which involves pupils in demonstrations and investigations. Pupils enjoy their science and show good interest in their work.
108. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge of what needs to be done to further improve achievement in the subject. Some teaching has been monitored and feedback given to teachers. The school has adopted the nationally recommended guidelines for the teaching and the assessment of science. The co-ordinator has looked at each topic and now all are suitably resourced.

ART AND DESIGN

109. Pupils reach levels of attainment in art similar to those in most other infant schools. However, due to an emphasis on English and mathematics and personal, social and health education, art and design is given less amount of time in the curriculum than is usual in most schools at Years 1 and 2. This restricts pupils' opportunities to explore and develop their ideas and to try out different tools and techniques.
110. Pupils have experiences in a variety of media such as collage, work in clay and painting and drawing with the use of chalk, pencils and pastels. In Year 1 they learn to draw and paint a variety of pictures of people who help them in their daily lives such as, policemen, firemen and the school crossings patrol. They draw carefully from looking at pictures and photographs and create effective patterns with the use of ICT programs. In lessons in the Year 1 classes, pupils made individual designs based on the local craft of well dressing. They explored ways of transferring their designs onto a clay plate and decorated their plates with a variety of pasta and dried pulses. They rolled out the clay plates carefully and learned to transfer their designs

from the paper to the clay with the use of small sticks to prick out their patterns. As a result of sound teaching and good preparation of resources by the teacher, pupils concentrated well and took pains to transfer their patterns accurately and decorate the plates. A high level of adult help enabled all pupils including pupils with special educational needs to sustain and persevere in their work. All pupils completed their work successfully and many achieved meticulous designs. In one class some higher attaining pupils finished quickly and did not benefit from further art and design tasks to extend their learning. Older pupils in Year 2 have produced some effective collages using a variety of natural materials such as wood and straw and materials such as hessian.

111. Teaching is satisfactory and pupils receive good adult help to aid their progress and help them achieve. This help and encouragement raises their confidence and they are proud of their efforts.
112. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new and has begun to develop a new scheme of work by reviewing the school scheme and matching it to the national guidelines. The co-ordinator has good expertise in art and monitors the planning of art and design in all year groups in the school. She has developed resources and is responsible for managing the budget for art and design. The sequential teaching and learning of skills is not fully in place, however, and skills are not systematically assessed. The teaching in art and design is blocked with design and technology which means that pupils can go for several weeks without practising the skills they are developing. This means that they often do not have the opportunity to use their skills whilst they are fresh in their minds.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

113. The pupils' standards are average and their achievement is satisfactory. This is the same as the time of the last inspection.
114. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Pupils enjoy the practical tasks of designing and making. Pupils in Year 2 have been making puppets. They followed their own designs using a variety of materials. However, there is little opportunity given throughout the school for pupils to evaluate what they have made. Pupils use construction kits to learn how to make and take apart their designs. In Year 1, the construction of toys using card and appropriate joining techniques was integrated into the history work in the class. This gave pupils an effective opportunity to put their new skills to good use.
115. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has been managing the subject for less than a year and has not yet had the opportunity to promote the raising of standards in the subject. She has reviewed resources and ensured that there is an appropriate range of tools, equipment and materials to support the teaching and learning. The school has adopted the nationally recommended guidelines for the teaching of the subject and this ensures that skills are taught in a systematic way. Assessment of pupils' work at the end of each unit of work has just begun but this has not yet been in place long enough to evaluate its effect.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

116. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2, standards of attainment in geography and history are broadly in line with those expected nationally for seven-year-olds.
117. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of geography is broadly typical. Pupils in Year 1 learn about the local environment. They satisfactorily draw maps illustrating their journey to school and through this work, begin to learn about the significant

landmarks in the local area. Their maps illustrate a growing awareness of direction and the notable features they see on route such as trees and special buildings. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they begin to learn about the different types of buildings in the community and the uses they are put to. For example, they compare homes such as high rise flats and modern detached houses for similarities and differences. An on-going unit of work entitled 'Barnaby Bear travels the World' successfully enriches pupils' understanding of travel and the features of other places. ICT is used appropriately for an informative display of work on 'Where in the world are we?'. Pupils have produced their own passports and compared the climate of Tenerife to that of a ski resort. They are acquiring a satisfactory understanding of how different types of weather affect the way people live and the clothes they wear.

118. Pupils in Year 2, compare the way of life in Shirebrook to that of a Scottish Island. They have created a panoramic picture to illustrate life on the island, which clearly demonstrates the pupils' understanding of a different way of life. In particular they compare the transport and jobs people have. They are able to record accurately for themselves both the differences and similarities between the two areas.
119. In history, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of some of the important events and people of the past. Pupils' writing about the Fire of London shows clearly that they know how the fire started and what living conditions were like at the time. They know a little about the work of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole. Alongside these areas of knowledge, children develop a sound understanding of the passing of time. For example, pupils in Year 1 examined a collection of toys to discover how things change over time and why. They talked enthusiastically about living conditions at the time of World War II and have a reasonably accurate idea of when the event occurred. One pupil indicated that his grandad was a young boy at the time.
120. The teaching in history is good. Teachers do their utmost to recreate the atmosphere of the past by using photographs, artefacts and visits. For example, pupils recently visited an air raid shelter in connection with their World War II topic and the Year 1 class is shortly to visit a Victorian kitchen. Teaching of history is rooted in learning from enquiry, and lessons often focus on pupils examining photographs and objects to learn how historians gather information about the past. When writing about a wartime beach scene a pupil wrote – 'The children at the seaside are sad because the soldiers have planted bombs under the sand'. This kind of learning is good because the pupils are beginning to reason for themselves.
121. In both history and geography, teachers plan well to cater for the varying levels of attainment of the pupils. For example, pupils with special educational needs often have the support of a learning assistant and teachers support pupils' activities with pictures if they have difficulties in reading. However, since the previous inspection, all pupils are much better at recording work for themselves. This is due to the significant rise in standards in literacy. No teaching was observed in geography but planning and pupils' work indicates the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The way the school teaches both subjects has improved since the previous inspection. All pupils now carry out their work in each subject at the same time, rather than in a carousel of various activities through the week. This means that teachers no longer have to waste time recapping on previous instructions for each group of pupils as the week progresses.
122. In both subjects, there are often good links between the topics studied. For example, in geography pupils learn about the different physical features found at the seaside whilst, in history, they make comparisons as to how seaside holidays have changed over time.

123. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They behave well, and are attentive to the teachers and the other adults that often support the lessons. When working in a group they share resources sensibly and are patient to take turns when they examine artefacts.
124. Management of both subjects is satisfactory. Both co-ordinators are new to their posts. In this first year, they have drawn up sound schemes of work based on national guidelines with slight adaptations to meet the needs of the school. Resources are available to fit in with the topics studied but as yet are not sufficiently comprehensive to be satisfactory across all topic areas. The time allocated for the teaching of history and geography is low compared to other schools. Consequently, the school teaches the subjects in half term blocks and therefore learning lacks some degree of continuity.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

125. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2 they attain standards broadly in line with those expected for this age of pupil. Standards remain very similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection some two years ago.
126. By the time pupils transfer to the junior school, they have become familiar with the appropriate applications of computers. These include word processing, inter-active simulations, graphic programmes for creating patterns, and basic data handling software to produce graphs. Additionally they have opportunities to develop their skills in control technology by the use of a programmable floor robot. Pupils show satisfactory skills in accessing programmes, opening menus, closing down windows and printing out their work. In word processing, they are able to present their work well. They know how to set out their work by use of the return key and how to reset the cursor key in order to edit their work as they go along. Some pupils are able to demonstrate a variety of ways of resetting the cursor key such as by use of the mouse or the arrow keys. However, teachers give their pupils too few opportunities to develop their skills further. This is especially true for the higher ability pupils and for those who bring in skills learnt at home. For example, there are far too few opportunities given to pupils to develop their skill of saving work and then editing it later.
127. Pupils word process for a variety of purposes. There are strong links with literacy. Pupils word process poems, create lists and take care to punctuate their work accurately. In history they are word-processing work about their topic on World War II by presenting questions about the period that are well set out on the page. These are good learning experiences for pupils that are set into the context of the topics they are studying in other subjects.
128. Within both year groups, pupils have produced graphs but in Year 2, they do so with little or no help from the teacher. A variety of graphs is on display. They include column, bar and pie charts illustrating a survey they carried out on the colour of each other's eyes.
129. Some teachers have introduced pupils to the use of CD-ROMs to improve their knowledge of words by use of a talking dictionary, for example. However, too little use is made of this facility which is available in each classroom. Consequently, teachers miss the opportunity to develop the pupils' own research and independent learning skills.
130. Within both year groups pupils work with a programmable robot. Some of the best work occurs where the pupils record routes and plan them out on paper before trying them out on the robot. In this way pupils learn that a variety of instructions may well produce the same result or that they have made mistakes in their instructions. These

good experiences also help to support pupils' learning in mathematics and give them a practical understanding of 90-degree turns. Teachers also use graphic programmes to support pupils' understanding in mathematics when they produce colourful symmetrical patterns. Pupils work confidently at the keyboard, accessing different options available on the toolbar and are confident enough to experiment.

131. The teaching overall is satisfactory. Weekly plans make regular reference to the experiences which pupils will receive. A strength of provision is the balance of experiences pupils receive. However, teachers give insufficient attention to addressing the small steps of learning that pupils need to go through in order to develop their skills successfully. Confidence and expertise amongst the staff varies. The new computers recently installed in each classroom have given rise to teachers having more enthusiasm for the subject. The teachers need the in-service training, due to start at the beginning of next term, in order for them to make better use of the resources. At present, the computers are under-used and teachers do not use the full potential of software to challenge pupils who are capable of using it.
132. Pupils obviously enjoy their work at the computers and talk about their work with enthusiasm. They respect the resources well and are eager to support each other when anyone shows signs of hesitation as to what to do next.
133. Subject leadership is good. The subject co-ordinator sets a good example by the work undertaken in her class. The revised scheme of work is in line with national guidelines and an assessment grid is in place to track pupils' progress. As yet the teachers do not use this information sufficiently well to move forward quickly those pupils who are capable of more challenging experiences. Resource levels have improved significantly since the previous inspection. These include a small set of laptop word-processors, which are helping to give more opportunities for pupils in Year 2. The school has recently upgraded the resources by purchasing a large interactive white-board to enable a whole class of pupils to view the computer screen at the same time and each classroom is now linked to the Internet. Whilst these recent additions have as yet had little time to have an impact on teaching and learning they demonstrate the positive initiatives being taken to raise standards.

MUSIC

134. At the time of the last inspection, music had a very low profile in the school. Since that time some progress has been made and, although it is now taught in every class each week, the amount of time given to music is still shorter than in most infant schools. This means that pupils' opportunities to express themselves through a variety of musical activities and react to them is restricted. Management of the subject is satisfactory. A scheme of work has been introduced since the previous inspection and this has given the staff more confidence to teach the subject. The school still does not have a pianist on the staff, but has purchased taped music to accompany the singing in assemblies. This is used well by teachers for music and in dance and movement lessons. The standards in singing are broadly typical of those which are found in most schools. However, it was not possible to form a judgement during the inspection on the other aspects of music as only a limited amount of activity was seen. Pupils were heard singing during assemblies and they showed good control of their voices to produce a pleasing sound. Pupils are able to sing the melodies of songs tunefully and with some expression.
135. In the lesson seen in a Year 1 class, the teaching was good. The teacher had a good relationship with the pupils and they responded well by behaving well and acting sensibly throughout the lesson. For example, when the teacher asked the children to lie down on the carpet to listen to the music they did this without any fuss, even though there was only a limited amount of space. The pupils were able to respond to

the different characteristics of the music and expressed their ideas about it using their voices in different ways such as whispering and humming to reproduce the significant sounds in the music they listened to.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

136. Standards in physical education are similar to those in most infant schools. Pupils make satisfactory progress and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. It was not possible to observe any gymnastic or dance activities during the inspection as these aspects of physical education only take place during the autumn and spring terms. Infant children were observed in games lessons outside.
137. Pupils enjoy the lessons and their attitude to the work is good. They take part enthusiastically and follow instructions carefully. Pupils in Year 2 show good control of their bodies and have a good awareness of space. For example, they can stop and change direction quickly and precisely without bumping into other. Pupils in Year 1 know about the effect that exercise has on their muscles and how their hearts beat faster after exercise. For example, the teacher gave pupils the opportunity to feel their hearts before and after exercise. Pupils understand the importance of warming up prior to starting skill practices.
138. In the lessons seen, the teaching was at least satisfactory, sometimes good and a very good lesson was seen in a Year 1 class. Teachers have good control and manage pupils well. All the lessons took place outside and so it was essential that pupils could hear the instructions. In a Year 2 lesson the teacher was heard to say 'Everyone, look at me and then I know that you are listening!' This ensured that all pupils followed her directions carefully. Opportunities were provided for pupils to evaluate their own performance and that of others in order to improve their learning. Pupils were given the opportunities to refine their skills of throwing, catching and passing a ball. They worked co-operatively with their partners. Teachers set good examples to pupils and always dress appropriately for the lessons.
139. Management of the subject is satisfactory. A good scheme of work is in place. Teachers use this to plan their lessons. This has given the staff confidence to teach the subject and ensure that pupils are able to build on their previous learning.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

140. The school has maintained satisfactory standards since the previous inspection and pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of different faiths and in their personal reflections. Pupils' attainment is in line with the locally agreed syllabus at seven.
141. Pupils in the infant classes are developing an understanding of the range of different religions faiths that exist in the world which make a difference to what people believe and value. Teachers provide good opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding in religious education. Through writing to pupils in another school of a different faith and visiting a Sikh temple, they appreciate the respect that needs to be given to peoples' values and beliefs that are different from their own. They understand the significance of special clothes, festivals, places and artefacts in the range of religions they study, appropriate to their age and ability. They have the opportunity to study different faiths including Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism.
142. Pupils reflect on the importance of particular people and events important in their lives. For instance, pupils in Year 1 are developing a good understanding of famous leaders such as Moses and Jesus. In a good lesson seen, pupils had the opportunity

to ask questions of an adult dressed as Moses. One asked 'How did you feel when you decided to leave Egypt?' Later they talked in a small group about how to be a good leader and the importance of perseverance and of including everyone. They know that many things are, 'frustrating' and 'hard' and that 'you can feel left out when you can't do something like riding a bicycle without stabilisers'. By the end of their discussions they conclude that Moses had the qualities that make a good leader and 'that Moses took charge and led the people away.' Pupils learn about characters and stories from the Old and New Testaments of the Bible such as Noah, and the Prodigal Son. In a study of the Hindu religion pupils record and retell the story of Rama and Sita.

143. Pupils make good progress in Year 2 and achieve well in their study and understanding of the Sikh faith. As a consequence of a visit to a Gurdwara pupils know how to behave in a special place and recognise the importance of the temple to those who follow the faith. In a very good lesson, they acted out what happened in the temple and how it looked. The teacher created a canopy in the school grounds, decorated with appropriate artefacts. Pupils were able to sit in their own Gurdwara and discuss the reverence that Sikhs have for their holy book and how they look after it. They have a clear understanding of the special vocabulary associated with the Sikh faith, and the way that the people in the temple helped all those who visited by providing food for them.
144. Teaching in lessons seen was good and very good. The curriculum is carefully planned. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use resources very well in lessons to make learning meaningful to pupils. Teachers develop pupils' understanding in interesting ways, for instance on leaving the Gurdwara the pupils immediately wrote down their first thoughts and impressions such as, 'It was quiet and calm', 'They made us feel welcome', and 'The writing in the Holy Book was very neat'.
145. The school places emphasis on toleration and respect for others and this is particularly evident in the teaching and impact of religious education in the life of the school. The curriculum is enriched by visits for instance to the local church, and visitors into school such as a faith storyteller who brings stories alive to pupils with the use of puppets and good props. A detailed scheme of work provides teachers with the necessary guidance to develop effective lessons and the school has recently begun to incorporate the national guidelines for religious education.
146. Management of the subject is good and the enthusiasm and commitment of the co-ordinator has been instrumental in providing detailed guidance and advice for teachers. The co-ordinator has a detailed action plan for the subject and clear ideas of how to evaluate recent developments although this is not yet prioritised as an aspect of the school development plan. The curriculum is in line with local arrangements. There is a shortage of artefacts to match some of the newer development of teaching the Sikh religion.