

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **LARKLANDS INFANT SCHOOL**

Ilkeston, Derbyshire

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112708

Headteacher: Carol Goulding

Reporting inspector: Brian Aldridge  
17454

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2001

Inspection number: 216891

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Park Road Ilkeston Derbyshire
Postcode:	DE7 5DR
Telephone number:	0115 9324288
Fax number:	0115 9443825
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Keith Bell
Date of previous inspection:	27 <sup>th</sup> September 1999

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17454	Brian Aldridge	Registered inspector	Science Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs	What should the school do to improve further The schools results and achievements How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed
14178	Patricia Willman	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils How well does the school work in partnership with parents
23453	Carole Cressey	Team inspector	English Art and design Geography History Foundation Stage	
20911	Judy Dawson	Team inspector	Equal opportunities English as an additional language Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils

The inspection contractor was:

SES  
132 Whitaker Road  
Derby  
DE23 6AP

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>28</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Larklands Infant School educates children from three to seven years old drawn from a wide range of social backgrounds in the vicinity of the school. With 178 pupils (72 boys and 69 girls), including 73 children of nursery age who attend part-time, it is about the same size as other primary schools. There are 106 children in the foundation stage, including those in the nursery. Children enter the reception classes in September and January each year after spending, on average, three terms in the nursery. There are no pupils of minority ethnic heritage; two pupils speak English as their second language, both of whom speak English fluently. Of the 34 pupils on the school's register for special educational needs, two have statements. Both of these proportions are about average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. When pupils enter the school in the nursery attainment is below average and this is particularly the case in their communication and literacy skills.

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

This is a very good school where children and pupils receive a very good education. The headteacher, who is an excellent manager, has led the improvement of teaching, the curriculum and assessment with the result that standards have been raised substantially. Pupils achieve very well because teaching is very good and a talented and diligent staff encourage pupils to love learning. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- Standards in English and mathematics are well above average.
- The quality of teaching is very good and consequently pupils achieve very well.
- The school is led and managed in an excellent manner by the headteacher, senior management team and co-ordinators.
- Pupils are well cared for and they have very good attitudes towards school.
- The curriculum is very good and assessment procedures are excellent.

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

- There are no significant areas for improvement.

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

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

Since the school was last inspected in September 1999 it has maintained an outstanding rate of improvement. In 1999 the school was judged to have serious weaknesses; standards and the climate for learning required some improvement, and leadership and management required substantial improvement. The school was revisited last year and was found to have made satisfactory progress in standards and good progress in leadership and management. The nine issues identified in the 1999 report have been dealt with extremely effectively. In all of the areas of provision the school's work has improved, some to a substantial extent. Standards are now much higher than they were two years ago. The quality of teaching and the curriculum are very good, both greatly improved since the last inspection. Assessment procedures and the use of this information are exemplary. The learning atmosphere in school is very good and pupils' attitudes to school, learning and each other have improved. The improvements are the result of high quality leadership and management by the headteacher, senior managers and subject co-ordinators. They have the capacity to bring about further improvement.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
Reading	D	B	A	A
Writing	E	B	B	A
Mathematics	E	C	A	A

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

The school sets itself challenging targets, which it has exceeded. Standards in English and mathematics have risen from well below average to well above average in two years without a significant change of children's attainment on entry to the school. This is a rapidly improving trend. In the 2001 teacher assessments in science standards were well below average but have shown some improvement and are on course to meet the school's targets. There are no significant differences between how well boys and girls do. As children enter the school attaining levels well below those expected, they achieve very well in both stages and make very good progress in their learning.

Inspectors found that in Year 2 standards in English and mathematics are well above average. Standards in speaking and listening are average and boys and girls do particularly well in reading and writing. Standards in science are average but are improving. Standards in science are below those of English and mathematics because science did not become a focus of improvement until last year. In almost all the other subjects standards are either above or well above those expected of pupils of this age. The high level of attainment is due to very good teaching, excellent assessment methods and a rich and stimulating curriculum.

Children learn very well in the nursery and reception class, (the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup>), and the standard of work in all of the areas of learning rises from below average to just about average by the time they join Year 1 of the National Curriculum. The exception to this is children's language and literacy skills, which remain below the levels set out in the Early Learning Goals<sup>2</sup>. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Pupils with the most severe educational needs learn very well, making very good progress towards the targets set out in their individual education plans. More able pupils make very good progress because there is always plenty of work for them that challenges and encourages them to solve problems.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils love learning and really enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; in the playground and classrooms pupils behave very well.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils are very kind to each other and enjoy helping their friends and teachers.

<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage – the key stage of learning for children aged from three up to the time they join Year 1 and begin the National Curriculum.

<sup>2</sup> Early Learning Goals – these final Stepping Stones set out what children are expected to know by the time they start Year 1 of the National Curriculum.

Attendance	Satisfactory and has improved.
------------	--------------------------------

As the teachers plan plenty of practical work pupils are drawn into their tasks. Children and pupils are very concerned about one another and involve each other in their games and learning.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Nursery and Reception</b>	<b>Years 1 – 2</b>
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very 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 very good in both the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. Teachers are very skilled at teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and number. Their very good subject knowledge ensures they assess pupils' progress very well and set them challenging tasks. Teachers manage their classes very well; they are keen for their pupils to do well and plan plenty of interesting and practical learning opportunities. This helps pupils to learn effectively because they see how to use their knowledge and skills in real situations. Teachers and education care officers are very good at supporting pupils with special educational needs; this means that all pupils, whatever their needs, learn very well and are included in all of the class's activities. Because teachers follow pupils' learning so closely they know the best moment to intervene in a constructive way to point out mistakes and make corrections. In turn, this helps pupils to have a very good idea of that they need to do to improve. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good; there are lots of practical learning opportunities. Lessons are planned so that pupils can learn independently, in pairs and as a part of larger groups.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school's provision is very good. Pupils with the severest special educational needs are supported very well by teachers and education care officers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good; staff members provide excellent examples for pupils to follow. Children and pupils are given very clear lessons about how to be mature and responsible and care for other people.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good; the assessment procedures and the use of assessment information are exemplary.

The school works very well with parents. The curriculum is rich with practical activities and this helps pupils to see how important their work is. The curriculum is planned so carefully that pupils make very good progress and are presented with lots of challenges. Teachers have cleverly planned the curriculum and assessments so that they work together extremely well to ensure pupils make very good rates of progress.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of headteacher, senior managers and curriculum co-ordinators are excellent.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors know the school well; they have important links with subject co-ordinators, which help them to know how each subject is doing.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This aspect of work is excellent; teachers and governors look very carefully at how well the school is doing.
The strategic use of resources	The school spends its money very effectively.

The building is very difficult to manage and run effectively for learning but teachers try hard and provide very good quality displays. The headteacher has developed a very strong team of dedicated and committed workers. They have developed an atmosphere for learning which reflects the clearly expressed aims of the school. The school applies the principles of best value well.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like coming to school and their behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Children receive the right amount of work, are expected to work hard and are helped to become mature.</li> <li>• Teaching is good, children make good progress and they feel well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents and they feel comfortable about approaching the school.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were no significant issues raised by parents.</li> </ul>

Parents hold very positive views about the school. They think the school is doing well and takes good care of their children. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views and note the substantial improvements that parents have seen in the school's work since the last inspection.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS**

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

1. Since the last inspection there has been a substantial improvement in the standards attained by pupils in the national tests held at the end of Year 2. Two years ago pupils achieved below average standards in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics. In the last tests held in 2001 pupils achieved well above average standards in reading and mathematics and above average standards in writing. Compared to similar schools, standards in all three areas of learning are well above average. Teacher assessments in science show an improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving the average levels compared to 2000; assessments show standards to be average. Last year the proportion of boys achieving average levels was very high compared to national figures. This had been the case since this group entered the school.
2. Pupils of all abilities learn very well in lessons. Whether they have special educational needs or are able to learn at a faster rate than others, all pupils are set demanding tasks that stretch them. They are given very good support and regular assessments show them making very good progress. The rising trend in results looks set to continue. Very good teaching and a rich and varied practical curriculum are supported by excellent assessment methods that pinpoint exactly what pupils need to learn and how they learn best. Children and pupils receive a very good education; they learn very well in lessons and achieve very well as they grow older.
3. Children enter the nursery class with attainment below the levels expected, particularly so in the area of communication, language and literacy. They achieve very well in the Foundation Stage and by the time they join Year 1 of the National Curriculum the majority meet the Early Learning Goals set for children of this age. Most pupils meet the goals set out for their development in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creativity, physical and personal and social skills. The exception is the development of speaking and listening skills in which children do not achieve the average levels set out in the Early Learning Goals. This is because skills in these areas are lower than others when pupils enter the nursery.
4. Inspectors' judgements confirm that the standards indicated in the 2001 end of Key Stage 1 national tests and assessments are being maintained in this year's Year 2. Standards in English and mathematics are well above average. Standards in science are average but are improving and evidence points to a faster rate of learning in Year 1. This is due to the very practical nature of the science curriculum and pupils learning how to experiment and investigate. In religious education standards are above the levels set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are above average. In other subjects standards are either above or well above average except in music in which are average. These judgments show that standards have improved across the curriculum and throughout the school. This impressive increase is due to regular and frequent monitoring of teaching and the quality of feedback given to teachers. This has improved the quality of teaching and encouraged teachers to focus much more sharply on the levels that pupils have achieved and what they need to do next. Teachers have adopted very good curriculum planning practices and excellent assessment systems.

5. Overall, pupils achieve very well. They enter the school attaining below average levels, make sufficient progress to reach the Early Learning Goals in all but speaking and listening, and achieve well above average results by the end of Year 2. Boys and girls and pupils of different abilities achieve equally well. Pupils with special educational needs, including those who have statements, learn very well. They are given lots of support so that they learn alongside other pupils at the same sort of work. As education care officers are well briefed by teachers and know pupils very well, the support they give is of very good quality. Just enough attention is given so that pupils have to work hard and make very good progress towards the targets set out in their individual education plans. Pupils who learn quickly are given plenty of opportunities to learn independently and to try out their own ideas. This helps them see how they can apply their knowledge and skills in new areas.
6. By the time children are ready to join Year 1 of the National Curriculum they listen carefully but do not always remember what they have heard. Often they mispronounce words, blurring the first letter with the rest of the word or missing it out altogether. Teachers pick up on this in the nursery and reception classes, asking pupils to repeat words and learn lots of new words to extend their vocabulary. Both classes are full of written words and excerpts from books. This encourages children to see reading as an enjoyable activity and, by the time they are ready to leave the reception class, most recognise letters sounds and names, begin to read simple words and phrases and move on to reading first books. Young children in the nursery are encouraged to write while playing and to learn how to write their names and common, useful words. Reception aged children use capital letters and full stops in sentences with increasing accuracy.
7. Nursery children weigh cake ingredients during play, compare the size of snowmen and identify shaped buttons on the snowmen's coats. Children in the reception class add numbers to totals beyond ten and learn how to count on by holding a number in their heads. Nursery children play with magnets and reception children sculpt ice to investigate how water freezes and melts. Children throughout the Foundation Stage use construction kits, develop their cutting and sticking skills and use computers to track Santa on his journey up till Christmas Day. In the nursery children send and receive e-mail. Children develop their physical skills very well, improving their coordination and balancing skills. They handle tools such as scissors, brushes and pencils safely and with increasing accuracy. In their play sessions pupils develop their social skills very well; they become family members and mechanics in role-play and use the appropriate vocabulary. In their work with dough, clay and paint pupils' creative development is promoted very well.
8. Pupils in Year 2 do not achieve as high standards in speaking and listening as they do in reading and writing. However, in all three areas they make very good progress and their speaking and listening skills are average by the end of Year 2. Pupils are reminded to be good listeners, to pay attention to their teachers and other pupils and to answer questions politely. They are given lots of opportunities to use their speaking and listening skills in play situations, drama and when their teachers ask for explanations. Pupils achieve very well in their reading and standards are well above average by the end of Year 2. The school provides lots of opportunities for pupils to read books and, for example, to use the Internet to carry out research in history and science. Most pupils are independent readers and faster learning pupils become very expressive readers. They read aloud with confidence, using different voices for the characters in their stories. Standards in writing are well above average in writing; this increase is due to the school's concentration on pupils writing longer pieces of work and using their reading skills to improve their understanding of texts. Pupils who learn

faster use a wide range of punctuation marks and average pupils spell common words, writing neatly with a uniform style. All pupils are confident when trying to spell new words and many of them make very plausible attempts if they do not know the correct spelling. This is because teachers are so good at teaching letter sounds. Standards in English have risen since the last inspection.

9. Standards in mathematics are well above average and have improved substantially. Pupils measure accurately using units of capacity, length and mass. They calculate accurately using their knowledge of how numbers work and they love solving problems. They talk about the methods they use and are beginning to choose how they solve problems from a range of known methods. They learn rapidly because their teachers help them to identify patterns in their investigations. Standards in science are average and are not as high as standards in English and mathematics because the very practical nature of the science curriculum has not been adopted for as long as the revised curriculum in mathematics nor has science had the concentration of effort afforded to English in the school development plan. This is being addressed and standards in science rose last year in line with the targets the school set itself and, as pupils in Year 1 are achieving above average standards, the rising trend looks set to continue. In their science work pupils in Year 2 know what food they should eat to make them healthy, how forces affect moving objects, that twisting, bending, pushing and pulling are forces and that the sun is our primary source of light. The real strength in pupils' learning in mathematics and science is the high quality practical work. Pupils are given lots of opportunities in each lesson to test out their ideas, to investigate how, for example, the proportions of sweets differ from packet to packet and how light reflects off shiny objects in different ways. Pupils are encouraged to become independent learners who can satisfy their own curiosity by setting up their own investigations.
10. Standards in ICT are above average and have improved very well since the last inspection. This is due to better teaching, more and better quality resources and the services of an education care officer who works with pupils to develop their ICT skills. Pupils are very familiar with computer keyboards and do not waste time as they hunt for letter keys. They use word processing programs to set out their work well, changing fonts and styles to suit their work. They save their work and find their files with ease. They construct graphs and show very good levels of hand-eye coordination as they use illustration programs to design play park games, work in the style of famous artists and complex drawings of bicycles. Pupils know how to use the Internet and CD-ROMs for research purposes. In almost all of the lessons seen, pupils made very good use of the computers in their classrooms.
11. Standards in religious education are above the levels set out in the locally agreed syllabus and have improved since the last inspection. Lessons have a strong emphasis on discussion and encourage pupils to understand their own feelings and experiences. Using stories from religions as illustrations, pupils are encouraged to understand other people's experiences in the light of the stories and their own lives. Pupils gain a good knowledge of Christianity and other faiths.
12. Standards in music are average. Standards in art and design, geography and history are well above average and in design and technology and physical education are above average, all of which have improved since the last inspection. This is due to better teaching, a very good range of learning experiences and excellent assessment systems.

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

13. All pupils, including the children in the Foundation Stage and those with special educational needs, enjoy their time in school and have very positive attitudes to their learning. They respond very well to the excellent values promoted by all members of staff and their behaviour in and around the school is very good. The very good relationships they have with each other and with the adults who work with them ensure that the pupils develop into sensible and sociable individuals. The level of attendance is broadly in line with the national average. These very positive features are a significant element in the very good progress that pupils make during their time in school. Pupils' response to these aspects of their development has improved since the last inspection.
14. The children in the Foundation Stage in the nursery and reception class arrive happily at school and get on very well with their teachers, with each other and with other adults who work with them. Most of the children arrive at school in good time and settle into the routines of the classroom with confidence. All the children, including those with special educational needs, take part in the many varied and interesting activities with enthusiasm, responding well to instructions and listening carefully to each other and to their teacher. The children in the nursery play their musical instruments with squeals of delight, making as much noise as they can, but are also able to control their natural exuberance to play quietly when required. Reception children were fascinated and excited by the ice balloon and delighted with the beautiful ice sculptures they created. Children help each other and tidy up carefully and sensibly, often without being asked. They embark on wonderful journeys together in the cardboard box, listening to each other's ideas and incorporating them into their role-play. They clearly understand how the school expects them to behave and respond accordingly, proudly displaying the stickers that they are awarded. Although for many of the children attendance at school is not statutory, most of them attend regularly.
15. The very positive attitudes of the infant pupils are fundamental to the very good progress they make during their time in school. They are keen and inquisitive learners who are enthusiastic about many aspects of their lives in school. Almost all the parents who expressed an opinion prior to and during the inspection believe that their children like coming to school and the pupils themselves confirmed this. Because the school is committed to valuing all pupils, very good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and this enables them to take a full part in all the activities offered in school. Pupils respond very well to the structure of their literacy and numeracy lessons. They are keen to offer their own ideas about their work and, because teachers value all these ideas, pupils' confidence and enthusiasm grows. This was particularly evident in a Year 1 English lesson when pupils were transported into pretend time and became characters in a story. Because pupils are expected to work hard, they settle quickly to their tasks and apply themselves with determination. They try hard to please their teachers and glow with pride when their efforts are rewarded with stickers or a visit to the headteacher and entry into the Golden Book.
16. Pupils' very good behaviour is a major factor in the happy life of the school community. The majority of parents who expressed a view prior to and during the inspection consider that behaviour in the school is good and inspection evidence strongly supports this view. They respond very well to the consistently, kind, firm and fair management by all members of staff and they quickly understand how they are expected to behave. Pupils move around the school in a calm and sensible fashion, responding quickly to instructions in the playground and during the mid-day break. They thoroughly enjoy their playtimes and, although collisions causing bumps and bruises do occur from time to time, there is no evidence that these are the result of deliberately unkind behaviour.

Although pupils come into assemblies very quietly and sit patiently, they sometimes become restless and fidgety towards the end. There have been no exclusions.

17. The very good relationships that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have with each other and their often excellent relationships with their teachers and with other adults in the school, is an important element in the development of their personal and social skills. Pupils enjoy working and playing together, happily sharing resources and taking turns with good humour. In a Year 2 music lesson, for example, pupils passed instruments to their partners without any fuss, allowing the lesson to proceed at a good pace. Pupils learn to respect and value each other's opinions and feelings during their class discussions and gain an insight into the different lives and values of those in other parts of the world. They take part in fund raising for charity and learn about others less fortunate than themselves. Pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and are aware that sometimes their actions may make their friends unhappy. They respect other's property and treat the school's resources with appropriate care. They have classroom jobs and those with particular responsibilities, for example the *Busy Bees* and the *Special Persons*, carry out their duties conscientiously and with pride.
18. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. The level of unauthorised absence is below the national average and this reflects the school's good procedures for following up absence. The majority of pupils come to school regularly and mostly on time. The small number of pupils who are regularly absent are missing important elements of their learning. Whilst most of the authorised absence relates to childhood illness, a few parents take their children on holiday during term time.

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

19. The quality of teaching is very good. Inspectors observed 40 lessons; in 5 per cent the quality of teaching was excellent, in 62 per cent it was very good, in 30 per cent it was good and in only 3 per cent was it satisfactory. There were no observations of unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching is remarkably consistent and, as teachers provide high quality teaching for much of the time, pupils achieve very well and have very good learning experiences in the majority of their lessons. Because teachers prepare their lessons so well all pupils, including those who learn faster than other pupils and those who have particular learning needs, learn very well. Assessments are so meticulous, accurate and regular that pupils' needs are being constantly reviewed and work is tailored to how pupils' learn.
20. Throughout the school, the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well. From an early age children are encouraged to see that learning to read, write and use number as being fun. A snowman display helped nursery children compare heights and identify colours and two-dimensional shapes. Humpty Dumpty was used very well in the reception class to encourage reading skills while Year 1 pupils used puppets to develop writing skills in an excellent lesson. Teachers are very skilled at teaching pupils the sounds of individual and groups of letters. Pupils are encouraged to write and see writing as an important activity. Whether children are writing up repairs to cars in role-play or pupils are recording the results of their experiments into how forces affect the distance cars travel, pupils are given plenty of opportunities to use and develop their writing skills. Number skills are also used effectively in measuring their designs, using graphs to show how musical instruments are played or charting how often they breathe.

21. Very bright pupils and those with special educational needs are very well supported. As progress is assessed every six weeks, pupils' learning is constantly reviewed. If new plans or methods are needed then teachers very quickly meet pupils' needs. Teachers work together with education care officers very well. Teaching assistants are very well briefed about what pupils are expected to achieve and what methods would be used. This means that not too much help is given and children and pupils are encouraged to use their skills and knowledge in new situations. Lessons are just the right balance of new work and practice. For example, in an English lesson in Year 2, pupils with severe educational needs worked at the same activity, sequencing a story, as those pupils who learn at faster rates. This was very carefully planned and because the work suited the abilities of all pupils, very good learning took place. Brighter pupils wrote stories with correct punctuation and pupils with special educational needs ordered the story properly with a beginning, middle and an end, so that it made sense. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils however quickly or slowly they learn. The expectation applies to how much work pupils complete in each lesson, how well they behave and to the quality of their work.
22. The quality of teaching is very good in English, mathematics and science and examples of very good or good teaching were seen in the other subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Pupils achieve better results in English and mathematics than in science because the effects of the new very practical science curriculum are only just becoming apparent. Improvement is particularly evident in Year 1. However, many of the strengths of pupils' learning in lessons come from the very practical nature of the tasks teachers plan. Lesson planning is very good at both the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1. This is due to teachers having very good subject knowledge. In addition to planning, another result of teachers' well-developed subject knowledge is the quality of the questions they ask. Teachers are very skilled at aiming particular questions at individual and groups of children and pupils. Consequently, all of the pupils feel involved and valued, which in turn helps pupils learn more effectively. Equally, very good subject knowledge means that pupils have targets set for them that stretch their thinking and skills.
23. ICT is used very effectively. Pupils in Year 1 used a program to design their playground rides. They plot graphs to show whether musical instruments are blown, hit or scraped. Children in the nursery use the Internet to track Santa's progress as he prepares for Christmas. There are many examples of pupils using word processing packages to present their writing. In art and design pupils use a paint program to very good effect to replicate the work of Jackson Pollock. In a Year 1 literacy lesson the teacher used a computer to illustrate words in a large font, which helped pupils read the words clearly. Pupils see computers as an automatic choice for learning, rather than a special activity to be undertaken at a particular time.
24. The quality of teachers' assessment work is excellent. Teachers are highly skilled at monitoring pupils' work during lessons. They watch all the groups in their classes and when the time is just right they will move in to offer help or stop the work of the class to teach a further point. This means that pupils do not waste time repeating errors; their work is corrected and they move on to complete their tasks successfully. After work has been assessed, demanding yet manageable targets are set for pupils. When asked, pupils could give chapter and verse about their targets. They know what they have to achieve and how they need to work to reach their targets. This brings about excellent levels of knowledge of pupils' personal development, how they learn and what teachers can set for homework. Pupils have a very good understanding how well they are doing.

25. Teachers ensure that lessons are interesting and challenging. Whether it is the beauty of the first Christmas for reception children, a teacher pointing around the hall and taking the pupils to 'pretend land' and out again in drama, pupils comparing the liquorice sweets in bags to dice throws to see if one or both sets of results could be random, trying their skills at the 'tough spot' in design and technology or pupils with special educational needs identifying the first letter of a word held by the 'letter bear', pupils are involved in their learning, challenged and excited. The result is that pupils love learning; they work very hard and concentrate, at times furiously, to complete their work. Teachers use homework very well; from the nursery through to Year 2, teachers set homework which practices the skills and knowledge pupils have learned and helps parents see how their work is going.
26. At the last inspection teaching was judged to be good but did not make sufficient impact because of a lack of progression in curriculum planning. The curriculum is no longer a barrier and the quality of teaching has improved significantly. All adults who work with children and pupils in lessons are not only diligent and meticulous in their work but talented as well.

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

27. At the time of the last inspection the curriculum was deemed to be good in the nursery and satisfactory throughout the rest of the school and for pupils with special educational needs. However, the curriculum did not develop pupils' skills in some subjects. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection and the curricular provision is now very good throughout the school.
28. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. Teachers plan a range of interesting activities designed to enable the children to make very good progress towards the Early Learning Goals. All the adults ensure that the children have every opportunity to learn for themselves while teaching them the specific knowledge and skills they need for the next steps in their learning.
29. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have broad and balanced learning opportunities. All subjects have a very good scheme of work and the school fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The school has adopted national guidance for planning the curriculum and has adapted the suggested schemes to ensure that they meet the needs of the pupils and are relevant to the school. For example, teachers have identified that pupils need extra support in speaking and listening and so now teach drama as a separate subject every week. The curriculum planning is exemplary. It is based on the regular tracking of pupils' progress and the matching of pupils' achievements to the different aspects of the National Curriculum. The curriculum is carefully planned to extend pupils' skills by providing learning opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in real situations. For example, work in mathematics based on the sorting and classification of information is used to learn how to use a computer database. Subject leaders plan the work for their subjects for each class in Key Stage 1, thus ensuring that there are no gaps in the curriculum. Teaching and learning are monitored regularly and frequently so that there is a consistent programme of improvement and development within each subject.
30. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is also very good. Teachers and education care officers work together very effectively. Care officers are well briefed by teachers and know exactly what to do to help pupils without interfering in their learning. At times pupils are grouped so that they can help each other to learn and in a



very good session in the lower English set in Year 1, the care officer showed high quality skills to help all pupils, including those with the severest needs, learn very well. Individual education plans that the school draws up are very good; they clearly set out what pupils are expected to do and show regular evaluations of pupils' progress.

31. The literacy and numeracy strategies are taught very well. Pupils are taught in ability groups and the curriculum is carefully planned to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities, including those who learn slower and those who learn faster than most pupils. The teachers are committed to the teaching of basic skills. Reading skills, spelling, grammar and punctuation are taught methodically and basic calculations are a part of every mathematics lesson. As soon as pupils have learnt new skills they are encouraged to use them and to apply them to other aspects of their work. The planning for the application of skills and investigations is excellent, thus ensuring that every pupil applies his or her skills in interesting and relevant ways. In literacy and numeracy, as in all the other work throughout the school, all pupils have equality of opportunity.
32. The school uses a commercial scheme for personal, social and health education, again adapted to match the aims and ethos of the school and to complement the local authority syllabus for religious education and the science curriculum. The governors have opted not to include sex education as part of the curriculum. Pupils are taught how to care for themselves and to keep safe. They know how to eat healthily, for example, and that drugs can be useful but that misuse is harmful.
33. The curriculum is enriched through a very good range of visits and visitors to school. Pupils visit the local bakery as part of their studies, for example, and are visited by local safety officers, the school nurse and the Derby County football team. The school takes every opportunity to increase resources through local commercial schemes such as tokens for computers, software or books. Pupils study the local area as part of their history and geography curriculum. Visits to the local churches have been arranged in response to the identification of a gap in the pupils' knowledge.
34. There are good links with other schools. There have been shared music workshops with a Caribbean Steel Band and local schools have benefited from additional music tuition. An education care officer supports pupils' work in information and communication technology and this is a very useful strategy. The school welcomes students and pupils from the senior school on work experience or following a childcare course. There is appropriate communication with the local playgroup leaders. Year 2 pupils visit the junior school before the end of the Summer Term and pupils' records are passed to their new school.
35. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This aspect of pupils' learning is carefully planned within the curriculum and often forms a part of the learning objectives for the lessons. Teachers are aware of the need to develop pupils' wonder and delight in the world around them and in their own achievements. Pupils discuss issues such as "belonging" "fear" and "being special" as well as the events that are important to others, including those of other faiths and cultures. These pupils know how to enjoy achievement. There was a buzz of excitement as pupils in a mathematics lesson discovered how to find the difference between two numbers without resorting to complicated subtraction. They could not wait to have a go themselves. In the reception class the children were delighted with their ice sculptures. This lesson created a great impact and more memorable than the simple freezing of water. Assemblies include stories that are relevant to the personal, social and health education themes and pupils' lives. A candle and a special table set

apart this time as one for thinking and reflection. Prayers are said before lunch to provide a quiet, reflective moment at the end of the morning.

36. From the time they start school children are taught the way they are expected to behave. The adults make it clear that this is a school where people care for each other and look after each other. They set high standards for relationships and cooperation and expect the pupils throughout the school to behave in the same way. Each class has their own rules as well as the school rules on display. The duties of the monitors and the *Special Person* for the day are unambiguous and consistent. The expectations are that pupils will behave well, share, care for each other and respect each other's views and opinions. The teachers plan opportunities for pupils to develop independence through following their own investigations and cooperation by working with others without adult supervision. The curriculum is designed to encourage pupils to think for themselves. There is an ethos of care and belonging within school that ensures that pupils know that they are part of a community. They are taught that people in other cultures and times have different social structures. For example, pupils know that children in Victorian England were expected to work very hard.
37. The teachers are very aware that the pupils live in a predominantly mono-cultural area. There is a wealth of provision within the curriculum for pupils to learn about their own and other cultures. In Year 2, for example, pupils have studied "Festivals of Light" in Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity and some of the customs within Europe. Pupils learn about the work of different artists and paint in similar styles. They use a graphics program to generate pictures in the style of Jackson Pollock and "mood" paintings like those of Mark Rothko. Seasonal decorations include mendhi and rangoli patterns and divas as well as snowmen, advent calendars and nativity displays. Pupils visit the Derbyshire Playhouse and are visited by the West Midlands Theatre Company and the Footprints Theatre. There is an annual Christmas concert and pupils learn about different types of music in their lessons. They play percussion instruments and sing songs in class, but no opportunities for pupils to sing together as a school were observed.

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

38. The welfare of all the children in the Foundation Stage and the infant pupils is a fundamental priority for the school and the quality of the care provided is better than it was in the last inspection and is now very good. The school has responded very well to the criticism of assessment in the last inspection. The excellent systems for assessing pupils' work and the use made of the information collected have ensured a very high level of educational support and guidance for each pupil. This represents a very significant improvement since the last inspection and is a major factor in the high standards achieved by the pupils. The kindness and commitment of all the adults who work with and care for the pupils ensures that the personal support and care for individual pupils is very good. The guidance and support provided for those with special educational needs is very good and these pupils make very good progress. The often excellent relationships that the pupils have with their teachers and helpers and the close communication and consistency between all members of staff are important elements in the quality and continuity of the care provided.
39. The children in the Foundation Stage in the nursery and reception class are very well cared for in a very happy and well-ordered atmosphere. There are very good induction procedures for both children and parents and the children settle quickly and happily into the routines of the classroom. All staff have a high awareness of each child's strengths and weaknesses and plan activities accordingly. Parents have very good opportunities

to speak informally to staff about any small matters of concern and, in some cases, nursery staff take the time to telephone parents to reassure them that their very young children are happily settled. The children are taught how to use the resources carefully and correctly and the importance of following instructions. Visitors come into school to talk to the children about how to keep themselves safe. The children quickly learn what is expected of them and staff consistently reinforce good work and behaviour with praise.

40. The policies and procedures established by the school to ensure the health, safety and protection of the pupils are good. Policy documents supporting the health and safety procedures are in the process of review and, as part of this process, the headteacher has established a very good health and safety committee. This group has carried out an initial risk assessment and plans are well in hand to formalise and extend this process. All staff ensure that the school is a healthy and safe environment, supported well by the caretaker and his team. A small number of parents expressed concern about procedures for some Year 1 pupils to visit the toilets and to change classrooms. The school recognises this concern and is actively looking for a solution to the problem. First aid provision is good and appropriate records are kept. Fire evacuation is carried out regularly and equipment checked. As the child protection co-ordinator, the headteacher maintains staff awareness of this issue at a high level. As a result, staff are vigilant in their approach to this aspect of care. Supervision in the playground is good and the mid-day supervisors are kind and good-humoured. Teachers ensure that pupils understand how to use resources safely and the importance of good hygiene and diet. Pupils receive appropriate information about sex and drugs, and visitors come to school to talk to them about issues of personal safety.
41. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. The systems for tracking attendance and following up absence are good and have been effective in raising the overall level of attendance and reducing unauthorised absence. Parents are contacted if the attendance of their child is causing concern and all parents are regularly reminded of the importance of regular attendance in raising individual achievement. A few parents, however, do not respond to the school's efforts to improve their child's attendance. Every week the class with the best attendance is recognised in assembly and pupils are rewarded each half term for good attendance. Morning and afternoon registration procedures comply with legal requirements. The school has excellent formal and informal procedures for recording and monitoring instances of unacceptable behaviour. There are very good systems for rewarding good behaviour and applying sanctions to those who misbehave which are used consistently by all staff. Pupils value the awards and try hard to achieve them. For example, pupils are encouraged to sustain good behaviour by filling in segments of the hungry caterpillar in order to achieve a certificate in recognition of this achievement. The majority of parents who expressed a view prior to and during the inspection are confident that the school handles any instances of bullying quickly, fairly and effectively according to the very good procedures outlined in policy documentation. The often excellent relationships between the pupils and their teachers promote a secure level of communication and pupils know that their teachers will try to help them.
42. The educational and personal support and guidance provided by the school, for those pupils with a statement of special educational need are very good. Links with outside agencies that provide professional guidance and help have been very good although this work could not be inspected directly due to staff absence.
43. The school's procedures for assessing what pupils have achieved, measuring the progress they make and using this information to establish what needs to be taught are

excellent. The nursery teacher establishes what the children can do during their first few weeks in school. From then on, as children learn in the nursery and the reception classes, their progress in all the areas of learning is tracked and the teachers make sure that the activities meet the needs of each child. Any problems, for example, poor speech, are swiftly identified. Every adult working in the Foundation Stage classes is involved in tracking progress and supporting individual children.

44. Teachers use the information from the assessments made in the reception class to set targets for achievement at the end of Year 2. These relate to groups of pupils as well as individuals. Each pupil has two targets, the expected target based on steady progress throughout the school and a challenging target based on good progress. After 'progress weeks', held every six weeks, teachers meet to discuss pupils' progress and to adjust the targets and the planning when appropriate. English and mathematics assessments are used to group pupils so that the work can be closely matched to pupils' needs. The English, mathematics and science subject leaders know very precisely the percentage of pupils likely to achieve each level in the national tests and tasks at the end of Year 2. Pupils' achievements are regularly matched against National Curriculum levels. Pupils' achievements and progress in all subjects are tracked and discussed at the progress meetings. The ICT subject leader, for example, knows how many pupils will reach the appropriate levels for the subject by the end of Year 2.
45. Each pupil has short-term targets that they work towards. They know exactly what they have to do to improve and when they have met their targets. These are practical, precise and achievable and result in highly motivated pupils who are proud of their achievements. This level of assessment and target setting, carefully linked to teachers' planning and curriculum development, enables pupils to make very good progress throughout the school.

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

46. Parents who expressed a view prior to and during the inspection are very positive about all aspects of school life. They value the care the school takes of their children and the range of educational opportunities provided. The school encourages parents to become involved in the work of the school and the learning of their children and many parents take advantage of the opportunities provided. This ensures an effective partnership between home and school. This has a good impact on the life and work of the school and on the very good standards the children achieve. It is an improvement since the last inspection.
47. The information provided for parents about the school is good. The school brochure is practical and informative and the governors' annual report for parents contains useful information about the school and its achievements. The presentation, however, does not do justice to the high quality of the education and professionalism of the school. Nursery staff visit families at home before the children start which effectively establishes good lines of communication from the outset. There are three opportunities during the year for parents to consult with staff about their children's progress or to see the work they have done. The reports on pupils' progress are good. They give parents clear information on how well their children are doing and indicate simple and specific ways in which parents can help their children at home. Parents are kept up-to-date with activities in school through regular letters and newsletters, and information about what the children will be learning is available. The headteacher and members of staff create a friendly and welcoming atmosphere in school. Most parents who expressed a view find that staff are easy to approach and feel that the school

works closely with them. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the decision making process and are kept well informed about the needs and progress of their children.

48. The school recognises the positive impact of parental involvement in raising standards and improving school life. A small number of parents are actively involved within the school and their help and that of the parent governors is valued. Most parents consider that the work the children take home is appropriate and the majority takes time to help them. This has a positive impact on the progress these children make. The introduction of the home/school targets is providing parents with a very good opportunity to become more involved in their children's learning and, in a survey of parents' views, was seen by the majority to be a very positive initiative. Although all parents have signed the home/school contract, there is a small number who do not fulfil their responsibilities under this agreement. For example, they fail to ensure that their children attend school regularly, a few take their children on holiday during term time and some do not help their children with their homework. This places these children at a disadvantage. Parents enjoy watching their children perform in assemblies and presentations, and support the organised social and fund-raising activities well.

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

49. Leadership and management were judged to require substantial improvement at the last inspection. The headteacher, senior managers and subject co-ordinators have worked very hard since then. They have attended training, reviewed procedures and adopted new systems to demonstrate that the school is capable of improvement. Using the judgements made at the time of the last inspection as a baseline, all areas of the school's work have improved.
50. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. She has led the staff to look critically at their work and to help each other to improve. She and the governors have appointed a strong and supportive team. After rebuilding confidence the headteacher has ensured that teachers have a sharp focus on their own teaching and pupils' learning. This has paid dividends and she has overseen a significant rise in standards. This increase is due in no small part to the very thorough assessment systems and the constant checking of teaching and pupils' progress by the headteacher and co-ordinators. Senior managers work extremely well with the headteacher and subject co-ordinators to ensure that if changes are needed in the curriculum or in teaching, they are adopted as quickly and effectively as possible. For example, the school identified that standards in science were not improving as quickly as those in English and mathematics. The school development plan, curriculum and teaching were modified as a result and last year the standards in science improved and look set for further gains.
51. After the last inspection the school lost a number of governors. Since then, governors have attended a great deal of training and have linked up with curriculum coordinators so that each monitors a subject of the curriculum. Each governor meets regularly with their partner teacher, receives a report on how well targets are being met and whether the school needs to do more to meet the subject's action plan, which has been drawn up by the coordinator. Following these meetings governors report back to the whole governing body. Thus, individually, governors have gained in-depth knowledge about particular subjects or aspects, special educational needs for example, and consequently governors collectively know the strength and weaknesses of the school's work. In turn, this helps the governors set targets for the headteacher in her work. The work of the governors is sound with some good features.

52. The monitoring of teaching and standards is excellent. All subject coordinators, on a regular basis, look at the work of their colleagues and analyse the work in pupils' books and the results of assessments made in the regular progress checks. This work helps towards planning teachers' in-service training. As a measure of how leadership skills are developed the headteacher observes the feedback coordinators give to teachers and then reports back to the coordinators on how well they have done. This helps coordinators to develop very high quality skills. Further, because they check on pupils' progress so often and in such depth, they develop very good knowledge of the National Curriculum. In turn, this provides a very good basis for setting targets for individual and groups of pupils and results in teachers being very focussed on raising standards.
53. The headteacher and governors are careful to ensure that funds available to the school are used to support the school's priorities. These are set out in a well-drawn school development plan, which is rightly focussed on improving standards. The quality of school development planning has improved since the last inspection, and teachers now bid for funds to support improvements in each subject. The school secretary prepares financial reports, using relevant computer based systems and these are presented to the governing body by the headteacher. Governors look carefully at how finances are spent and how the curriculum can be supported. The financial limits placed on the school by the governors are appropriate and mean that the governors are aware of any major spending decision. The governors and headteacher ensure that the best value is achieved when purchasing resources. A good example is having computers supplied by a local company which maintains the machines cost-free as part of the initial installation cost. The school applies the principles of best value well.
54. The school is well staffed with teachers and education care officers. All staff including administrative, caretaking, cleaning and lunchtime staff show high levels of commitment to the care and welfare of pupils. The school deals very effectively with staff absence and education care officers are well qualified to support pupils with special educational needs. The school building is not well designed and is difficult to manage but teachers work very hard to provide a stimulating learning atmosphere and use very good quality displays to improve the learning environment. The school does not have a library but this does not interfere with pupils' learning as the measures teachers take to teach library and reference skills are very effective. There are very good systems for ensuring new members of staff are well prepared to work in the school.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER**

57. There are no key issues for improvement. The inspection team judged the work of the school to be very effective. The school's self-evaluation procedures are of the highest quality and stimulate effective measures to improve the work of the school, which is kept under constant review.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	24	13	1	0	0	0
Percentage	5%	60%	33%	3%	0%	0%	0%

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

### 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)		178
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		25

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR-Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		47

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3



National comparative data	5.6
---------------------------	-----

National comparative data	0.5
---------------------------	-----

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	35	35	70

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	31	30	35
	Girls	32	31	32
	Total	63	61	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (88)	87 (86)	96 (94)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	33	31
	Girls	30	32	27
	Total	59	65	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (86)	93 (92)	83 (78)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	141
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.5
Average class size	23.5

#### **Education support staff: YR-Y2**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	89.5

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	37
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.3

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

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

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	415,742
Total expenditure	428,738
Expenditure per pupil	1,649
Balance brought forward from previous year	28,679
Balance carried forward to next year	15,683

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	178
Number of questionnaires returned	64

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	20	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	72	27	0	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	69	27	2	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	58	33	2	0	8
The teaching is good.	75	23	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	33	8	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	23	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	31	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	56	36	6	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	64	33	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	33	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	31	13	3	19

## **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**

58. The school's provision for children in the Foundation Stage consists of a nursery and reception class. Since the last inspection the teaching and learning have improved particularly in the reception class and overall it is now very good. The school is now very effective in providing a wide range of challenging and focussed experiences to promote the early learning goals in all the areas of learning. In both the nursery and reception classes stimulating, well-structured activities promote early reading, writing and numeracy skills very effectively and provide children with a very good start to their education.
59. The overall attainment levels of most children entering the nursery are below the average of those found nationally. Teaching in the foundation stage is very good and this has a very positive effect on children's learning. As a result, most children achieve very well and, by the time they move into Year 1, they have made significant gains in their learning. This is confirmed by initial assessments which indicate that over 75 per cent of children meet the early learning goals in all areas of learning. The exception is in the area of speaking and listening where progress is slower and children do not reach the expected level.
60. Teaching in the early years is very good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed and over 90 per cent of teaching was at least good with over half being very good. Very good teaching was observed in both the nursery and reception classes. All staff have a secure understanding of what children are expected to have learned by the end of the reception year. Lesson plans and schemes provide a very good framework for learning and ensure that there is progression and challenge as children move from the nursery into reception class. Planning is exceptionally clear and detailed with challenging learning objectives that ensure children's knowledge and understanding are built on as they move from nursery to reception. This has a positive effect on the quality of the teaching and learning across the Foundation Stage. Staff work very well together, are enthusiastic and have high expectations of the children. They recognise the importance of play and first hand experiences and provide imaginative opportunities for children to engage in independent play. This has a very positive effect on the good progress children make towards the early learning goals. Experiences are interesting and challenging and are focussed very closely on what children need to learn in relationship to the stepping-stones. Activities are very well organised and appropriate to promote communication, language, literacy and mathematical development. Teachers carefully plan the day to ensure there is a good balance of teacher directed activities and child initiated ones and considerable emphasis is placed on developing children's basic skills, which has a very positive effect on the progress children make in Key Stage 1. Activities are exciting, capturing children's imagination and making them very eager learners. Staff are well organised to provide very effective support as children work and play independently. Questions and comments are challenging and carefully phrased to develop children's thinking and provide children with opportunities to choose and articulate their own decisions.
61. All staff use praise and encouragement effectively to promote positive behaviour and personal, social and emotional development. Children are given very clear instructions about what it is they are expected to do. All staff contribute to an excellent assessment system which indicates in meticulous detail children's progress in acquiring the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to reach the early learning goals. Parents are

involved in their children's learning through sharing storybooks at home or, whenever they can, working alongside their children in the nursery or reception classes. Parents are kept informed of their children's learning and are encouraged to build on the activities the school provides to enhance further their children's learning.

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

62. Teaching to promote personal development is very good and the majority of children will meet the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Children are very eager to learn new skills and to explore new ideas and to develop relationships with adults and each other. They enjoy coming to school and happily leave their parents at the start of sessions. The rules and routines of nursery and school life are explained well and as a result children are confident in knowing what is expected of them in a safe and secure environment. Emphasis is placed on helping children to develop an understanding of appropriate behaviour and what is right and wrong. Staff sensitively explain to children the consequences of their actions, encouraging them to consider the feelings of other children and to say sorry.
63. Children learn to share and take turns in a variety of extremely thoughtful and well-planned situations. For example, buckets and spades are limited in the sand play to encourage children to share and to negotiate. Children are reminded to restrain their eagerness, be polite and to put up their hands to answer questions or make comments in a group situation. The youngest of children work independently for sustained periods of time and take pride in making Christmas mobiles to decorate their room. Reception children respond well to the challenge of 'hard work'. They are eager to share their successes with adults and friends. For example, one child with special educational needs was delighted when he wrote his name independently for the very first time. Everyone shared the moment developing the child's self esteem and the class's appreciation of each other's efforts. Relationships are very positive and through 'together times' and religious education lessons children are encouraged to reflect on their feelings, actions and experiences. There are well-planned opportunities for children to develop a sensitivity and awareness of their own uniqueness and the wonder of the world around them. Expressions of sheer delight were heard as children in the nursery felt the power of the wind, or children in reception watched ice melt into wonderful sculptures or gazed on the nativity crib for the first time and were transported to the very first Christmas through story and song.

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

64. Teaching of communication, language and literacy is very good and the majority of children will achieve the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1 in all aspects except for speaking and listening.
65. Language and literacy are given a very high priority. On entry to school, children's language for thinking and communicating is often restricted. Staff use every available opportunity to encourage children to listen carefully, share conversations and articulate their ideas. In the nursery, children listen attentively to stories and their attention is drawn to new vocabulary, which they are then encouraged to use in their play and talk. Exciting activities and play provide opportunities for children to talk about their experiences. Challenging questions, comments and imaginative activities are used to extend children's thinking. For example, on a very windy day nursery staff introduced 'windmills' to extend children's vocabulary about the weather. By the time children move into the reception class they are becoming more attentive listeners and confident speakers. They shared a magical experience as they listened to the story of the first

Christmas and unwrapped a nativity crib and Christmas tree. In response to excellent staff interactions, which introduced new vocabulary and ideas, children talked excitedly about the events leading up to the birth of Jesus and their anticipation as they looked forward to Christmas day. Staff in both classes are very skilled in providing children with good examples of well structured language patterns.

66. Very clearly labelled displays, alphabet and sound friezes and individual name cards in both nursery and reception help children develop early reading and writing skills. Children are encouraged to make marks on paper as they make appointments in the car repair shop. In the nursery challenging games and activities systematically introduce older children to letter names and initial sounds. More formal structured activities in the reception class build on these skills. Average and well above average children write their own simple sentences about favourite nursery rhymes using familiar letters, sounds and words. The youngest children in nursery are encouraged to recognise their own names and, by the time they move into reception, most children make very good attempts to write their own names, using capital and small letters with increasing accuracy.
67. Comfortable book corners promote a love of books and children are learning to handle books with care. Nursery children know about authors and illustrators and reception children are reading simple books with increasing confidence. Children are often seen curled up with a book or reading a book to find out more about torches as part of a topic on light and dark. All children take games or books home on a regular basis to share with family members. This has a very positive effect on children's progress in learning to read. Elements of the literacy strategy are implemented extremely well for children in the reception class. In both classes learning to communicate through talking, reading and writing is seen as fun and this has a positive effect on children's achievements.

### **Mathematical development**

68. Teaching of mathematics is very good and most children will achieve the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1. The nursery and reception classes provide a wide range of activities to promote mathematical understanding. Through well planned topic work they explore number, pattern, shape and measurement. In the nursery children learn to use mathematical ideas and skills in practical situations, such as when they weigh out the ingredients to make imaginary Christmas puddings, or dial telephone numbers to book car repairs in their workshop. In all classes children have opportunities to compare, match, sort, order, sequence and count using a wide range of interesting games, routines and experiences. A nursery display about snowmen was used well to develop an understanding of shape order and size.
69. In the reception class number lines, sticks and fingers are all used to extend children's understanding of number to twenty. Number rhymes such as 'five cheeky monkeys' develop children's ideas of one more and one less. Children count, match and order numbers to 20 and can do simple addition problems such as adding five and eight together using their fingers. Higher attaining children enjoy mental problems and are develop very useful strategies such as 'holding a number in their heads' and then counting on. Children consider size, shape and position when playing with two and three-dimensional shapes, small world toys or emptying and filling containers in the sand and water play area. Elements of the numeracy strategy are implemented with imagination for children in the reception class and this has a positive effect on children's achievements



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

70. Teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world is very good and the majority of children will achieve the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1. In both classes the natural curiosity of young children is enhanced as staff continually encourage them to talk about their discoveries and experiences, to ask questions and to explore made and natural materials. Early scientific skills are developed as nursery children use magnets to discover the properties of different objects. Children in the nursery become very competent users of the Internet as they send and receive e-mails and excitedly track Santa's journey on Christmas Eve.
71. Reception children excitedly observe the changes that occur when water is frozen and then melted. The celebration of festivals such as Diwali, Bonfire Night and Christmas develop children's understanding of their own community and culture and that of other people. They learn about the passage of time through celebrating birthdays, talking about the days of the week and the changing seasons and weather. In the nursery, staff carefully observe and assess and help children's skills of cutting, folding and sticking. As a result of this very effective support children enter the reception class well equipped to tackle the challenging tasks provided. They are confident in working independently with a wide range of construction toys and are able to design and make their own models and to discover how things work. The computer and tape recorders are popular choices and children are confident and competent in using different programs to support their learning in mathematics and language and literacy.

## **Physical development**

72. Teaching is very good and most children will achieve the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1. Considerable emphasis is placed on the importance of regular exercise to develop healthy minds and bodies. Children's natural exuberance and energy is catered for very well in the nursery. A very good range of challenging large equipment is available on a daily basis to help children develop their climbing and balancing skills. Confidence and skill are exhibited as children balance, climb and swing on the very good equipment available. There is a wide range of wheeled toys which children manoeuvre well avoiding other children and planned obstacles.
73. In the reception classes, children have structured lessons to promote further their physical development. In these lessons children are developing good spatial awareness and control. Children are encouraged to follow instructions and observe other children's techniques to improve their skills. In addition, children use a range of large outdoor equipment to extend their skills further. Appropriate emphasis is placed on developing children's skills when handling tools, construction toys and malleable materials and most children competently handle a variety of tools and materials safely and with care.

## **Creative development**

74. Overall children enjoy a good range of experiences in art, dance, music, story and imaginative play. The nursery provides children with a very good range of opportunities to use their imagination. Through such experiences children are encouraged to develop their use of language to express ideas. For example, they take on the roles of family members, mechanics and customers and with very good adult interaction learn to use appropriate vocabulary and language structures. Teaching to promote creative development is very good and the majority of children will meet the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

75. In the reception classes opportunities to develop children's imagination continue to be well planned and stimulating. Children don costumes and become 'bears' in an exciting and well-resourced 'cave'. Structured music lessons and a good range of musical instruments, songs and rhymes throughout the Foundation Stage, help to develop children's understanding of sound and rhythm and pattern. Dance lessons provide older children with opportunities to respond to different types of music and to create short sequences using movement and music to interpret stories, moods and feelings. In both classes, children's appreciation of different artists, observational skills and understanding of different techniques and colour are carefully developed and built on. There are many activities available for children to develop their senses through investigating texture, shape and colour. Staff provide materials with interesting real and made textures from which children can choose to create their own designs. Children work with play dough, clay and junk materials to create two and three-dimensional pictures and models. Sand and water are available for children to explore on a daily basis and are always stimulating and well planned to extend children's knowledge and understanding.

## ENGLISH

76. Standards are well above the national average. This level of attainment was reflected in the 2001 national tests, which showed that the standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were high in relation to the national average and to pupils in similar schools. All pupils, whether they learn quickly or have particular educational needs, make very good progress and achieve well. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Since the last inspection standards have been rising and inspection evidence indicates that this upward trend is set to continue. Standards have improved since the last inspection when speaking, listening, reading and writing were judged to be below average.
77. All areas of weakness highlighted at the last inspection have been addressed with professionalism, rigour and enthusiasm. Considerable emphasis is placed on developing pupils' writing skills in a variety of contexts and for a wide range of purposes. Pupils of all attainment levels use their reading and writing skills well in other areas of the curriculum, for example, when recording their investigations in science lessons, writing an account of a life as a Victorian child or writing a poem about the weather as part of a geography topic.
78. The school's enthusiastic implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the introduction of extra programmes, such as reading and talking partners, have had a very positive impact on standards. Well-trained additional staff support pupils, including those who learn quickly and those who have difficulty learning. Pupils with the most severe educational needs learn very well. They are given very good support to ensure that they learn very well in lessons to achieve the targets set out in their individual education plans. All staff are very skilled and lessons have an atmosphere of hard work and a commitment to high standards.
79. Although standards in speaking and listening are not as high as in reading and writing, nevertheless pupils make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment and achieve well. Standards in speaking and listening have improved since the last inspection and are similar to those expected nationally. A range of strategies has been implemented which is having a very positive effect on the improvement of pupils' speaking and listening skills. Speaking and listening are planned into the lessons and imaginative play and drama are a regular part of the teaching and learning. Before

lessons begin, pupils are reminded of the need to adopt 'a positive listening attitude' and to be 'good listeners' as they listen carefully to their teachers and each other.

80. Staff ensure that pupils have good opportunities to talk about their work and to express their ideas and opinions, confident that they will be listened to and taken seriously. In a Year 1 lesson very effective teaching suspended reality and transported pupils into a make believe world of witches, magical characters and castles. New vocabulary and language structures were introduced as pupils were encouraged to talk about what it felt like to be a 'rat' or a 'spider'. Children worked well in pairs to explore language and listened carefully to each other's ideas. Such opportunities have a very positive effect on improving pupils' confidence in using language, adapting their speech to the various characters and events and in developing attentive listening skills. By the age of seven the pupils are becoming confident speakers and listeners. They are eager to answer questions, to talk and evaluate their work and to engage adults and each other in conversations, listening with interest to each other's contributions.
81. As a result of a very literate environment by the age of seven standards in reading are well above average. The school provides a wide range of high quality and challenging books and texts to foster all pupils' love of books and develop their independent reading skills. Pupils are encouraged to read for a wide variety of purposes. As well as reading for enjoyment, pupils are encouraged to recognise the importance and value of reading in order to live a full and independent life. Examples included reading a map, researching information on historical characters, using the Internet or following instructions and recipes. Pupils are aware of authors and illustrators and are able to identify the main characters and events in their favourite books. Lower attaining pupils read simple stories with increasing accuracy and understanding. An understanding of letter sounds, word families and spellings give them confidence in tackling unfamiliar words and this has a very positive effect on the progress they make towards becoming fluent and confident readers. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 read aloud with considerable confidence, adopting different voices for the characters in their stories and using an interesting 'story telling' voice which holds the attention of the person listening to their reading. Books are very well matched to pupils' attainment and interest levels and many pupils are fluent readers of a wide range of texts well before they reach the end of Year 2. Pupils take books home regularly and family members are encouraged to hear their children read in order to improve further their progress in reading.
82. Standards in writing by the age of seven are well above average and improvements since the last inspection are significant. Observations show that very imaginative and effective teaching ensures pupils make rapid progress towards becoming independent writers. Building well on the teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage staff use a range of exciting strategies to engage pupils' interest in writing. Puppets with a desire to be 'Bob the Builder' when they grow up are used very effectively to interest pupils in writing their own imaginative stories. A range of 'cuddly toys' goes to different homes each evening and parents and children record the adventures that occur. The most reluctant of writers are eager to share this task and eagerly look forward to when it is their turn to be responsible for the toy. This is very successful in involving the whole family in developing writing skills and is having a very positive effect on raising standards. By the age of seven the majority of pupils are spelling common words correctly and making very good attempts to spell more complex words. They write very interesting stories and accounts observing the rules of punctuation, using full stops and capital letters. Higher attaining pupils use question marks, apostrophes, connectives and metaphors to add interest to their stories. Pupils now write for a variety of purposes, such as shopping lists, notes to their friends, historical accounts and

imaginative stories and poems. Punctuation, adjectives and adverbs are chosen well to add interest and to capture the attention of the reader. Handwriting is now almost always very neat and well formed, with pupils learning to join their letters and develop a legible style.

83. ICT is used very effectively to support pupils' literacy skills. Pupils develop research skills as they 'surf the internet' for information about Victorian homes and are developing very good word processing skills as they write simple stories or poems.
84. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now very good and very effective in helping pupils learn very well. Lessons are now very well planned and all the programmes of study are effectively covered. Teaching is never less than good and is mostly very good. In some Year 1 lessons it is outstanding. All teachers are very confidently implementing the 'Literacy Hour' and this is having a very positive effect on achievement. Teaching is very carefully structured and well planned to meet the needs of pupils of all attainment levels. Tasks and resources are chosen carefully to ensure that boys are fully involved in learning. This has resulted in boys making very good progress and achieving as well as girls. Class and group targets provide a focus for learning ensuring that pupils are very clear about what it is they are expected to learn. The final sessions effectively check that pupils have understood the lesson, are ready to move on to the next stage of learning or need further help to reinforce their learning. Speaking and listening are now given a very high profile and staff ensure that pupils are listened to carefully and encouraged to express their views. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are given a particularly high priority and pupils' knowledge and understanding of basic skills are apparent in their extended writing across the curriculum. Imaginative and challenging opportunities for extended writing now ensure that progress in this aspect of English is very good. Teachers use humour, praise, comments and questions effectively to check understanding and extend thinking.
85. Pupils confidently offer answers to teachers' questions, knowing that even if their answers are incorrect the teacher will help them to discover for themselves the right answer. Pupils are constantly reminded of the strategies they need to improve their work such as good handwriting, correct spelling and punctuation. When teaching is very good or outstanding, expectations are particularly high and the teacher's enthusiasm, explanations, use of resources and knowledge have a very positive effect on attainment and progress. In these lessons teaching is lively and exciting and mundane tasks such as the use of correct punctuation are made exciting and interesting. Such teaching moves pupils' learning on at a fast pace and encourages very positive attitudes to the subject.
86. Relationships are very good and teachers have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour and attainment, resulting in very good discipline and high standards. Teachers use a range of appropriate and high quality resources to support the teaching of literacy. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and tasks are always very well matched for pupils' individual needs. Support staff are used very effectively to give additional help to designated individuals and groups of pupils. Their contribution greatly enhances the learning opportunities for the pupils. Assessment and record keeping are exceptionally good. Regular assessment tasks track pupils' progress every six weeks and are used very effectively to identify areas of strength and weakness. Individual and class targets focus pupils' attention on how they can improve their work further and achieve even higher standards. Teachers mark work on a regular basis and detailed comments help pupils to improve their work. Homework is set to extend work done in lessons and to check that pupils have fully understood new learning.

87. The co-ordination of English is excellent and makes a very important contribution to the aims of the school. The schemes of work effectively ensure there is progress and continuity across the school, taking into account the needs of the different ages. National test results and teacher assessments are carefully scrutinised to identify how the school can improve further. The monitoring of lessons and planning has had an excellent impact on the quality of the teaching and learning. All of these strategies have helped teachers to provide pupils with high quality and challenging opportunities to extend their literacy skills and achieve high standards.

## **MATHEMATICS**

88. Standards in mathematics have risen impressively since the last inspection. By the time pupils enter Year 1 their achievements are similar to other pupils nationally. By the end of Year 1 pupils' attainment is above average. Pupils in Year 2 are achieving levels well above other pupils of the same age. This is because the teaching is very good. Teachers track their pupils' progress very carefully so they can match their lessons to the pupils' needs. They set challenging targets for individuals and groups so that pupils know exactly what they have to do to improve. These are shared with the parents so they can support their children at home. The lessons are planned to encourage pupils to use their mathematical skills to solve problems and to find the most effective way of working.
89. Although there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls over time, boys' achievements have been particularly impressive over the last year because they respond very well to the teaching methods used. Pupils with special educational needs and those who learn quickly are supported very well and also make very good progress.
90. At the beginning of Year 1 more able pupils count accurately within 100 and count in twos, fives and tens. They add and subtract within 10. They compare the length and weight of objects and measure them using cubes or other non-standard units. The present Year 1 pupils solve problems by sorting, classifying and organising information in different ways. In one lesson pupils sorted Liquorice Allsorts in as many ways as they could find, then recorded their results in bar and block graphs and pie charts using a database program on the computer. Others throw a dice and recorded the results logically on a graph to show the number of times each digit was thrown. They understand the term *random* and correctly estimated that each pupil's graph would be different, unlike the graphs of the pupils in the first group. Each group was challenged to find as many different ways as possible for sorting a pack of pictures of different dogs. The cleverest pupils were the first to start the challenge so that the others were able to use the experiences gained during the week to improve their chances of winning. Pupils learnt rapidly during the week due to the excellent teaching and the teacher's very high expectations.
91. Pupils in the lower ability group work at a brisk pace as they consolidate their knowledge of number facts within 10. The teacher skilfully accommodates slower pupils and those with special educational needs by asking direct questions. All are expected to think for themselves. This teacher also extends the pupils' vocabulary as they discuss order of the days of the week.
92. Pupils in Year 2 use centimetres metres, grams and kilograms to measure length and weight. They add and subtract mentally, using the most efficient method to solve the problem. They use their knowledge of odd and even numbers, multiplication tables and

estimates to check their results. The more able pupils add mentally within 100, solving questions that are asked using *add, plus, more than* and *the sum of*. They describe the methods they use and are well on the way to being able to select the most efficient and quickest methods. They were very enthusiastic when their teacher showed them how speed up their subtraction by finding the difference between two numbers by counting from the smaller to the larger. She did this at the end of the lesson as a hint of the next lesson's work; her pupils could not wait to have a go. Less able pupils count to and from numbers up to 50 and recognise odd and even numbers. The teacher frequently asks her pupils to explain their calculations and encourages them to identify patterns in their work. This helps them to learn rapidly as their new learning is immediately consolidated and existing skills are applied to support the new work.

93. During the inspection all the mathematics' teaching was at least good, and three-quarters was very good or excellent. All teachers have very good subject knowledge, knowledge of what their pupils are capable of and great enthusiasm for the subject. As a result, pupils really enjoy their lessons and work extremely hard. They respond to the challenges set with alacrity. When working independently they remain committed to their tasks. When working in pairs or groups they discuss their work sensibly and support each other. All the pupils know what their targets are and what they have to do to achieve them. Teachers' knowledge of their pupils' achievements and the use they make of this knowledge to plan future work is excellent. The National Numeracy Strategy is used very effectively and the work in the numeracy lessons is supported by ICT and applied in other subjects. For example, they make charts of experiments with rolling objects and records of breathing rates.
94. The overall provision for mathematics is very good. It is the teachers' excellent assessment procedures, very good planning and teaching skills as well as their relationships with their pupils that have made such an impact on the pupils' progress. There are half-termly meetings to discuss pupils' progress. Targets are adjusted accordingly and any necessary changes in the lesson plans are made. Pupils are taught in ability groups based on the teachers' knowledge of their individual needs. The subject leader is extremely efficient. She knows precisely what has been achieved and where the subject needs to be developed. The school has fully addressed the issues from the last inspection and has raised pupils' attainment from below average to well above the national average at the end of Year 2. The improvement since the last inspection has been excellent.

## SCIENCE

95. In the 2001 statutory teacher assessment the overall performance was well below average. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 and above was above average. At the last inspection standards were judged to be below average. Inspectors agree with the latest 'progress check' which indicated that standards are now average in Year 2. There are promising signs that standards are rising and that, as pupils gain more experience of investigating and experimenting, they achieve better results. This is clearly shown in Year 1 where standards are above average. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls although last year's results show that boys achieved particularly well. The school tracks pupils' progress very well and records show that boys in this group always maintained high levels of achievement. All pupils, whatever their rate of learning, including those who learn faster than others and those with special educational needs, learn very well. Higher attaining pupils are given lots of opportunities to solve problems and those with special educational needs, including those with the severest learning needs, are given very good support. The keys to this continuing rise in standards are the very good learning

opportunities planned in the curriculum, meticulous assessments and the very high quality of teaching.

96. Standards in the current Year 2 are average and pupils are making very good progress as they learn how to plan and manage their own investigations. Lessons are carefully structured to provide all pupils, however fast and effectively they learn, with opportunities to work with the teacher or education support officer as well as conduct their own experiments. This level of planning, combining structured learning opportunities and pupils investigating for themselves is a very important aspect of science work. It means, for instance, that in a very good Year 1 lesson pupils learned that they could not see a mirror in a dark box but could see it when a light was shone through a hole. They learned very effectively that light reflects off shiny materials. In another part of the classroom they could use torches, mirrors and traffic reflectors as well as metal objects to experiment. Some pupils found that they could see a rainbow as the reflector split the light. One pupil asked how does the yellow torchlight make all the colours of the rainbow? Other pupils showed how they could reflect the torchlight onto the ceiling and walls. These learning experiences encouraged great curiosity and lots of questions.
97. In Year 2 pupils experimented with forces to see if they could discover if a slope affects the speed of a toy car. In a supervised experiment pupils increased the steepness of a slope and measured how far a car would roll. After recording their results pupils compared each group's work to see whether or not their experiments achieved similar results. However, while each group was experimenting, others were constructing carts from kits to see if they could build a better car. In a confident move the teacher moved seamlessly from a scientific theme to one of design and technology. Pupils' cars were tested on the same slope and pupils judged which was most effective. During this session pupils altered their designs as they found that improvements needed to be made. The analysis of pupils' work shows they make good progress and, as they develop their investigative skills, the rate of learning improved. Their work covers the whole of the curriculum and pupils use computers well in science, for example, to plot graphs of their work about sound and healthy eating. They use the Internet to find out about endangered species, the heart and the body.
98. The quality of teaching is very good and is consistent between classes. Very good subject knowledge allows teachers to use very good questioning techniques. Pupils are often asked the question; *Why do you think that has happened?* and, *Can you think of an explanation for that?* Pupils then have to explain clearly what they think to their teacher and the other pupils in the class. During these explanations pupils are encouraged to use the correct words and be precise about the descriptions of their methods. In Year 2, for example, pupils were encouraged to have several attempts to describe how to measure the distance that the car would roll. Teachers allow pupils to run their own tests. This is a very valuable learning procedure as the teacher asks pupils how to make the tests fair and how each of the elements of the test can be controlled. Pupils are encouraged to use their mathematical skills and knowledge as they add the total of centimetres cars move down the slope. Teachers check on pupils' work extremely well and in a number of ways during lessons. In the introductions to lessons teachers ask questions about what was covered in the last session, they ask pupils to predict what they think might happen in certain experimental circumstances and, as the lesson closes, they ask for explanations of their results. During the lesson they observe the work in progress and are very skilled at stopping pupils at just the right point and correcting any wrong ideas that may be developing. Each pupil's ideas are given careful consideration and all pupils listen attentively when other people are speaking. Teachers use very good methods in science lessons. There were gasps of

delight as the teacher drew reflective objects from a bag and real excitement in the lessons observed as pupils began work. Pupils are encouraged to work independently, in groups and as a class during discussions.

99. The leadership and management skills of the coordinator are excellent. Excellent subject knowledge and assessment procedures combine to promote rising standards. Demanding but realistic targets have been set over a two year period. Last year these targets were met and there are promising signs that Year 2 will meet the current targets. Events such as the inspirational whole-school science day help pupils and parents to see the importance of the subject and to make learning fun. At the last inspection learning opportunities were not based on the National Curriculum, higher attainers were not stretched and the work was not of sufficient depth. All of these issues have been addressed well. There has been a good rate of improvement since the last inspection.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

100. Due to the schools timetabling arrangements and the timing of the inspection no art and design lessons were seen. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning.
101. By the age of seven the majority of pupils achieve standards that are well above those expected for their ages. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well and make very good progress in relation to their prior levels of learning. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were in line with those expected.
102. Due to the school's timetabling arrangements it was not possible to observe any teaching. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that the school provides pupils with a very wide range of experiences to develop their skills, techniques and knowledge and understanding of art and design. Work is well displayed indicating the value teachers place on pupils' work and generally adding to the ambience and attractiveness of the building.
103. From an early age, pupils learn to apply paint, crayon and pastels effectively to produce their own images and pictures. Pupils are becoming very skilled at colour mixing to create mood and feelings and their work shows a mature appreciation of shade, tone and texture. By Year 2 pupils show considerable artistic skill in using different materials, brush strokes and texture. Pupils' work, using nature as a stimulus, is of a very high quality. The youngest pupils make marks to represent different textures and collaborate well together using a range of materials to create textured trees using newspaper, sawdust and glue. In Year 2 pupils observe how William Morris used nature in his designs and show considerable skill in their own observational drawings of natural objects. Previous skills are built on well and teachers provided pupils with very good strategies and reminders on how to improve their work. Art is very effectively linked to other areas of the curriculum such as history and religious education. For example, as part of their history topic pupils in Year 2 made detailed sketches of chimney sweeps through the last century. ICT and artistic skills were effectively combined as pupils used a computer program to produce designs in the style of Jackson Pollock.
104. An appreciation of art in other cultures is fostered as pupils create intricate rangoli patterns and decorative mendhi designs. Two-dimensional work is developed as pupils work in clay to produce diva lamps as part of their work on other religions and customs.



Through a well planned curriculum and enthusiastic and confident teaching, pupils' creativity is fostered well. Pupils work co-operatively, share ideas and appreciate the work of others. Teachers provide a wide range of opportunities, resources and a variety of exciting stimuli to catch pupils' imagination and interest. The school has excellent methods of checking pupils' progress in acquiring the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to achieve well in the subject. The co-ordination is excellent and makes a very important contribution to the aims of the school. The schemes of work effectively ensure there is progress and continuity across the school, taking into account the needs of the different ages. This helps teachers to provide pupils with high quality and challenging opportunities to extend their artistic skills.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. Standards are above average. At the last inspection standards were average and progress was satisfactory for all pupils. The rate of learning has increased since then and now all pupils, at whatever rate they learn, achieve well. Teachers set difficult tasks for all pupils and there are no differences between the achievements of boys or girls. Pupils who learn faster are set demanding tasks as the lessons progress and pupils with special educational needs are given very good support to ensure that they too learn very well. Lessons are carefully prepared so that pupils learn the knowledge and the skills they need to achieve good results. National guidelines on the curriculum have been carefully adapted and an exacting balance is struck between teaching pupils new skills and providing plenty of practical work. This means that at times pupils may make the same model, for example, using a split pin as a pivot to move windscreen wipers on model cars but then individuals will go on to practice their skills and techniques in further work.
106. Pupils in Year 1 use sliders and pivots to illustrate nursery rhymes. Pupils made models of Mary watering her garden with the watering can swivelling over the flowers. Incy ran up the drainpipes and as two holes were cut into the pipe and two spiders were drawn on the slider, Incy appeared to run up the pipe. In a very good lesson pupils are given a 'tough spot' where they have to solve difficult problems. *How can you make a propeller turn without touching the blades? Can you find more pivots in our playground model?* Pupils draw their playground games using a computer to begin their designs and alter their ideas as they go along. This work ensures that pupils concentrated fiercely and worked extremely hard with each other to solve the problems with construction kits. First of all they looked carefully at, for example, a wooden seesaw, and then they attempted to make their own models. Because of the very good structure of the lesson pupils not only made seesaws and models of propellers, they understood the ideas and could explain their thinking using terms such as cog and axle.
107. Pupils in Year 2 made good quality models of cars to test on slopes. This work was carried out in conjunction with their science work as an illustration of how forces affect moving objects. Pupils explained that wheels need to be in line and that there should no part of the model which interferes with the smooth running of the model's wheels. In a very good portfolio of work pupils can be seen investigating how windmills work using cogs, axles and moving joints. Pupils assemble and join materials to make their models after first making very good drawings and diagrams. Joseph's Coat of Many Colours gave pupils lots of opportunities to use fabric on a large scale. Pupils make fruit salads as part of their healthy eating topic. Pupils label their sketches and evaluate their final models. Models and products are finished well.
108. Teaching is very good. Planning is very good, combining lots of opportunities for pupils to learn new skills and knowledge and then apply them in practical sessions. During

lessons teachers are very good at altering the scope or the focus of the session. As teachers monitor the progress of pupils very well, teachers pick up on errors or the wrong ideas and halt the lesson to put forward the correct notions. The lessons have a very good structure and teachers make sure that all pupils, whatever their learning needs, are very well supported. Because their work is valued, pupils become very confident so that when they are asked to attempt new work they do so with excitement and high levels of engagement. Education Care Officers are very well briefed by teachers and during lessons help pupils to evaluate how well their work is going.

109. The subject has been very well managed since the last inspection. The coordinator has adapted very good learning opportunities from national guidelines so that the school's curriculum is based on practical learning accompanied by many opportunities to use computers in their work.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

110. Due to the school's timetabling arrangements and the timing of the inspection no geography lessons were seen. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning.
111. By the age of seven the majority of pupils achieve standards that are well above those expected for their ages in both subjects. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well and make very good progress in relation to their prior levels of learning. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were in line with those expected nationally.
112. In history, by the age of seven, the pupils show a very good understanding of the distinction between the past and present as they examine toys, household objects and homes throughout the ages. Very well planned lessons, interesting resource visits and visitors are used effectively to help pupils make comparisons with their own lives and those of children in the past. In their studies of different homes the pupils in Year 2 were able to recognise some of the differences in household objects using different sources of information about the past, including the Internet and real objects. The use of well planned role-play situations brings history alive for pupils. An exciting Victorian kitchen full of real objects gave pupils a feel for life in a Victorian household. An imaginary coalmine brought to life the horrors of life underground for young Victorians as pupils crawled on all fours through the 'mine'.
113. Time lines help pupils to develop a secure understanding of chronology as they sequence events and begin to understand the passage of time. They can name significant events and people from the past such as Florence Nightingale and understand how such people changed lives.
114. Pupils are encouraged to think as historians and become 'history detectives' and engage in independent research using a range of sources to find out about recent and past events. Pupils' skills of enquiry were developed well as they investigated why the Great Fire of London spread so quickly and what were the implications of having no fire service.
115. In geography, pupils develop a very good knowledge and understanding of the physical and human features of places near to home and far away. Younger pupils plot the journey of Barnaby Bear and locate their own holiday destinations. They learn about simple map reading as they plot the journey of Red Riding Hood to her Grandma's cottage and make a plan of their own bedrooms. A study of 'the Isle of Struay' provides

Year 2 pupils with very good opportunities to compare their own town with an island location. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions about different places and to consider what it might be like to live in a particular place. Very good progress has been made by the age of seven and pupils know that maps and plans represent a locality and are able to locate specific places, using a key and following simple grid references. Higher attaining pupils confidently locate continents and oceans on a world map. Skills and knowledge are developed exceptionally well as pupils discover what life is like in an African village. A visitor from Zaire opened pupils' eyes to a whole new world as they explored games, local costumes, customs, money and food from Africa. Through very imaginative role-play pupils developed ideas of trading and shopping in an African market. They experienced life as an African woman, carrying a baby on their backs, or balancing a water pot on their heads. Such experiences gave pupils an excellent insight to how people live and work in other lands very different from their own. Environmental changes are explored as pupils recognise how recycling waste materials and developing a responsible attitude to pollution can improve their own locality. Pupils develop appropriate geographical language to support their learning, for example, by the vocabulary relating to map reading, islands and sustainable development.

116. In both subjects pupils are consolidating their study skills through field trips and the use of maps, atlases, CD-ROMs and the Internet.
117. In the limited number of lessons seen the quality of teaching in history was very good. Teachers use very effective strategies for managing lessons and organising pupils. Teachers' planning and pupils' work indicates that teachers have a very good understanding of the subjects and systematically develop skills of historical and geographical enquiry. The teaching is enthusiastic and imaginative and the very effective use of a wide range of resources brings both subjects alive for pupils and has a positive effect on the quality of learning.
118. Pupils' attitudes are very good. They particularly enjoy lessons that challenge them to think and to explore new ideas. They respond very well to opportunities to exchange ideas with each other when working in small groups or pairs.
119. The co-ordination of both subjects is excellent and makes a very important contribution to the aims of the school. The school has excellent methods of checking pupils' progress in acquiring the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to achieve well in the subject.
120. The schemes of work effectively ensure there is progress and continuity across the school, taking into account the needs of the different ages. This helps teachers to provide pupils with high quality and challenging opportunities to extend their historical and geographical knowledge, understanding and skills.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

121. At the last inspection standards in ICT were below average and progress over time was unsatisfactory. Pupils now achieve levels that are above the national average and their progress is very good. Teachers use a comprehensive scheme of work closely linked to national guidance for the subject. All teachers have had additional training and the resources have improved. There is now a computer suite; the teaching of skills is much more effective and the provision in the classrooms is still improving. The school makes good use of supermarket coupons to improve the resources. The school employs a support assistant for two days a week who works closely with the teachers.

As well as teaching new skills, she enables pupils to apply their learning to other areas of the curriculum. All these measures have made a significant impact on pupils' progress.

122. From the time the children start school in the nursery they learn how to use the mouse to draw lines and pictures. They design Christmas cards, drawing Christmas trees and putting a star on top. They use the Internet to follow Father Christmas' schedule in the run up to Christmas and have received a reply to their e-mail. In Year 1 pupils draw faces using a number of different tools from their graphics program. They display information graphically. For example, pupils worked with the ICT assistant to create bar and block graphs and pie charts to compare liquorice sweets in different ways, as part of their mathematics lesson. In the reception class children program a robot to travel in different directions, progressing to following a route. Pupils use the keyboard well and by Year 2 they produce accurate text, changing font and size and using the capital, shift, return and delete functions with ease. They save their work and access their personal folders from the hard disk. Pupils use CD-ROMs and the Internet to access information and older pupils combine photographs from the digital camera or scanned pictures and text.
123. The teaching of ICT is very good. In a very good lesson in Year 2 the teacher demonstrated a new skill very carefully and expected her pupils to explain just how she changed the size of the font. Pupils demonstrated their skills and corrected work using the backspace key. There were cheers as pupils changed the font, size and colour of the text. Pupils made very good progress in this lesson as they learnt new skills and consolidated those they already had. There is no difference in the attainment of boys and girls and pupils with special needs are supported very well, enabling them to make the best possible progress. The teaching assistant supporting ICT works closely with the teachers and the preparation for the lessons is impeccable.
124. The subject leader is excellent at her job. She keeps a file of evidence, with all aspects of the curriculum and samples of the pupils' work. These samples give a very good analysis of the pupils' abilities and whether the work is above average, average or below average. This is an excellent tool to enable teachers to assess exactly how well their pupils are achieving. The developing record of evidence is beginning to include samples of the use of ICT from other subjects. Teachers include ICT in their plans for other subjects and there is an ongoing program to develop even more opportunities for the use of computers and software in other subjects. Computers are already used on a regular basis as part of most lessons.

## **MUSIC**

125. Standards in music are average. This is similar to the standards at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' progress has improved and is now good. This is because there has been an improvement in the scheme of work and the quality of the teaching. These factors have not been sufficient to raise standards overall; during the inspection there were insufficient opportunities to observe pupils singing together as a whole school.
126. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to understand the difference between "pulse" and "rhythm" and, when accompanying a well-known song, the majority of pupils maintain the pulse accurately as they clap. They find working with a new song and percussion instruments much more difficult, slipping into playing the rhythm. Some very good teaching in this lesson helped the majority of pupils master the technique. The most impressive aspect of this lesson was the pupils' commitment to their task and the way

that they shared the instruments. They evaluated the performance of the different groups (recorded on a tape recorder), valuing each other's efforts. The teacher guided them towards measuring the performances against the objectives of the lesson. With the teacher's encouragement, pupils are beginning to identify which instruments are most suitable for producing a crisp pulse.

127. Pupils in Year 1 identified long and short sounds in their lesson and are beginning to select the most suitable instruments to produce each. They know the names of the instruments they use. This was a good lesson because the teacher had very good relationships with her pupils and created a hushed atmosphere as pupils listened to some Chinese music to reinforce the concept of long and short sounds. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieved well in this lesson. The teacher was particularly aware of a pupil with hearing difficulties and praised her accurate crash of the symbol.
128. There is a good music curriculum, based on national guidance and adapted to meet the needs of the school and the available resources. The subject leader has a clear vision for future development and monitors the teaching and pupils' achievements. Pupils' knowledge and understanding are appropriate for their age and their listening skills are good. Only one year group at a time sang in assembly, usually with a commercial tape, recorded with accompaniment and children singing. Pupils do not have to sing well to produce a reasonable sound under these circumstances.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

129. Dance and gymnastics lesson were observed and in both standards are above average. This is an improvement on the last inspection when standards were judged to be average.
130. Pupils have good levels of knowledge about how to prepare their muscles for exercise. They react very well to commands and follow their teacher's instructions very well. They stretch and warm muscles with increasing vigour until they are ready to begin. In dance, pupils imitate galloping horses as they ride to save the Sleeping Beauty. After hacking down thickets of thorns with precise and imaginative movements they come to the rescue. All pupils, whether they have special educational needs or learn more quickly than most pupils, achieve well. There were very good examples of pupils with the most severe learning needs joining in with the same work as other pupils and, after receiving just the right amount of support, succeeding well. The education care officer watched the work carefully to see when it was appropriate to intervene and without helping too much was able to offer very good support. In gymnastics, Year 1 pupils balanced on large body parts before extending their work by using small body parts such as hands and feet. In Year 2 pupils planned a sequence of rolls and movements with increasing control and coordination. Their compositions were of good quality and included dismounts in which pupils extended their fingers and toes.
131. The quality of teaching was never less than good and in one class in Year 2 was very good. In all lessons teachers participated with pupils and showed very good models of work rate and imagination. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and concentration. They know just when to halt the lesson to give pupils instructions which will help them improve. For example, in the Year 2 dance lesson, pupils were shown how to dance the courtly steps to celebrate Sleeping Beauty's release from the spell. The teacher systematically built up the sequence until all pupils, including those with special educational needs, could side step and promenade around their partners. Teachers chose good examples to illustrate particular points. Each example was

carefully evaluated and pupils were keen to show how much they enjoyed the work of their classmates.

132. The subject is led and managed in an excellent manner. Very good adaptations to national guidance have been made to ensure that pupils' needs are met in the most appropriate way. A comprehensive and very good quality photographic record is kept of pupils' work. Showing how the community works with the school to improve the curriculum, this record show good quality work from pupils.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

133. Standards in religious education exceed the expectations set out in the local authority's agreed syllabus and have improved since the last inspection when they were deemed to be average. There is a lot of emphasis placed on discussion and reflection in the religious education lessons. This approach enables the pupils to explore their own feelings and to empathise with the experiences of others. This raises their attainment beyond simply knowing about a topic to a level of understanding more often found in older pupils.
134. Two lessons were observed during the inspection. In both lessons, and in pupils' books, it was evident that pupils have a secure knowledge of their own and other faiths. When discussing journeys in Year 1, for example, pupils knew what awaited the Three Wise Men when they journeyed to Bethlehem and remembered the story of Mary and Joseph's journey well. The map they drew of the journey showed that they understood the conditions faced on the journey very well. Year 2, pupils discussed the preparations for Christmas. The teacher wanted to ensure that pupils did not confuse Advent with the other Celebrations of Light that the class had been studying. The more able pupils showed that they understood the order of the preparations well, writing a diary of events. Less able pupils drew some of the preparations that are made on the lead up to Christmas. A pupil with a statement of special educational needs had very good support and lots of encouragement from the pupils on her table.
135. The teaching was good in both lessons with very good relationships complementing the teachers' secure subject knowledge. One lesson, however, was a little too long and some of the impact was lost towards the end. In the other, the teacher spent too long revising the work covered before lunch. Pupils had just sat in assembly and needed to be more active. Discussion with the pupils and an analysis of their books shows that they have a good knowledge of Christianity and other faiths and identify similarities and differences between them.
136. The religious education curriculum is closely linked with the programme for personal, social and health education and fully reflects the aims and ethos of the school. Teachers regularly assess their pupils' progress and the subject leader uses this information to identify any weaknesses in the subject provision. As a result there has been more emphasis on visiting local places of worship to improve pupils' knowledge of symbols and worship as well as the physical parts of the church. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.