

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **DOLLIS INFANTS SCHOOL**

Mill Hill

LEA area: Barnet

Unique reference number: 101275

Headteacher: Ms Maureen McGoldrick

Reporting inspector: Mrs Jane Wotherspoon  
22199

Dates of inspection: 1-4 October 2001

Inspection number: 218434

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Pursley Rd London
Postcode:	NW7 2BU
Telephone number:	020 8959 3995
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. D. Fanning-Tichborne
Date of previous inspection:	November 1999

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22199	Jane Wotherspoon	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Art; Physical education.	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
18565	Moira Eminton	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development; How well does the school care for pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16773	Raminder Arora	<i>Team inspector</i>	Foundation stage; Science; Religious education; Equal opportunities; English as an additional language.	
18498	Denise Morris	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics; Design and technology; Information and communications technology; Music; Special educational needs.	
23658	Stephen Parker	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Geography; History.	How good are the curricular opportunities?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Dollis Infant School serves a socially and culturally diverse area, which is reflected in the fact that half the pupils are from ethnic minority groups. At present, a total of 310 boys and girls aged between 3 and 7 attend the school. Forty-nine pupils attend the Nursery on a part time basis; this figure has been reduced from the admission figure of 78 until the local authority's proposals to develop the Nursery provision are finalised. When pupils start school, their standards of attainment are below average. About half the pupils speak English as an additional language and many pupils begin school speaking little or no English. Overall, pupils at the school speak 24 different languages. The mobility rate is high, with many pupils joining and leaving the school part way through their education. Eighty-four pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, a figure, which is above the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is just above the national average. There has been a high turnover of staff in the last two years, including several senior staff. Of the 10 class teachers, 4 are new to the school this term, including one who is new to the teaching profession. One post remains unfilled, a supply teacher covers a long-term absence, and two part-time teachers cover a teacher on maternity leave.

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

This is an improving school. It provides a satisfactory quality of education and has many good features. Standards are rising, especially in mathematics, and the quality of teaching has improved. Pupils achieve well in the important areas of literacy and numeracy. Leadership and management are good. The school gives satisfactory value for money. The school has a good capacity to continue improving, provided that suitably qualified and trained permanent teaching staff can be recruited and good teachers can be retained.

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

- Pupils behave well and are enthusiastic about their learning.
- Provision for moral, social, and cultural development is strong.
- Very good leadership from the headteacher motivates the school community to work hard and achieve well.
- The school is a harmonious community where all pupils are valued and cared for.
- Teaching of mathematics and English, especially reading, is good and pupils make good progress.
- The school works hard to involve parents in the life of the school and in their child's learning.

### **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

- Standards in writing.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality.
- Specific provision for pupils in the early stages of learning English.
- Strategies to recruit and retain teaching staff.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1999, when it was judged to have serious weaknesses. Since then it has made a good level of improvement in many areas in a relatively short space of time. It no longer has serious weaknesses. Standards in mathematics have risen and pupils now make good progress. However, standards in writing need to be raised further. Teaching has improved in Key Stage 1 and is now at least satisfactory in all subjects. The breadth and balance of the curriculum has improved; now that the school follows national guidance in all subjects, pupils' knowledge and skills are developed systematically. The quality of financial planning has improved and funding is well targeted to key priorities. As well as these improvements, the school has built on the strengths that were noted at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher and governors are aware of the need to devise a long-term plan to shape the school's future, and the school is now at the stage where this can be achieved.

## STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above average</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below average</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

The table shows that the results of Year 2 tests in 2000 in reading, writing and mathematics were mixed in comparison with those of the previous year. Over time, results have fluctuated from year to year. Writing has always been weaker than reading. However, when compared with similar schools nationally, standards were above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Results in 2001 improved in mathematics but dipped in reading and writing. Standards seen during the inspection are more encouraging, with pupils attaining at, or close to, the levels expected for their ages in most subjects. There have been improvements in standards in mathematics, science, ICT and RE in Years 1 and 2; at the time of the previous inspection there were weaknesses reported in these subjects. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in all subjects. This reflects good achievement overall from the low starting point of many pupils, especially in English and mathematics. There are still weaknesses in pupils' speaking and writing skills, but even in these areas pupils are making at least satisfactory progress.

Children start school with a wide range of skills and experience, but standards are below average overall. When the pupils begin school, many speak little or no English and this initially holds them back in other subjects. Pupils achieve particularly well in personal, social and emotional development to attain levels similar to those expected for their age. By the end of the reception year, pupils' attainment is below expectations in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. They meet expectations for their age in creative and physical development.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The good attitudes of the majority of pupils make a positive contribution to the quality of learning and achievement in the school. Pupils are keen to work hard and are enthusiastic about the activities teachers give them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. A small minority of pupils who find it difficult to follow the school's expectation are given additional support and learn from the good role model of other pupils. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils get on and co-operate well with each other. They learn to respect one another's differences and racial harmony is strong. The school is a well-integrated multi-cultural community where relationships are good. Mutual respect permeates all aspects of school life.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The attendance figures are well below the national average. Absence rates are too high. Most absence is authorised, and the number of parents who take their children on extended family holidays affects the overall figures. A small group of pupils is persistently late arriving at school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and reception	Years 1-2
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Teaching is satisfactory with some good features. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1. Teaching is consistently good in the nursery class where there is a good focus on developing pupils' language skills, and satisfactory in reception classes. A wide variety of activities give children opportunities to develop their skills and broaden their knowledge of the world around them. Teaching is good in English and mathematics in Years 1 and 2; literacy and numeracy are taught well. More use could be made of ICT in other subjects. Resources are well chosen and tasks are varied to meet pupils' different learning needs. Teaching assistants give good support to groups of pupils so that they can practise skills at a level appropriate to their ability. Weaknesses, seen in science, stemmed from the teachers' unclear expectations of what pupils were going to learn. Throughout the school, relationships between teachers and pupils are a strength. Good management of pupils and a consistent expectation of their behaviour are firmly established in most classes. Praise is used well to help pupils feel good about themselves so that they enjoy their learning. There is some inconsistency in the quality of marking of pupils' written work.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory breadth in both key stages. There is an appropriate emphasis on personal, social and emotional development in Nursery and Reception, and on English, mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2. There is good provision for personal, social and health education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good at present. The specific support for these pupils is not as well focused as in the past. This is because staffing difficulties have forced the school to deploy the special needs co-ordinator as a class teacher.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory support in lessons from teachers and classroom assistants. At present the pupils at the early stages of learning English have little additional support because of difficulties in recruiting staff. The school is committed to the inclusion and integration of all pupils in all school activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for moral development is a significant strength of the school's work. Provision for spiritual development is less well developed, though it is satisfactory. Provision for social and cultural development is good
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are well looked after. The parents' confidence in the school's care for pupils is rightly justified. Pupils are sensitively supported. Assessment procedures are good, but there is further scope for analysis and use of this information.

The school enjoys a strong partnership with parents, who appreciate the level of information they receive and the increased opportunities to become involved in the life of the school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives a strong and determined lead to the school's work. She has striven to make the necessary improvements to the quality of education while managing the difficult staffing situation. She is supported well by other key members of staff who share her commitment to improvement and give sound support to their colleagues. There is a strong sense of teamwork among all staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors work effectively through the well-established committee structure. They are aware of the school's main strengths and weaknesses and of the difficulties that face the school. Governors are keen to establish a more formal approach to their monitoring role. Governors support the school soundly.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Monitoring is effective in identifying areas of the school's work that need improving. Action is carefully planned to address weaknesses and then followed through. The school is beginning to use data to analyse the performance of different groups of pupils, but this process is not well established.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's funding is targeted towards areas of high priority. Significant improvements have been made to the internal accommodation and to the quality of resources during the last year. However, as a result, the school has only a small contingency fund. Governors seek to obtain value for money when planning expenditure.

The school has been successful in strengthening the management with appointments to senior positions and key co-ordinators roles, but there remain vacancies for one class teacher and the part-time post of a teacher to support pupils with English as an additional language. As a result, the special needs co-ordinator and the deputy headteacher are currently deployed in classes and have not been able to carry out their usual duties. As a short-term measure this is a reasonable compromise, but in the long term it is unsatisfactory. A good number of learning assistants support pupils in class and make a good contribution to their learning. They have helped to maintain stability and continuity for pupils while changes have occurred among teachers. The accommodation and resources for outdoor learning in reception classes is limited, and affects the provision in physical development.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Based on the views of the 17 at the parents meeting, 59 responses to the questionnaire, and informal discussions during the inspection.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children are happy at school.</li> <li>• Pupils make good progress because the school has high expectations of them.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Pupils behave well.</li> <li>• Staff at the school are approachable and listen to parents' concerns.</li> <li>• Parents feel well informed about what goes on in school and how their children are progressing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities provided outside school hours.</li> <li>• The stability of staffing.</li> </ul>

Inspectors confirm the positive views of the parents who completed the questionnaire and also share parents' concerns about the unsettling effect of staff changes on the education of young pupils. The school works hard to minimise the impact of staffing difficulties. The range of activities provided to enhance the curriculum is small but similar to that found in many infant schools.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children start school with a wide range of skills and experience, but standards are below average overall. Over time, pupils are achieving well to attain standards that are close to average by the age of seven. When pupils begin school many speak little or no English, and despite the progress they make in the nursery and reception classes they do not reach the levels expected by the end of the Reception year in communication, language and literacy. In mathematical development and the knowledge and understanding of the world, children do not reach the expected standards. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1, most children attain the early learning goals in the areas of creative and physical development. They achieve particularly well in personal, social and emotional development, and are likely to attain most of the early learning goals in this area. These findings are not consistent with those of the previous inspection report, where standards by the age of five were mainly satisfactory. The difference in judgement is due to the recent developments nationally in curriculum expectations for the children in the early years of their education.

2. Personal, social and emotional skills are promoted strongly and the children settle well, though some are still reluctant to leave their parents and carers. Most are happy and secure at school. Children are helped to form good relationships with others through many good opportunities to work together. They learn to take turn and to share. By the time they leave the reception classes, children have achieved most of the early learning goals in this area. Simple classroom rules are shared and children learn to follow the classroom routines. Praise and encouragement are well judged. Very good relationships between adults and children underpin the development of enthusiasm and positive attitudes to learning. Their efforts at communicating are valued by adults and their confidence to speak is promoted through well-planned opportunities, but a significant proportion of children do not meet expectations for their age. A love of books and stories is fostered strongly in the school and this helps in the development of early reading skills. By the end of reception, many children know letter sounds and names and begin to recognise key words. Writing skills develop slowly. Many children do not reach the early learning goals in mathematics by the end of foundation stage, owing to the low start. Pupils' knowledge of number is sound and the effective use of number rhymes and songs enhances their learning. However, they have difficulty using this knowledge when vocabulary such as 'add one more' or 'take one away', 'how many altogether' and 'how many left' is involved.

3. The results of end-of-key-stage 1 tests in 2000 in reading, writing and mathematics presented a mixed picture in comparison with those of the previous year. Over time, results have fluctuated from year to year, but writing has always been weaker than reading and mathematics. However, when compared with similar schools nationally, standards in reading and writing were above average and standards in mathematics were average. Comparisons with similar schools within the local authority show that pupils are achieving well. There has been no particular trend in the attainment of boys and girls over time. The teachers' assessments of science show standards as well below average overall in 2000.

4. At the time of the inspection, no national comparisons for test results in 2001 were available, but the school's raw results showed an improvement in the standards attained in mathematics, with a rise in the number of pupils who exceeded expectations for their age. Teachers' assessments showed that standards in science also improved but results in reading and writing showed a slight dip. The results were not unexpected, for several reasons, but mainly because a large group of pupils in this year group had special educational needs. In addition, disruption in staffing and high pupil mobility had an impact on the continuity of pupils' learning. Thirteen per cent of pupils who took the tests joined the school during Year 2 and less than half of pupils spent their whole school career at Dollis Infants.

5. Standards seen during inspection were more encouraging, with pupils achieving at, or close to, the levels expected for their ages in most subjects. This is due to the improvement in the quality of teaching overall. There have been improvements in standards in mathematics, science, ICT and RE in Key Stage 1, since the previous inspection reported weaknesses; this reflects the emphasis that the school has placed on addressing the weaknesses in these areas. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in all subjects, in contrast to the unsatisfactory progress reported then. This reflects good achievement overall from a low starting point, especially in English and mathematics. There are still weaknesses in pupils' speaking and writing standards, but even in these areas pupils are making at least satisfactory progress.

6. Pupils listening skills are satisfactory overall, and most pupils are increasingly confident to speak during 'circle time'. Their reading skills develop well and they make good progress, mainly because of the high level of enthusiasm for reading shared by all members of the school community. By the age of seven most pupils are able to read appropriate books independently, with good understanding. Standards of handwriting and presentation have improved since the previous inspection, with the introduction of a consistent format, and are now satisfactory for pupils' ages. However, there are still weaknesses in punctuation, spelling and the structure of writing when pupils write independently. They are not able to apply their learning from the exercises which practise these skills. They do not readily check their own work for errors and the teachers' marking is not precise enough to identify specific weaknesses that need to be remedied. This is still an area for the school to work on.

7. Pupils make good progress in mathematics to attain the standards expected for their age. Standards in number work are a particular strength in both year groups. Pupils are developing a sound knowledge of the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes and use standard and non-standard measurements. They are encouraged to estimate, for example when comparing items of different lengths. By Year 2 pupils can solve simple problems by choosing the appropriate mathematical operation and they are learning to approach their work in a systematic way. The use of a computerised learning program in mathematics has been successful in helping to raise standards, and the school is considering extending its use to pupils in Year 1.

8. The standards seen in science during inspection are close to those expected for pupils' ages. This represents a marked improvement since the previous inspection. Since then the school has placed a greater emphasis on investigative science, and this is leading to a particular increase in opportunities to develop pupils' enquiry skills and their ability to record what they find independently. In Year 2, most pupils explain with increasing confidence what they believe the outcome of a test will be.

9. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are represented in all ability groups within classes. Initially, many pupils' command of English is weak but they quickly learn enough spoken language to be able to follow instructions and participate in activities. Their skills in reading and writing develop more slowly. Once they have acquired a reasonable level of English, these pupils achieve as well as their peers. The achievement of pupils who are new arrivals and at the initial stages of English language acquisition is satisfactory. At present, not all these pupils are receiving specialised support to meet their specific needs, due to staffing difficulties. They are given sound general support as part of the whole class. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, and these pupils make good progress towards meeting their individual targets. Their progress is monitored closely to ensure that they make gains in learning. The good provision of additional teaching support assistants who work closely with these pupils helps them to be fully included in all activities.

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

10. The good attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the majority of pupils make a positive contribution to the quality of learning and achievement in the school.

11. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They listen attentively and respond with enthusiasm to challenges. They take pride in their work and most try hard to concentrate. The minority of pupils who do not adapt readily to a structured school day are given additional support. Pupils in the foundation stage who are new to the school's routines show a willingness to follow the guidance of the adults around them. This was evident during the inspection in the course of a story time in a reception class. Pupils listening to the story of 'Three Billy Goats Gruff' were captivated by the finger puppet used by the teacher to dramatise the story. Delighted by the puppet's antics, the children eagerly joined in the chorus and were a happy and attentive audience. Pupils making gingerbread men were thrilled when shown how to change a round piece of dough into the shape of a gingerbread man. Their enthusiasm for the task and willingness to persevere were important factors in the success of their learning.

12. Most pupils follow instructions and enjoy their involvement in lessons. This was evident in a Year 1 music lesson about contrasts in sound. They sang 'Dingle, Dangle Scarecrow' with loud voices, and arms thrown in the air. Their exaggerated gestures to the chorus 'Up jumped the scarecrow', and the whispered section which followed, prompted much laughter and illustrated the pupils' commitment to their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are encouraged to be active members of the class and are enthusiastic learners.

13. Standards of behaviour are good in the school. Parents have indicated their approval for the improved standards of behaviour since the last inspection. Throughout the day, pupils move around the school with good regard for the rules. They are responsive to adults and most are fair and considerate to each other. They move along the corridors mindful of others. Pupils observed during the inspection at an assembly were quiet and attentive throughout. They are confident that bullying is not an issue and that any disagreements between pupils are dealt with quickly.

14. Pupils show good understanding of fairness and justice. They are learning to co-operate with others and to respect one another's differences. Pupils play harmoniously in the playground. Most understand the importance of taking turns and sharing. They help each other, collaborate well in lessons in groups and listen to different viewpoints. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils, reflecting on the importance of working together, showed quiet consideration and respect for people who are ill and an understanding of the importance of helping others. A group of Year 2 pupils, sitting in a circle to discuss class rules, felt able to express their feelings and opinions with confidence and good sense.

15. Pupils get on well together. The school is a well-integrated multi-cultural community where relationships are good. Cultural differences are welcomed and celebrated. Opportunities are provided for the pupils to reflect on their actions and to value their feelings and beliefs. Racial harmony is strong. Mutual respect permeates all aspects of school life, and the pupils' ability to relate well to each other parallels the good example set for them by the adults in the school.

16. Pupils are given an appropriate range of responsibilities for their age, and they carry out these sensibly and willingly. Duties such as taking the register to the office, acting as monitors at lunchtime and tidying up, help pupils to gain confidence. Their self-esteem is also lifted by being awarded the class 'Very Important Person' for good sense and hard work, a position which is accepted with great pride and pleasure. Pupils raise money for worthy causes and enter competitions, including the Year of the Chrysanthemum competition. Their efforts play an important part in their personal development and their understanding of the world, and the help and care that is needed to protect it. Ninety three per cent of parents responding to the inspection questionnaire have indicated their confidence that the school is working well to help their children become mature and responsible.

17. Unauthorised absence is comparable to the national average but overall attendance levels are unsatisfactory and have fallen since the last inspection. At 92.7% they are well below national comparisons. Factors behind the low rate include high levels of authorised absences because of parents taking holidays abroad and medical reasons.

18. The school has also identified a small group of pupils who are often late for school and whose lack of punctuality can be disruptive to the start of the school day. However, improved logging and analysis of lateness, and good collaboration with the Education Welfare Service, has improved punctuality in the last year.

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

19. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when teaching in Key Stage 1 was unsatisfactory and represented a serious weakness in the quality of education provided. There are now several good features in teaching.

20. The teaching of pupils in the foundation stage (nursery and reception classes) is satisfactory. It was good in just under half the lessons in reception classes and unsatisfactory in one. Teaching is consistently good in the nursery class. Here the constant focus on developing pupils' language is well judged. Although often receiving little response from pupils, the adults maintain an endless stream of talk to promote pupils' language development. This is most appropriate considering the high number of pupils who begin nursery with limited knowledge of the English language. All staff value children's efforts at communicating and provide a good model of spoken language for children to copy. The strong emphasis on fostering a love of books enhances children's enjoyment and their early reading skills. Areas for imaginative play are well organised and relevant links are made with the stories used at other times of the day. This gives children opportunities to recall and retell stories, and develop their vocabulary by practising key phrases such as 'trip, trap trip trap over the bridge' as they act out the story of Three Billy Goats Gruff. Most adults use talk to good effect and are active listeners. However, not all teachers are consistent in the way they make, and use, the daily observations of individual children.

21. Throughout the foundation stage, very good relationships between adults and pupils support children's personal social and emotional development. At this stage in the year, all adults are working to establish clear expectations, and these are increasingly demanding as children become familiar with the routines of the day. Some simple classroom rules are shared with all. Children are helped to form good relationships with others through many good opportunities to work as part of a group, independently, or with an adult. Children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve in a variety of learning situations. As a result, they develop positive attitudes to learning and an eagerness to do well. Children are taught the difference between right and wrong and guided to behave sensibly at all times.

22. Teachers encourage the children to explore new experiences and to learn from their explorations. To this end, they set up a wide variety of activities that give children opportunities to develop their skills and broaden their knowledge of the world around them. Well-organised resources encourage a mix of teacher-directed and child-initiated activities. However, whereas morning sessions are closely focused on activities that develop literacy and numeracy skills, the afternoon activities are too general and not sharply focused on specific areas of learning. This results in learning that is satisfactory rather than good. Where these sessions are more successful, adults asked well-focused questions to encourage children's responses, extend their thinking and develop their vocabulary. The unsatisfactory lesson in a reception class failed to stimulate, challenge or engage children sufficiently, and little account was taken of what the children could do already.

23. The teaching of English in Key Stage 1 is good. It was good or better in almost two thirds of the lessons seen and satisfactory in the rest. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers plan together effectively, using the literacy framework. They share with pupils what they are going to learn and so lessons have a strong sense of purpose and a good pace. Texts are chosen well and used effectively to teach specific skills. Tasks are generally well matched to pupils' different levels of need and ability. However, the use of unconnected exercises to practise writing skills was not always effective in addressing pupils' individual weaknesses in writing.





24. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is good, and this represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has been effective and is having a positive impact on standards. The quality of planning is good and the three-part lesson is taught consistently. In the best lessons, teaching is lively and enthusiastic. Good demonstrations ensure that pupils are clear about what they have to do. Occasionally, the pace of lessons dips where there is too much 'turn-taking' when the whole class is being taught together. Those who are waiting become restless and impatient.

25. In science, too, the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and has a direct impact on the improved standards seen. It is mainly satisfactory with good features, although two of the six lessons seen during inspection were unsatisfactory. The weaknesses in these two lessons stemmed from the teachers' unclear expectations of what pupils were to learn, and therefore an inability to guide them appropriately in their activities. Where the same lessons were seen in other classes, teachers managed the activities more successfully. Scrutiny of teachers' planning and of pupils' past work shows satisfactory teaching.

26. Teaching is satisfactory in other subjects. In ICT, teachers often give good explanations of tasks, with good demonstrations of what pupils have to do, though the lack of resources for pupils to put skills into practice straight away has an effect upon their learning. The planned development of an ICT suite in the library holds much promise for improvements in pupils' learning, as teachers will be able to make more use of ICT in other subjects. In all subjects, teachers base their planning on national guidance and this helps to ensure that there is a sequential development of pupils' skills and knowledge, both within the lesson and over time. This was very evident in physical education lessons.

27. In the introduction to lessons, teachers make sure that all pupils are included and have the opportunity to answer questions. In the main, teachers give pupils tasks that match the different levels of attainment, so that all are able to achieve success. Teaching support assistants are always briefed well on the tasks they are supporting. Resources are well prepared and organised. Often, but not always, lessons finish with a review of what has been learnt, and this is beneficial in reinforcing pupils' understanding. Homework is a consistent feature. The emphasis on developing reading is well placed but pupils are also encouraged to complete other small tasks to support learning in other subjects. An inconsistent feature is the quality of marking. Teachers acknowledge pupils' efforts, give encouragement and, in the best examples, identify some weaknesses needing attention. However, expectations are not consistent across other subjects.

28. Throughout the school, the teaching of pupils who speak English as an additional language is satisfactory but there are weaknesses at present. The school has been unable to appoint a part-time teacher to provide specific teaching for pupils at the early stages of learning English. A bilingual assistant, employed for one day a week gives satisfactory support to the eight identified pupils at the early stages of English in Year 2. Class teachers do not have a well-developed knowledge of pupils' specific needs with regard to their stages of learning English. They are not fully aware of the range of language needs of the identified pupils and therefore do not plan activities specifically with these pupils in mind. However, they provide sound general support, and pupils' responses are suitably extended to help them develop their knowledge of English language. Teachers' own spoken English is a good model for pupils to copy, and the emphasis on developing vocabulary is also a helpful feature of most lessons. In addition, three classroom assistants are themselves bilingual and give pupils appropriate support, including translating instructions, as part of general group work. As a result of this general support, pupils are making satisfactory progress but are not having their specific language needs met.

29. Throughout the school the relationships between teachers and pupils are a strength. All adults contribute to the positive ethos within the school. Good management of pupils and a consistent expectation of behaviour are firmly established in most classes. Pupils' self-esteem and enjoyment of learning are supported by the good feedback, explanations, and encouragement from teachers.

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

30. The curriculum was unsatisfactory at the last inspection, but weaknesses have been corrected and it is now satisfactory. The improvement has been secured by a vigorous review of subject policies and schemes of work, with the adoption of national guidelines for all subjects. As a result, teachers' medium and long-term planning is well founded, so that pupils in parallel classes cover the same material and develop the skills, knowledge and understanding expected for their age. Planning for children in the Foundation Stage is firmly based on the recommended Early Learning Goals. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are offered a broad curriculum that includes religious education and all subjects of the National Curriculum. Considerably more time is given to English than to other subjects, though this emphasis is acceptable in light of the fact that many pupils enter the school with low attainment in English or at an early stage in learning English as an additional language. The time available for other subjects is used efficiently, with appropriate adjustments to the timetable to ensure a sound balance of coverage. For instance, design and technology is taught in blocks of time rather than every week, and geography and history are taught alternately in half-term units. Pupils' interest is stimulated by occasional events that focus on a specific aspect of the curriculum, such as Book Week.

31. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy are followed closely, and planning is securely based on their official frameworks. Standards in reading benefit from the extra time given to reading and story each day, in addition to the literacy hour. Pupils have opportunities to write at length in other subjects, and this has corrected a weakness noted in the previous report. The school has made adjustments to the programme of study for mathematics after closely analysing pupils' test performances. Standards are rising as a result, though there is more scope for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in other subjects.

32. There is good provision for personal, social and health education, both in planned lessons and at other times, when pupils are given good support in their classes by teachers and other adults. There is a satisfactory scheme of work for the taught programme, which includes weekly class discussions, called "circle time", where pupils can raise issues of concern. The scheme includes relevant aspects of citizenship, health education, and drugs awareness. The policy for sex education has been recently reviewed and this aspect is taught with the assistance of the school nurse and the approval of the governing body and parents.

33. The school is committed to the inclusion and integration of all pupils in all school activities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils' difficulties are identified at an early stage through a programme of testing, and support is allocated as required. They are provided with individual education plans containing specific targets to guide their development in language and mathematics. Monitoring of pupils' individual needs, and of their academic progress, is a particular strength of the provision and ensures that support is sharply focused. Their targets are reviewed regularly and appropriately updated to ensure that these pupils make consistently good progress. Support in class is well planned, so that all pupils take full part in the main activities. Nevertheless, during the week of the inspection the co-ordinator was unable to work with groups of pupils with special needs because she was deployed as a class teacher as a result of staffing shortages. This reduced the quality of provision for special needs seen during this week.

34. There is satisfactory provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language. Pupils receive sound support from class teachers to develop their knowledge of English on a day-to-day basis during literacy hour. They also benefit from the support of classroom assistants, several of whom share a common language with pupils. However, the post of part-time teacher has remained unfilled since the start of the academic year and this affects the amount of specific support that can be provided for pupils in the early stages of acquiring English.

35. Provision for out-of-class activities is satisfactory. The most effective extension to the curriculum is the invitation to children and their parents to arrive fifteen minutes early each day to

read together. Teachers and assistants work hard beforehand to set out interesting and appropriate books, and this is a very productive time for the many pupils who take advantage of it. The school continues to host a very good quality French Club, run by an outside organisation and attended by more than twenty pupils in Years 1 and 2. Other clubs are set up occasionally for specific purposes, for instance to learn Indian dances to perform at the school's summer fair. Satisfactory use is made of the locality and further afield to support studies in geography and history. The range of visits to places of interest has improved since the previous inspection, with work in several subjects, including science, supported by good quality visits. The school takes part in local festivals and events. A range of visitors, including the vicar and members of the local community, presents role models of citizenship. Parents from some of the different cultural backgrounds represented in the school are invited to talk to pupils about aspects of their culture. There is satisfactory contact with the neighbouring junior school to ensure that leavers make a smooth transfer to the next stage in their education, with close attention paid to arrangements for pupils with special educational needs.

36. Provision for pupils' personal development has improved since the previous inspection, when it was satisfactory. Moral development was good at that time, but provision has been further developed so that it is now very good and a significant strength of the school. Concern for the physical and emotional well being of others is given a high profile in all aspects of school life. Adults promote values of honesty, fairness and truthfulness in their caring relationships with pupils. Good quality books are used well in daily story times to illustrate moral principles. Class rules are simply expressed and have a positive focus. Teachers control behaviour through encouragement, stressing principles of fairness and self-respect and encouraging reflection on the consequences of one's actions. Positive images and messages are displayed prominently throughout the school, to reinforce their importance.

37. Provision for spiritual development is less well developed, though it continues to be satisfactory. Worship was a low-key element of the school assembly and instances of class worship that were observed during the inspection. Prayers and moments of reflection were brief, though linked meaningfully to the context. A stronger element of provision is found in the way that teachers value pupils' ideas in lessons and beyond, and seek to develop their insight into other values and beliefs. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own experiences and explore questions of meaning and purpose in their learning. They learn to appreciate the beauty of the world and their place in it, through study of living things in science and to some extent through creativity in art and music.

38. Provision for pupils' social development is good. There is a positive working atmosphere in most lessons. Practical tasks are designed so that pupils learn to collaborate, and they respond well in helping their partners to succeed. They play well together in the playground, helped by a good range of equipment and positive guidance from supervising staff. There is a good link with moral development in that each day a pupil is chosen for the golden chair in each class in Year 1, and in Year 2, two pupils are chosen to be "very important people" for the week. Part of their reward is to carry out specific duties. Pupils develop a wider understanding of citizenship through charitable fund-raising and hearing of the experiences of a range of visiting adults.

39. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The diversity of pupils' cultural backgrounds is a valued part of the school's ethos, celebrated in the books, pictures and objects displayed attractively around the school. Teaching materials are carefully chosen to project positive images and avoid stereotyping. This is particularly evident in the good range of books in the library, class collections and corridor displays. Specific references to a range of cultures are built into many subjects, including art, geography, history, music and religious education, to ensure that pupils begin to develop a wide, positive and well-informed understanding of the world.

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

40. The school continues to provide good standards of care for its pupils. The high quality of

this support is having a positive effect on progress and achievement.

41. The staff is responsive to the needs of individuals, many of whom join the school at different times in the academic year. The personal development of each child is effectively monitored and supported by adults using formal and informal systems. The good relationships which exist in the school play an equal part in maximising the achievement of individuals. Pupils are sensitively supported and cared for in an environment where adults provide good role models. Parents' high regard for the way their children are looked after is justified. One hundred per cent of those responding to the inspection questionnaire noted that their children like coming to school.

42. Although staffing difficulties have currently restricted the management role of the special needs co-ordinator, pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Their progress is monitored with the help of individual education plans. The school has good contact with a number of specialists, who visit the school to provide additional support for pupils. The youngest pupils are also well supported in the secure setting of the nursery. Support for pupils with English as an additional language has been affected by staffing shortages, but the quality of support is being enhanced by the teaching assistants. Their effectiveness and clear view about their tasks help to settle newcomers and those with different linguistic backgrounds.

43. Throughout the day, the care provided for pupils is good. Lunchtime staff work well to ensure pupils' continuing comfort and security. They are a well-informed and valued team, who ensure that lunchtime routines run smoothly and that everyone is happy. Good arrangements are made to ensure that pupils are looked after at playtime and at the end of the day. Medical arrangements are firmly established and several members of staff have been trained in first aid. Accidents are clearly documented and good attention is paid to children who have specific medical needs. All members of staff share a high level of commitment to the personal needs of the pupils. Appropriate child protection arrangements are in place. Staff are fully aware of procedures for referring pupils and contact with external support officers is well established.

44. Since the last inspection, procedures to monitor the safety of the environment have improved. The school has identified areas of the site in need of development and has targeted its energies to improving these. Inspections and risk assessments of the site are regular and well organised, and the governing body's health and safety committee plays an active role in maintaining a high focus on safety. The site is kept clean, tidy and in good order by the caretaker. As a governor and member of the health and safety committee, he has very good knowledge of the buildings and plays an important role in maintaining standards.

45. High expectations of good behaviour are echoed throughout the school. The school has very good systems to promote good discipline, and its continued emphasis on good behaviour gives positive messages to all pupils, including those who struggle to behave appropriately at all times. Pupils are constantly reminded of what kind of behaviour is expected and they delight if stickers and praise are awarded to them. Even the youngest children are made aware that unacceptable behaviour is not to be tolerated and that good work and behaviour are to be celebrated by everyone. All incidents of misbehaviour are monitored, and effective use is made of circle time sessions (when pupils sit in a circle to discuss issues of importance) to reflect upon and to reinforce the positive values of the school. Pupils spoken to during the inspection felt that the school is a non-threatening place and that if disagreements occur they are dealt with fairly.

46. The school is systematic in following up absences, and staff have good knowledge of the reasons for non-attendance. The school has appropriate contact with the Educational Welfare Service and uses its channels of communication effectively to remind parents that dips in attendance mean dips in progress. However, despite the school's good procedures, levels of attendance are unsatisfactory, with the overall figures affected by visits abroad during term time. The school is aware that these overseas trips are one-off family occasions, and it seeks to get the best possible educational value from them through the diaries and records of the visit which pupils are asked to complete while away and to discuss with their classes on their return.

47. Procedures for assessment at the school are good. They have improved significantly since the last inspection. They are particularly strong in mathematics, where some very good analysis of

data has ensured that pupils' progress is being very well monitored. Gender comparisons have identified differences between the achievements of boys and girls in mathematics, and have provided evidence for monitoring standards across the year groups. Some effective procedures in English are being established, particularly for literacy, where guided reading records and phonics checklists highlight what pupils know, understand and can do. A good range of assessments is in place to ensure that pupils' difficulties in literacy are identified quickly. In Year 1, pupils undergo a screening test which highlights any difficulties they may have. These difficulties are then addressed by structured support and remedial programmes.

48. A range of good assessments is also in place to ensure that pupils' personal and social education is supported, and that any pupil with difficulties in this area of learning can have an individual plan to help develop more positive relationships. Procedures for assessment in the foundation subjects are satisfactory. At the end of each module of work, teachers assess what pupils have learned, so that they can plan appropriately for the next module. The cycle of assessment and testing at the school is good overall, and ensures that pupils' academic progress is consistently measured and monitored. The target setting process is thorough and ensures that pupils achieve the next step to success.

49. The use of assessment information throughout the school is satisfactory. It is good in mathematics, where data collected is analysed and used to identify the progress pupils have made, and also to identify where additional support may be needed. Other aspects of data analysis have yet to be fully effective in informing the school about its own progress. More use could be made of the information to track variations in the rates of pupils' progress over time. Data relating to pupils who speak English as an additional language is just beginning to be analysed, so that their progress can be monitored.

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

50. Since the last inspection the school has strengthened its good links with parents. The success of the partnership has been emphasised by parents responding to the questionnaire, expressing views at the Parents' Meeting, or spoken to during the inspection. On each of these occasions parents indicated that they are very satisfied with their contact with the school and with what their children are learning there. The only issue of concern, namely staffing shortages, is still being addressed.

51. Since the last inspection the school has introduced a weekly newsletter to give parents a broad range of information about the school. Parents of children in the Nursery also receive helpful half termly news sheets. Information about the topics to be studied each term and a number of useful leaflets (for example on 'how to help your child with handwriting'), give detailed and focused guidance on individual issues. The increased volume of information about the curriculum has enabled all parents and carers to have a fuller picture of school life. Additional information on displays around the building helps give parents a secure understanding of what their children are learning and the day-to-day life of the school. The information provided in the prospectus, noted in the last inspection as inadequate, has improved and the school continues to update it to fulfil all requirements. The school recognises the rich cultural diversity of the school population and its duty to reach non-English speaking parents. Information about the school is available in the key dialects, and bi-lingual parents are also used to extend its message. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are efficiently informed about their child's progress and are invited to attend review meetings.

52. Parents are set clear expectations about the ethos of the school from introductory sessions with staff. These meetings are fundamental not only in introducing parents to the structures of the school, but also in enabling young children to have a feel for the care and organisation of the school. The opportunity for pupils to borrow a book before they start school underlines, from the beginning, the importance attached to reading.

53. The involvement of parents in the life of the school has been identified by staff as pivotal in raising standards. The impact of parental involvement is good and is making a positive contribution to learning. Regular helpers come in to school and their assistance is both valued and encouraged, and many were seen reading with their children at the beginning of the day. Parents have indicated that they welcome the revised arrangements, which enable them to come to school earlier and play a more prominent part in their child's learning. The involvement of parents in learning is also promoted by home-school record books, which are well used. These provide informal contact with teachers and a continuing dialogue about progress. Homework is used throughout the school to extend the work being done in the classroom and it also helps parents to become involved in their child's learning. However, not all parents support the school by ensuring that they bring their child to school regularly and on time.

54. The Friends Association is a committed group of parents who have raised valuable funds for the school. Their recent donations have improved play facilities, provided computers, and helped improve the quality of learning in the school.

55. Parents have indicated their appreciation for the sensitivity and approachability of the staff at all times, most notably at the beginning and the end of the day. They are warmly welcomed to the school and 100 per cent returning questionnaires feel comfortable in approaching the school about a problem. Parents seen during the inspection were given every opportunity to make contact with staff in an atmosphere that is totally supportive of the spirit of sharing and caring.

56. Parent consultation evenings, held once a term, further consolidate parents' involvement with their children's learning. Questionnaires are issued on these occasions to gauge parental opinions. They not only provide a focus for discussions but also acknowledge the school's belief that parents are a rich resource in supporting learning. Pupils' targets are discussed and reviewed at these meetings, and parents are consulted widely for their opinions about school life. Consultation is seen in the school as an effective way of keeping parents informed, while using their views to shape its future.

57. Since the last inspection the school has been trying to improve the quality of pupils' reports, to reflect a sharper focus on attainment and ability. Their format and use is still being evaluated but those in current circulation provide parents with a satisfactory measure of a child's potential and achievements.

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

58. The headteacher is a strong leader who sets high expectations of herself and of all members of the school community. The high level of enthusiasm, energy and commitment she has brought to her role during her year in post has enabled the school to make a good level of improvement in a short space of time. The school no longer has serious weaknesses. The deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher are both relatively new to the school and to their roles. With the headteacher's support and guidance they have a clear view of what they need to achieve and how to go about it. They, too, lead by their example of good practice and the good level of support they give to new and inexperienced members of staff. Together, this senior team offers much potential to continue guiding improvements to the quality of education.

59. Many new systems and procedures have been introduced to improve planning, assessment, monitoring and evaluation. These are yet to become fully embedded in practice but the school is well placed to continue improving. Its capacity to succeed is good, and hampered only by concerns over the lack of stability in staffing, which was an issue facing the school at the time of the last inspection. In the last two years eight members of staff, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher, have left and nine have been appointed. At the time of the inspection, the school was still short of a permanent class teacher and a part-time teacher to support children with English as an additional language. In addition, there is a long-term absence covered by a supply teacher. Though the school has made determined efforts to fill vacant posts and to minimise the disruption to

pupils' learning it



has not been successful, and new strategies must now be considered to recruit and retain teaching staff. Staffing issues have taken up much of the headteacher's time and it is testament to her determination that this has not diverted her from the main task of improving the quality of education provided by the school.

60. Long-standing subject co-ordinators offer good leadership and guidance to their colleagues. However, the considerable level of staff turnover has resulted in many subject areas having co-ordinators who are new to their responsibility and/or new to the school; some responsibilities are temporary. Several subjects have no co-ordinator, and a watching brief is kept by the headteacher. Several new co-ordinators are yet to influence practice but there is a satisfactory overview of each subject and how it needs to develop in the immediate future. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed and co-ordinated; procedures are in line with those recommended in the Code of Practice. Monitoring of pupils' individual needs, and of their academic progress, is a particular strength of the provision. The deputy headteacher has, very recently, taken over responsibility for co-ordinating the support of pupils who speak English as an additional language. He has a good level of expertise in this role and has many ideas about how to improve the support, but staffing difficulties have significantly reduced his ability to put his plans into action.

61. Governors continue to provide sound support to the school. They fulfil their statutory duties well and work effectively through the well-established committee structure. They are kept well informed of the school's progress through regular updates from the headteacher and key staff. In this way, and through their own visits to the school, they are aware of the school's main strengths and weaknesses, of the standards achieved by pupils, and of the difficulties that face the school. Governors are keen to establish a more formal approach to their monitoring role and speak highly of the training they received recently on monitoring and evaluating the school's provision.

62. The governing body is currently undergoing significant change, as seven governors complete their term of office during the next two months. Several long serving and knowledgeable governors are standing down. Although the chair of governors sees this as a positive opportunity to refresh and strengthen the governing body, there is currently uncertainty about its composition.

63. Good procedures are in place to monitor the quality of education provided and to evaluate the standards pupils achieve. Areas for improvement become the focus for whole school development and are set out in the school development plan. The school's commitment to raising standards is firmly embedded within this plan, which at present extends for only the current year. This is satisfactory as a short-term measure considering the particular circumstances of the school, namely changes of staff, changes of governors, and the need to make rapid progress to address the school's serious weaknesses in a short time. Nevertheless, the school is aware of the need to devise a longer-term plan.

64. Appraisal and performance management continue to be satisfactory. The professional needs of new staff are currently being evaluated. A programme of lesson observations by senior staff and subject co-ordinators has identified where improvements are required in teaching, and these have been supported through training for individual teachers and for the whole staff. This has helped to improve the overall quality of teaching since the last inspection. Training in behaviour management has been a key focus at the start of the current academic year and has involved all teachers and non-teaching staff so that there is a consistent and positive approach. The success of this can be seen on a daily basis in the good relationships that have been established, and in the good behaviour of pupils throughout the school.

65. Monitoring of pupils' work has identified weaknesses in handwriting and presentation, and this has become a priority for the school which is being tackled in a systematic way. The production of a booklet for parents on 'How to help your child with handwriting' signals the school's expectation that parents too will be involved in improvements. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have been strengthened and the information is beginning to be analysed in a systematic

way to identify weaknesses in pupils' knowledge, to set specific curricular targets for the coming year and to evaluate the school's performance. The school's tracking system is being updated and computerised to offer greater possibilities in analysing the achievement of different groups of pupils, and to measure individual rates of progress.

66. The work of the school is enhanced by the high quality of the support staff, many with long associations with the school, who uphold its ethos. These staff, whose support is recognised as fundamental in raising standards, provide good role models to the pupils. They also make a strong and positive contribution to the quality of their learning and have helped to maintain stability and continuity in relationships during changes to teaching staff.

67. Improving the quality of resources has been a high priority for the school since the last inspection. High focus has been placed on raising the quality of books. As a result of increased expenditure, resources in English (including literacy) and in mathematics (including numeracy) have substantially increased. Provision in the library and other areas of the curriculum is satisfactory and is recognised as in need of further development. The number of computers has risen in the last year and the school has identified an area of the library for development as an information communication technology suite. Resources have benefited from reorganisation; they are clearly labelled and are accessible throughout the school and in the classrooms.

68. In the past year, significant improvements have been made to the internal accommodation to raise the quality of the learning environment. Substantial refurbishment of many areas of the school has made them stimulating and well-maintained places for learning. They include the office areas, corridors, and outdoor play areas which provide attractive and imaginative centres of interest for young children. The nursery has been significantly improved through redecoration and refurbishment. Other areas have been identified for improvement in the school's asset management plan. The accommodation allows the curriculum to be taught effectively in most areas of the school. However, the rooms used by reception pupils are not generous in size, and the design of the building means that two of the reception classes are sometimes used as a thoroughfare. The outdoor play area for reception pupils is too small to be used continuously by the three classes and this limits pupils' access to outdoor learning. In addition, the children do not have regular access to large apparatus to develop their skills for adventurous play.

69. Since the last inspection the quality of financial planning has improved. The new headteacher and governing body have identified appropriate immediate priorities and have linked planned development with spending. As a result, although current financial planning is short term, the school's spending decisions have had a direct impact on improving the quality of education. Prudent financial management is reflected in improvements to the accommodation and learning resources, an increase in the number of support staff, and the creation of a new post of assistant headteacher to strengthen the senior management team. However, this well targeted spending has resulted in a low level of contingency funding. The school recognises that balances brought forward from one year to the next should be within acceptable limits. It is also aware that the already itemised costs of planned development, agreed by the headteacher and governing body, should be entered into the school development plan.

70. The governing body's finance committee meets regularly and discussions are guided by concise terms of reference and a detailed finance management policy, which sets out clear responsibilities and procedures for the administration of the school's finances. Good quality information ensures that committee members have a clear analysis of the school's current financial position. The budget is prepared by the headteacher and discussed by the committee before being approved by the full governing body. The principles of best value are understood satisfactorily; several quotations are obtained before any financial commitments are undertaken, and the committee is aware of the need to seek to achieve value for money.

71. Funds allocated to pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are appropriately spent, although the specific support for the needs of both groups of pupils is not at its normal level because of current staffing difficulties.

72. Financial control and administration are good. The day-to-day administration of income and expenditure is efficient and effective. This has been confirmed by the most recent audit of the school's finances, which took place in February 2001. This stated that 'the financial administration and financial management in the school is of a good standard' and did not recommend any issues for improvement.

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

73. The team recognises the good improvement to the quality of education made in the school in a short space of time and acknowledges that the school now needs time for new procedures to become fully embedded in day-to-day practice. The school should continue to implement the initiatives it has started in order to carry on raising standards. A long-term development plan should be devised to incorporate the current priorities and give emphasis to the following:

- Improve standards in writing by ensuring that:  
(*Paragraphs: 6, 23, 27, 97, 98 and 103*)
  - \* teachers' marking in all subjects identifies pupils' individual weaknesses precisely so that these can be corrected in the work that follows and;
  - \* pupils use in their own writing the skills they have learned in exercises.
- Improve the amount of specific, specialist support for pupils in the early stages of learning English.  
(*Paragraphs: 9, 28, 34, 60, 71, 75, and 77*)
- Devise strategies to recruit and retain suitably qualified and well trained permanent teaching staff.  
(*Paragraphs: 33, 42, and 59*)
- Improve pupils' rates of attendance and their punctuality.  
(*Paragraphs: 17, 18, 46, and 53*)

74. Other issues which should be considered by the school:

- Improve the outdoor facilities for pupils in the reception classes so that they have regular access to outdoor learning, including large apparatus, to enhance their physical development.  
(*Paragraphs: 68, 82*)

## **OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES**

### **Provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL)**

75. About half the pupils in the school are learning English as an additional language. Sixty-three pupils are at the early stages of development. The school's provision for these pupils is satisfactory at the moment. The support staff consists of a bi-lingual instructor who visits the school for one day per week. In addition, several non-teaching staff share a common language with the pupils. The deputy headteacher has taken over responsibility for co-ordinating the support of these pupils. He has a good level of expertise in this role but staffing difficulties elsewhere in the school have meant that much of his time at the start of term has been spent supporting new members of staff, in particular a succession of supply teachers. The post of part-time teacher has not been filled since the start of the academic year and this affects the amount of support that can be provided for pupils in the early stages of acquiring English.

76. Comprehensive procedures are in place to assess pupils' second language needs and a clear distinction is made between pupils who have language needs and those who may also have special educational needs. Special educational needs are well met but the specialised support to meet pupils' language needs is not available at present. A bilingual assistant and the deputy headteacher give satisfactory support to pupils in two of the Year 2 classes. Other pupils elsewhere in the school are supported as part of the whole class only. Although pupils in the early stages of learning English are making satisfactory progress, their learning could be accelerated with more specifically focused support. Pupils who have progressed beyond the early stages of English acquisition achieve well and make progress at a similar rate to that of their peers. To a large extent this reflects the school's previous level of provision for these pupils.

77. Class teachers are not completely aware of the full range of language needs of the identified pupils in their classes and therefore do not plan activities specifically with these pupils in mind. However, they provide good general support and extend pupils' responses as appropriate. Pupils are generally exposed to experiences and language as part of the whole class and they readily pick this up. Clear explanations from teachers, good role models of spoken English, and emphasis on learning new vocabulary all contribute to pupils' learning of English. However, not all classes display the same richness of language. Training for all staff in how to support pupils who speak English as an additional language is, rightly, planned for later this term.

78. The school is committed to the inclusion and integration of pupils with EAL needs in all school activities. All staff respect pupils' cultural background, and this is very helpful in developing pupils' confidence. Pastoral care is a high priority within the school, and the success can be observed in the confident way these pupils become happy members of the school community. Parental support is effectively sought. The translators and translations can be arranged if and when needed. The on-going interaction between school and home in supporting pupils' learning is well developed and is evident in the way that parents regularly share reading activities with their children at the start of the day.

79. Clear and useful formal 'whole school' procedures for monitoring the attainment and progress of all pupils are well developed in mathematics and becoming established in English. This information is used soundly. The school is beginning to analyse the test results of pupils who speak English as an additional language and to measure the relative progress of these pupils over time. There is scope for further use of such information to evaluate rates of progress and to set specific targets.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	63
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
<b>Number</b>	0	5	28	27	3	0	0
<b>Percentage</b>	0	8	44	43	5	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR–Y1
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	261
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	9	58

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR–Y1
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		84

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	160

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	45
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	58

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.1
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:	<b>Year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	<b>Total</b>
	2000	42	48	90

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	<b>Boys</b>	30	32	38
	<b>Girls</b>	42	44	43
	<b>Total</b>	72	76	81
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	<b>School</b>	80 (82)	84 (74)	90 (97)
	<b>National</b>	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	<b>Boys</b>	28	32	31
	<b>Girls</b>	43	41	40
	<b>Total</b>	71	73	71
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	<b>School</b>	79 (74)	81 (87)	79 (70)
	<b>National</b>	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	24
Black – other	7
Indian	20
Pakistani	8
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	11
White	96
Any other minority ethnic group	26

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

### Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	1	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes:****YR–Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	29

**Education support staff:****YR–Y2**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	145

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Financial information**

<b>Financial year</b>	<b>2000/2001</b>
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<b>£</b>
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Total income	732255.00
Total expenditure	728822.00
Expenditure per pupil	2479.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	24010.00
Balance carried forward to next year	27443.00

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out  
Number of questionnaires returned

310
59

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	81	19	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	39	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	42	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	41	7	0	5
The teaching is good.	67	29	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	37	2	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	24	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	23	2	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	68	25	7	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	71	27	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	26	2	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	29	19	0	9

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents are concerned about the disruption to their child's education which occurred both last academic year and at the start of this academic year, brought about by difficulties in recruiting teachers.



## **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**

80. There is a single intake of 52 children in the nursery in the September following their third birthday. All children attend part-time for either the morning or afternoon session. They are admitted to the three reception classes at the start of the school year following their fourth birthday. As the inspection took place early in the school year, most children in the reception classes were under five. Many children had only just started in the nursery or in full-time school in the reception classes. The three reception classes are each staffed with a full-time teacher and a classroom assistant, but at the time of the inspection one class was taught by the special needs co-ordinator, having been taught by a supply teacher since the beginning of term. There have been significant changes to the foundation stage. There is a new co-ordinator, with much experience and expertise to bring to the role.

81. Most children's attainment on entry to the nursery is low in all areas of learning. About half the children are learning to speak English as an additional language and some have speech difficulties. At this early stage of the year, the school is in the process of identifying pupils' specific needs. At present, there is no specialised additional support for pupils with special educational needs and for those in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Staff support these children soundly on a daily basis. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1, most children attain the early learning goals in the areas of creative and physical development. They achieve particularly well in personal, social and emotional development as a result of good teaching in this area, and are likely to attain most of the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. In communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and the knowledge and understanding of the world, children do not reach the expected standard, owing to their low starting point. These findings are not consistent with the previous inspection report of mainly satisfactory standards. This is due to the recent developments nationally in curriculum expectations for children in the early years of their education.

82. The foundation stage curriculum is well planned to provide a suitable range of experiences that are relevant, imaginative and enjoyable. The planning format has changed this year under the guidance of the new foundation stage co-ordinator. It broadly reflects all areas of learning, and in the reception classes it is extended to embrace and link with the work the children will encounter in Key Stage 1 in the literacy and numeracy strategies. Both nursery and reception teachers plan together effectively to provide a stimulating range of activities with clear learning outcomes. They outline their weekly and daily planning with suitable learning intentions for all areas of learning, and provide a balance of teacher-directed and children's self-initiated activities. However, the afternoon sessions in the reception classes are not as well focused as the morning sessions, which tend to be devoted to teaching literacy and numeracy skills. A good range of indoor resources is well organised and used effectively for all areas of learning, but the outdoor resources for the reception pupils are limited. In addition to the baseline assessments, there are procedures in place for assessing children on a day-to-day basis, in order to check and record their progress. However, these are not applied consistently by all teachers. As a result, not all the specific learning needs of children are planned for and met effectively.

83. The overall quality of teaching in the foundation stage is satisfactory. It was judged to be good in just under half the lessons in reception classes and unsatisfactory in one. Teaching is mostly good in the nursery class. The staff know how young children learn and they extend their responses sensitively. In the best lessons, teachers' expectations of work and behaviour are appropriately high and the tasks effectively match children's level of functioning and skill. The unsatisfactory lesson in a reception class failed to stimulate, challenge or engage children sufficiently, and little account was taken of what children could do already. Homework in the form of borrowing books is used particularly well to enhance children's progress throughout the foundation stage. The staff work very well as a team and support one another.

## **Personal social and emotional development**

84. Children enter the nursery with a low standard of personal, social and emotional skills. Teaching of this area of learning is good. Children are skilfully encouraged to develop their confidence and the ability to sit quietly and concentrate. This is evident in the nursery, where children are given regular opportunities to participate in activities, to listen to others, and to take turns at speaking in a familiar group, for example when sharing a book or refreshments. Children listen quietly, show respect for equipment and take turns fairly. For example, pupils were seen in the library handling books carefully and returning them to their correct places. Pupils in the nursery and reception classes settle down quickly and feel both happy and secure at school. In reception classes, during whole class activities and discussion, they are encouraged to always put their hands up and wait to be asked, for example when answering questions or discussing a story. Children are helped to form good relationships with others through many good opportunities to work as part of a group, independently, or with an adult.

85. By the time they leave the reception classes children have achieved most of the early learning goals in this area. This shows good achievement and reflects the skilful teaching of the staff. Children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve in a variety of learning situations. The staff act as good role models for the children and explain clearly what is expected of them. Some simple classroom rules are shared with all. Children listen and concentrate for a fair length of time and clearly understand set routines for both indoor and outdoor work; for example, they use resources such as scissors and glue with care and clear away the toys they have been playing with. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and are guided to behave sensibly at all times. They are building confidence to find their way around the school and take messages to other teachers. They are attentive and eager to learn, and enjoy sharing their work with any available adult. The teachers and classroom assistants manage children well, with very good relationships, and keep them purposefully occupied. The children's play and responses are supported and extended sensitively.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

86. When children first come to school many find it difficult to talk in sentences and to explain what they would like. Teaching is mostly satisfactory for this area of learning. All staff value children's efforts at communicating. There is effective teaching of basic skills such as speaking clearly or holding a pencil correctly. Children in the nursery are beginning to talk about their experiences and develop new vocabulary during discussions and social occasions, such as 'snack time', but their communication skills are limited overall. While some willingly talk about the aspects of their work, many give only one-word answers or none at all. The practice of parents sharing books with their children at the start of the day is effective in helping children to a love for books and in developing their ability to talk about pictures in the story books.

87. In the reception classes, children become more confident and learn to answer freely, although by the time they are ready to leave the reception classes some still find it hard to explain and to reason out loud. Some older children in the reception classes are gaining satisfactory control in developing early writing skills. They draw and paint with increasing control. By the end of the year a significant number write their own names unaided. Good progress is made when adults work in small groups or on a one-to-one basis to give children individual attention. The introduction of the literacy strategy is making a significant impact. Many children know some of the alphabet by the letter name and the initial sound. A few write strings of letters from memory. The children enjoy using the big books such as 'Where is My Teddy', and are given well-planned opportunities to develop new vocabulary as they collectively talk about pictures and focus on key words such as 'bear' and 'teddy'. Children like the imaginative play areas, for example the 'home-corner' or the 'three bears' house', which are well set up and used effectively to motivate talk. For example, during the week of inspection, children followed the traditional tales such as the 'Three Bears' and the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff'. The teachers carefully linked these stories to their teaching focus in all

the

main areas of learning, with role-play settings. Examples were the 'Bears' Cottage' or 'MacDonald's take away', where children initiate their own free play opportunities. Most adults use talk to a good effect and are active listeners. However, the practice of making daily observations of individual children and consistently building on what has already been achieved is inconsistent.

### **Mathematical Development**

88. A larger than average group of children do not reach the early learning goals in mathematics by the end of foundation stage, owing to the low start. Teaching is satisfactory. In the nursery, the adults give children opportunities in practical situations, such as counting milk cartons or other children. The story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' is used effectively to teach children the vocabulary of sizes, 'big', 'small' and 'medium'. A few children recognise basic shapes and gain some knowledge of capacity and weight from practical experiences with sand and water. In the reception classes, they learn about the properties of shapes, through playing the 'blindfold' game and counting the corners of shapes. They learn to make simple comparisons and use words such as 'bigger than', 'smaller than' and 'middle-size'. Some older children describe objects by position, shape, size, colour and quantity when working with large and small construction equipment. By the end of the reception year most children count and order accurately up to 10 and recognise numerals. Suitable opportunities are planned for children to write the number symbols correctly and to record simple 'sums'. The effective use of number rhymes and songs further enhances pupils' learning. However, most children have a limited knowledge and understanding of how to solve simple problems involving addition and subtraction, and in using vocabulary such as 'add one more' or 'take one away', 'how many altogether', and 'how many left'.

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

89. Most children enter the nursery having had few experiences of the wider world. Their lives are centred on their homes and families. Adults in the nursery support children's understanding satisfactorily. They give them opportunities to explore with everyday objects of interest in the home corner and play-kitchen, and help them to learn how children have grown since they were babies. Teachers plan activities to broaden the children's vocabulary and knowledge of things around them. Children work with sand, water and play-dough, and freely explore properties of malleable materials. They use paint and mix different colours, but most do not yet name basic colours correctly. Teaching is satisfactory. In the nursery, the teacher uses objects such as acorns, twigs and autumn leaves, collected by the children, to practise the related vocabulary. Activities such as planting bulbs and other plants are well organised.

90. Reception children further develop their knowledge and name the parts of a flower in their drawings. Most children confidently name the main parts of the body. Children use a variety of materials, such as paper and textiles and develop cutting, joining, folding and building skills. They have opportunities to build with construction materials, for example Lego and duplo, but they do not have sufficiently developed skills in asking questions to find out how things work. Most children show the developing computer skills expected for their age. They show increasing control in the use of the mouse, to move items on the screen. Adults intervene effectively in activities and encourage the children to explore new ideas. For example, children in one reception class were observed making gingerbread biscuits and carefully noting changes in the ingredients as they mixed them. This was because the teacher made good use of such questions as 'what does it feel like', or 'how could I change the shape', to prompt the children's responses.

## **Physical development**

91. The nursery has access directly to a spacious and secure play area with both hard and soft surfaces as well as a grass pitch. Reception classes have access to a very limited area with little room for wheeled toys. However, teachers carefully organise the outdoor activities and make best use of the current facility. Both nursery and reception classes have no fixed climbing frame for children's adventurous and imaginative play. In the main school hall children learn to be aware of space and develop co-ordination and control in movement. In their use of construction toys a significant number of pupils show reasonable hand and eye co-ordination. They are developing confidence in the use of different tools and joining materials such as sellotape and glue when making a 'colour collage'. Children select from a range of materials and use scissors carefully.

92. Teaching is satisfactory. Adults prepare well and provide calm and sensitive support. They have a sensitive awareness of children's safety. They have planned opportunities to use the good range of large and small outdoor resources such as bikes. In a lesson observed in the hall, the reception teacher successfully developed children's ability to listen and follow instructions, and improve body control and posture. By the end of the reception year, most children meet the expectations of the early learning goals in this area.

## **Creative Development**

93. Most children are on course to meet the expectations of early learning goals in this area of learning. They experiment with paint and use their observations and imagination to create pleasing results. They are given opportunities to explore colour and texture, and work with a range of materials such as textile and coloured stickers to create collage or paint pictures, for example the wall display of 'Three Billy Goats Gruff'. Support staff work closely with teachers and make positive contributions to children's learning. Sometimes, over-direction by the adult in the lesson limits children's ability to use their own imagination and work independently. Children sing and clap nursery rhymes and express pleasure in listening to music. One girl thought the jazz music 'cool!' The teachers ask relevant questions to extend the children's vocabulary, for example when they are painting and mixing colours. The children in reception are learning to explore colours and shapes when creating 'self-portraits'.

## **ENGLISH**

94. Standards at age seven are average in listening and reading but below average in speaking and writing. The range of attainment across the school is very wide. A few pupils enter the school with high attainment in English, but many more have low attainment or are at an early stage in learning English as an additional language. Nevertheless, pupils achieve well in comparison with their prior attainment.

95. Listening skills are satisfactory overall, because teachers have high expectations for attentiveness. Pupils generally behave well, though a few become restless when teaching is not energetic and does not actively involve them. Most pupils concentrate hard on what is said and follow instructions promptly and correctly. They are particularly responsive when stories are read well. Teachers make effective use of the good relationships in their classes to include all pupils in literacy hour discussions, though individuals have little time to develop their answers. At the early stage of the year when the inspection took place, few pupils in Year 2 were confident in speaking to the class at length in English or in other subjects. Most pupils have made satisfactory gains in confidence in responding to direct questions, though many speak too quietly and indistinctly.

96. Pupils make good progress in reading because books are well chosen for their high interest and clearly graded for difficulty. Enthusiasm for reading is evident in all years, and many parents give good support, some taking their children to local libraries. The ability to sound out new words to find their meaning is well taught, so that most pupils are able to read appropriate books

independently with good understanding by age seven. Some read aloud with dramatic expression, reflecting the good examples set by teachers at story time. Those with special needs or with English as an additional language are given close support and careful monitoring so that they build on success. Pupils with higher attainment understand how to find information in non-fiction books because more use is made of such books to support learning in other subjects than at the previous inspection.

97. Standards of handwriting and presentation were noted as a weakness in the previous report. There has been a good improvement and standards are now satisfactory. Writing is generally well formed and neatly presented. Some pieces are word-processed, and more frequent use is now made of the medium. Pupils learn to write for a good range of purposes and audiences. By age seven, they express their meaning clearly in personal accounts in English and other subjects, such as history and geography. Those with average attainment and above have a sound range of vocabulary in descriptions, and a good grasp of conventions of stories. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are given additional support so that they make satisfactory progress in expressing their meaning for real purposes. The writing programme includes a significant amount of study of grammar, and standards of accuracy in spelling, punctuation and sentence formation are satisfactory in specific exercises. However, such accuracy does not carry over sufficiently into pupils' free writing.

98. Errors in basic punctuation and in spelling common words are found more frequently than normal in the work of pupils in Year 2. Such errors affect the achievement of many pupils across the range of attainment. This indicates that they have not learned to apply their learning from exercises correctly or to check their work, with the result that some are not building up a solid enough base of accurate learning.

99. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching was good or better in almost two thirds of the lessons observed and satisfactory in the remainder. One lesson was very good. Teachers work together effectively to plan lessons in detail, using the appropriate targets from the official literacy framework. These targets are made clear to the class at the start so that lessons generally have a strong sense of purpose and a good pace. Shared texts are well chosen for their appeal and quality of language. Teachers are generally skilled at reading aloud, using different voices for the characters, often to the great delight of the class. Interaction with pupils is generally brisk, with the intention of involving and challenging all to learn and remember.

100. Features of language, such as phonics patterns, are well taught, using a good range of techniques to reinforce learning. For instance, pupils are keen to use their mini-boards to try out spellings and compete to be first to answer. In a Year 1 class, pupils for whom English is an additional language were well supported by the teacher's careful pronunciation of key words. This was followed by very effective use of a puppet who needed reminding about how to sound out his words.

101. Tasks given to groups of pupils are generally well matched to their different levels of need and ability. Nevertheless, instances were observed of such a wide variety of tasks in reading, writing, speaking and listening that it was difficult for the teacher to ensure the quality of pupils' learning. By contrast, lessons with fewer, more closely focused tasks, especially on improving standards in writing, were more easily organised and monitored, and more appropriate for the needs of most pupils. It is a good feature of planning that the role of teaching support assistants and other adults is clearly set out. This strengthens the teamwork so that all adults play a full part in supporting individuals and groups during lessons, and supported pupils make successful progress as a result. Some groups lack confidence in working independently and need more support in the form of guidelines and word lists, with the occasional brief visit by an adult to redirect their efforts. Only rarely were pupils seen using word lists and dictionaries as they wrote and checking their work for accuracy before handing it in.

102. The final review at the end of lessons varies in quality. In some instances, opportunities are missed to develop pupils' speaking skills or to reinforce their learning of language targets. By contrast, a good feature of a Year 2 lesson was the careful review of examples of the writing of one group, with the class helping to spot what could be improved. The writers concerned then had the chance to make corrections for themselves, so benefiting from the improvements suggested.

103. In marking, teachers respond sensitively to pupils' ideas, give encouragement, and identify some weaknesses needing attention. However, much of the impact is lost because pupils are not routinely required to do corrections or follow-up work. In some cases, teachers' marking in other subjects ignores literacy errors, and expectations for accuracy are not consistent.

104. The subject is well managed and has a high profile in the life of the school. The National Literacy Strategy is securely in place, so that lessons are well structured. The new co-ordinator has monitored teaching to support colleagues, and the quality of teaching is significantly better than noted at the previous inspection. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and improving, as pupils' work is monitored and analysed more closely against agreed criteria. There remains a need for more detailed procedures for assessing progress in speaking and listening, and for monitoring the accuracy of pupils' writing. Resources for teaching are good. Particularly effective work has been done in improving the quality of reading books and grading them for difficulty. The initiative to involve parents in reading with their children, at home and in class before school each day, is proving very successful in raising interest in books. The co-ordinator for the library has carried out a rigorous review of its stock, resulting in a considerable pruning of out-dated books. The school recognises that there is now a need to build up the collection of non-fiction and bi-lingual books. Books and all forms of the printed word are attractively displayed in corridors and classrooms. To raise pupils' interest and enjoyment, the curriculum is imaginatively extended through an exciting range of special events and visiting authors, illustrators, storytellers and theatre groups.

## **MATHEMATICS**

105. Good provision is made for mathematics, and pupils make good progress. Pupils attain the standards expected for their ages in numeracy and all aspects of mathematics. Test results indicate a rise in standards. This has been achieved through improved teaching skills, which were previously weak, and through structured programmes for all pupils. Standards in number work are a particular strength in both year groups.

106. In Year 1, pupils are familiar with numbers up to 20. They count confidently forwards and backwards, and recognise numerals. They recognise groups of objects quickly, and sort them appropriately by size, colour and shape. They are beginning to understand how to combine two sets of numbers to make another number. For example, in one lesson, pupils were working with dominoes to identify the number of dots on each side. They were able to count each set, and combine them in a simple sum, orientating numbers and showing understanding of simple addition. Higher attaining pupils were able to find several different ways of making the number '8', and showed good understanding that the position of a digit in the number 15, for example, gave its value. Almost all pupils in Year 1 can count along a number line to 10, and most pupils can order numbers beyond 10. A few are confident with numbers to 100.

107. Evidence from past work shows that pupils can describe and make simple two-dimensional shapes and undertake practical activities in which they investigate measures. For example, they have used non-standard measures to find out which is the heavier, a potato or a crayon. They have estimated the length of different items by saying which they think is longer or shorter, and they have explored different containers to see which one takes the most liquid. Almost all pupils in Year 1 achieve standards that are appropriate to their age, although there is a significant minority achieving below expected standards, and a small minority who achieve above their expected level by the end of the year.

108. In Year 2, many pupils have secure knowledge of two and three-digit numbers, and work confidently with numbers to 100 to solve simple problems. For example, in several lessons, pupils were required to find a number 'between' two given two-digit numbers. They worked confidently with a partner to find the answers. They are able to choose the appropriate operation to calculate answers, and benefit from good structured teaching, which helps them to learn in a systematic way. Pupils of lower attainment, and those with special educational needs, benefit from good support as they work towards their tasks. They work with lower numbers but carry out similar activities to those of their higher attaining peers. Pupils in Year 2 know many of the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes, and they use standard and non-standard measures accurately. For example, evidence in books shows that pupils are able to measure given lines with a ruler, weigh simple items, and measure liquids. The highest attaining pupils use appropriate notation for amounts of money over one pound. There is evidence of all pupils undertaking simple data collections, and effectively using computers to portray their results. Pupils in Year 2 are achieving broadly average standards in relation to their age, with a small minority attaining above average. There is also evidence that a significant minority will attain just below average standards.

109. The quality of both teaching and learning in mathematics is always good. It has improved significantly since the last inspection. Analysis of pupils' work shows that there is a consistency in the content of work completed, and that appropriate demands are made of pupils in both year groups. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has been effective and is having a positive impact on standards. A major strength of the provision is the consistent planning for the three-part lesson which ensures that pupils' skills are developed and consolidated regularly. This promotes good achievement and good gains in learning. Teachers work well together to plan their lessons. Good quality resources are shared effectively and are well used to motivate pupils and keep them on task. The good use of teaching assistants ensures that lower attaining pupils, and those with special needs, are able to access the lessons at their own ability levels. This helps them to make equally good progress. In the best lessons teaching is lively and supportive. Teachers model and demonstrate tasks so that pupils are clear about what they have to do. Effective strategies, such as putting simple actions to counting activities, are used to keep pupils on task and maintain their concentration. Occasionally the pace of lessons dips when there is too much turn taking which leaves other pupils waiting for too long, and they become restless or impatient.

110. Plenary sessions are generally well used to help remind pupils about their learning and to further consolidate skills. The practical approach to learning in numeracy lessons is a major strength, and ensures that pupils enjoy lessons and look forward to them. Numeracy skills are beginning to be employed in subjects such as science, design and technology and information and communications technology, but in a few classes this area of mathematics is not sufficiently promoted. Assessment is consistently and well used to improve standards.

111. Mathematics is well led. Many improvements have taken place in the past two years, and improved monitoring and training are having a positive impact on the development of the subject. Analysis of test data has enabled specific areas for improvement to be targeted. This has led to the introduction of a computer-based mathematics programme for all pupils in Year 2, so that they develop their skills in a structured and progressive way. Systems for assessing what pupils know and understand are good. Regular monitoring of standards helps teachers to identify any weaknesses. Data for tracking pupils' progress over time is very good and is a strength of the provision.

## **SCIENCE**

112. The standards seen during inspection are close to the national average. This represents a marked improvement over the unsatisfactory standards reported at the last inspection. The analysis of pupils' work and observations made during lessons indicate that most pupils achieve well, owing to a greater emphasis on investigative science. This is leading to a particular increase in pupils' enquiry skills and ability to record what they find independently. However, pupils do not receive enough



guidance on how to record their work efficiently and present their findings systematically. The achievements of pupils of different gender and those with English as an additional language are consistent. Pupils with special educational needs achieve appropriate levels as a result of focused support based on carefully identified needs.

113. Younger pupils in the key stage are beginning to make more detailed observations as they explore circuits and learn to make a bulb light. A range of experiments leads pupils to acquire a secure understanding of materials and their properties. They carry out investigations to develop the use and awareness of senses, for example when Year 1 pupils learnt to use their senses to explore materials such as sand, water and play dough. They learn the difference between 'pull' and 'stretch' as they work with play dough, and observe the change in cotton wool as they dip it in the coloured water. Pupils clearly enjoy science and are excited by it. Most pupils are learning to work collaboratively and share resources and ideas. However, in some lessons, due to weaknesses in the management and organisation, they become excessively noisy and this affects the quality of their learning.

114. In Year 2, most pupils explain with increasing confidence what they believe the outcome of a test will be, for example when testing 'what makes a difference to the speed of a car?' In this lesson pupils showed a mature approach to their work and acted responsibly. This was because of good planning and the clear expectations for work and behaviour set by the teacher. Most pupils observe and record with understanding, using the format provided. Many begin to offer well-informed, reasoned explanations of what they observe. They record and express what they have found out through their tests, investigations and observations. Most pupils confidently question what might happen and predict outcomes. They are keen to offer ideas, and understand the need to control the conditions to give a fair test. They also study the parts of a human body and recognise that in order to keep alive and stay healthy a human being needs good diet, exercise and sleep. Most higher attaining pupils are developing good use of scientific vocabulary. They can compare and describe findings and facts, and make appropriate use of charts, diagrams and pictures.

115. The school has worked hard to improve the coverage of all aspects of science, through careful planning based on the nationally recommended schemes of work and guidance in the subject. The quality of assessment and the recording practice in the subject has also improved. Investigations in science are recorded with accompanying progress notes through the year. However, the use of information technology to support learning in the subject is less well developed.

116. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good features but some weaknesses. Planning identifies an appropriate sequence of activities with clear objectives. Resources are used effectively to support learning. In the best lessons, teachers' knowledge of the subject and scientific understanding are good. Their planning is suitably informed by ongoing assessment of pupils' progress. They use a variety of styles and techniques and encourage pupils to think independently. Most teachers use probing and open-ended questions to elicit fuller response, prompt further inquiry and provide challenge. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher's explanations and use of demonstration encouraged pupils to apply the notion of a 'fair' test and successfully test their hypothesis that 'the higher the ramp, the faster the car'. In this lesson, pupils of all abilities achieved success and reached conclusions for themselves. However, teaching was unsatisfactory in a lesson in each year group. This was because the common planning, which is shared within the year group, was not adapted well enough to meet the needs of the class, and the teachers did not have a secure enough understanding of what they were trying to get pupils to learn. Most teachers regularly mark pupils' work and praise good effort. Their good-humoured management of pupils and constructive relationships encourage effective learning.

117. The planned curriculum meets statutory requirements and is broad and balanced. The subject is led with clear educational direction. The co-ordinator has monitored standards of attainment and the quality of teaching to identify what needs to be improved. There are sound procedures for assessing pupils' work, but this assessment does not effectively relate to the National Curriculum levels, and teachers do not consistently use the information to guide their planning. Resources are adequate and generally well organised, with an appropriate range of

reference books and pictures to support pupils' learning.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

118. The standards of work seen during inspection are similar to those expected for pupils' ages. This judgement is similar to that made at the time of the last inspection. However, several improvements have been made since then; there is a clear policy for teaching art and design, a new scheme of work is being implemented, art skills are taught specifically, and pupils do not spend so much time working without direction from adults.

119. Some recent work using ICT in Year 1 shows that pupils are developing a growing awareness of design. They have 'painted' pictures using an art package and designed some patterns using the 'stamp tool'. Work on using pencil and charcoal to make different types of marks to create texture gives a clear indication that drawing skills are being taught well. There are many examples of well-observed work in the drawings of faces, flowers and objects on display around the school and in pupils' past work. There is also evidence, within displays, that art is often used as a vehicle for other subjects.

120. Teaching is satisfactory. During the inspection, the two lessons seen were well prepared and planned to build effectively on pupils' previous experiences. In practice, one was more effective than the other. This was reflected in the teacher's own experience of the subject, in the quality of the feedback to pupils as they worked, and in the management of pupils. In both lessons, pupils responded positively to the activities. They developed their skills in colour mixing and began, by trial and error, to match the paint to the colour of their skin. Several interesting conversations were overheard as pupils discussed together how to make the paint lighter or darker. The majority took pleasure in their efforts and gained a measure of success. All pupils were fully involved in the practical activities and behaved well. Most pupils worked carefully when adding paint and, despite the cramped conditions, there were no accidents and no spillages. The organisation and management of painting lessons is made harder for teachers by the absence of a sink and running water in the classrooms. As a result, adults do much of the tidying and washing up, which prevents pupils from practising these valuable skills.

121. The breadth of activities within the curriculum is satisfactory. Evidence of past work includes work in both two and three dimensions and the use of a good range of media. Teachers' past planning includes work on colour mixing, textiles using stitching, weaving with a variety of materials, collage, sculpture and drawing. This gives sound evidence of pupils using a range of materials and exploring ideas. There is evidence, too, of pupils evaluating their own work and that of others in an end-of-unit assessment. Lessons are now more focused so that skills are taught systematically and pupils do not spend time working unsupervised as they did at the time of the last inspection

122. The co-ordinator is new to the role in school and has had a limited influence on the subject as yet. However, she has plenty of ideas about how to develop art and design and these have been identified in the action plan. The intention is to develop more cross-curricular links and to enrich the curriculum by broadening pupils' experiences with, for example, visits to galleries.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

123. No lessons of design and technology were seen during the week of the inspection, but scrutiny of pupils' work, including their designs, models and evaluations around the school, shows broadly average standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

124. Standards in both year groups are in line with those expected of pupils of the same age. There is evidence that pupils in Year 1 have undertaken a project to make a card with moving parts. They worked from a design brief to plan, design, make and evaluate their own card. They showed evidence of how they identified the material needed, and they drew simple pictures of what their own moving part would look like. They used card and paper and simple mechanisms to create

'sliders'

and 'levers'. They use their technology skills in a range of other subjects. For example, there is evidence that they have made three-dimensional houses and other buildings as part of a history topic on the Great Fire of London.

125. In Year 2, pupils have worked on a project to create a mechanism that 'winds up'. They have selected the most appropriate tools and materials for their own project, and can explain their choices. The finished models show a variety of ideas, resources and plans. Evaluations identify areas for improvement. There is evidence that pupils across the year group have generated their own ideas, putting together different materials, assembling, and joining with simple techniques. Drawn plans show that pupils are beginning to use appropriate technical vocabulary, such as 'cog', 'wheel', 'axle', as they design their models. They have also made a range of puppets using different textures and materials, and show pride in the finished items.

126. The quality of teachers' planning is satisfactory. Teachers plan their lessons from the established scheme of work to ensure that a broad and balanced range of activities is in place. Planning clearly indicates the specific skill that will be taught. Finished items show how pupils have improved their designs and show evidence of at least satisfactory gains in learning. End-of-module assessment of pupils' skills ensures that teachers know what pupils have learned, and enables them to adjust future planning to cater for specific difficulties.

127. Responsibility for co-ordinating the subject has recently been allocated to a new member of staff who has yet to make an impact. However, the headteacher has maintained a clear overview of the development of the subject and ensured that provision is appropriate. There is little evidence of monitoring, either of teaching or of standards, but plans are rightly in place to do this. Resources are generally adequate and the organisation of teaching into modules ensures that a high level of input over the period improves standards.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

128. Standards are satisfactory overall, with the work of most pupils reaching the expected level by the end of Year 2. Standards have improved since the previous inspection, when pupils were judged to be making unsatisfactory progress. The curriculum is now based on national guidelines so that all pupils are given appropriate work to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in the required elements of the programme of study. They record their understanding in a variety of ways, including writing, drawings and maps. This ensures that all pupils are fully involved and make satisfactory progress, including those with special needs and those who have English as an additional language.

129. Pupils in Year 1 use an atlas to follow the travels of Barnaby Bear around the world, looking at pictures of famous landmarks and typical features of major countries. They identify the main features seen on a walk around the locality. Most pupils are able to draw features such as the different types of housing on their route, and those with higher attainment describe in writing what they have seen. Such fieldwork is extended in Year 2, when many pupils produce good sketch maps of the area around the school and extensive tallies of the different vehicles that have passed. Current map work in Year 2 shows that many pupils have paid good attention to the detail of street signs and symbols identified in photographs of the locality. Stories set in a Scottish island are used to create a contrasting setting, and pupils successfully identify differences in scenery, life-styles and peoples' roles as compared with their own experience.

130. The standard of teaching was satisfactory in the three lessons seen. Lessons are well planned and appropriately resourced so that pupils at all levels of attainment are actively involved in discussion and practical work. Teachers give clear instructions and manage activities firmly. The tasks that pupils carry out are stimulating, and matched to different levels of attainment so that all are able to achieve success. Pupils show interest in stories, maps and photographs. They work

well together in pairs or groups and sustain concentration. At the end of the lesson, teachers question pupils effectively to check on their understanding and encourage more careful thought. Occasional homework tasks enable parents to help their children, for instance when Year 1 pupils list features they see on their route to school.

131. Management of the subject is satisfactory, though staff shortages mean that there is presently an acting coordinator. All aspects of provision have recently been reviewed, and teachers in each year group plan together to ensure consistency. Resources are satisfactory, though the school is aware of a shortage of computer software for the subject. Effective use is made of visits into the local community and further afield, to give pupils practical experience in applying their knowledge and skills. The study of fiction and non-fiction books and the writing of factual accounts make a good contribution to the promotion of literacy skills. Attractive displays around the school celebrate pupils' work and highlight features of other cultures.

## **HISTORY**

132. History was not timetabled during the inspection, but examples of pupils' work from last year indicate that standards are satisfactory at the end of Year 2. All pupils make satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Standards have improved since the previous inspection, when pupils were making unsatisfactory progress. The improvement has come about because planning is now based on national guidelines, ensuring systematic coverage of all elements of the subject through the school.

133. Pupils in Year 1 study household objects and toys from the past and compare them with their modern equivalents, developing a clear sense of what has changed over time in the context of their own families and everyday life. Other practical work includes studying changes in the area round the school. Pupils in Year 2 project well into the lives of people in distant times through imaginative writing, such as their eyewitness accounts of the Fire of London. They study the lives of famous people, such as Florence Nightingale, and clearly explain their contribution to society. Work seen is consistently well presented, showing interest and involvement in the topic concerned. No lessons were seen, so a secure judgement cannot be made on the quality of teaching.

134. There is a satisfactory temporary arrangement for the management of the subject. The curriculum is well planned to ensure a smooth progression in skills and understanding, and provision is guided by a satisfactory assessment procedure. There are sound links with other subjects, particularly geography. Visits to sites of historic interest are well planned to extend pupils' knowledge and enjoyment. The subject makes a good contribution to their cultural development.

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

135. Provision for information and communications technology has improved since the last inspection. Plans are established to further improve provision by creating a new suite with enough resources for a whole class to work together, so increasing the time that each pupil can use a computer.

136. Standards across Key Stage 1 are satisfactory. In Year 1, pupils show their knowledge and skill by explaining how to create a picture on the computer. They use technical vocabulary to explain which tools they need to use, and a small minority demonstrates to the others what they have to do. The lack of sufficient systems inhibits higher achievement. Pupils share and take turns, but this limits their 'hands on' experience. They show that they can make choices, and talk about their work with enthusiasm. They are in line to achieve average standards by the end of the year.

137. In Year 2, pupils are beginning to enter, save and retrieve their work. They are using information and communication technology to work with text, and word processing skills are

developing appropriately. Sensitive and helpful support from staff encourages pupils' progress. They are beginning to find out how to process text. For example, in one lesson, pupils were trying to produce 'capitals' in their text. With careful prompting from the teacher, they were able to succeed

and then explain to others how they had achieved it. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 can explain the function of the cursor, and know how to increase their text size. Almost all pupils know what the 'return' key is for, and understand basic word processing functions.

138. In the three lessons seen, the quality of teaching and learning in the subject was satisfactory overall, with many good features. Teachers support pupils well, and encourage them to try new things. They emphasise the need to 'try' things out without putting pressure on pupils to succeed. This fosters confidence and positive relationships. Pupils are valued, and this ensures that they enjoy lessons and are keen to try. Teachers' skills are good, with some very good knowledge evident. Initial demonstrations to the class are of good quality, and clear explanations are given to ensure that pupils understand their tasks. Pupils are well managed and organised so that they take turns over the week to complete the set task. Satisfactory assessment of skill development is a feature in lessons, and this is having a positive impact on standards. However, teachers do not use information and communications technology enough within other subjects. This reduces the amount of learning that takes place.

139. Leadership of information and communications technology is very new. The new co-ordinator has quickly established some good plans to ensure improvements in resource and standards. Plans are rightly in place to increase resources significantly. Effective monitoring of teachers' plans has improved the content of the subject, and ensured consistency across year groups. Staff training planned for the future has been timed to coincide with the arrival of the new resources. This is a good strategy to ensure that the provision for the subject continues to improve. The main weakness in the provision for information and communications technology is its lack of use in support of other subjects. This is closely linked to the lack of resources, and it hampers pupils' understanding of the importance of the subject and its impact in the modern world.

## **MUSIC**

140. The school has recently established a new initiative in music, with part-time specialist music teaching. This is working well and is ensuring that standards are appropriate in relation to pupils' ages. It is a positive feature of the provision.

141. Standards seen in lessons were satisfactory. The recent addition of a music specialist has improved the provision and ensures that all aspects of music are well planned. Pupils are learning to use their voices to make a range of high and low sounds. They have limited ability to control their voices, but are able to recognise the difference in sounds and are beginning to explore how sounds can be made. A few pupils in Year 2 are able to follow a simple score to raise and lower their voices, as the teacher points to the instruction sheet. The listening skills of some pupils are weak and they find it difficult to listen to music and to instructions. Because of this, their ability to identify simple repeated patterns is limited. Others do this well. For example, pupils in one class in Year 2 were able to make a simple pattern for their peers to sing. They achieved this well and worked hard to improve their own work. This particular class also listened well to a piece of music, commenting appropriately on it and achieving good standards.

142. The quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory. Good teaching was seen during the inspection. Pupils are being taught to use their voices, make music and listen, and evaluate their work. Some exciting opportunities are created for pupils to compose their own sounds. For example, pupils were observed using simple instruments to create a tune for others to copy or answer. Their different interpretations were valued, and they worked hard to improve their compositions. In another lesson, the behaviour of pupils hindered their learning. Because they failed to listen and were restless and excited, standards dropped; they were not able to learn effectively, because their response to the activities was inappropriate.

143. Music provision is in transition and there is currently no co-ordinator to lead the subject forward. However, the headteacher has a clear overview of the needs of the subject, and recent improvements in provision are improving standards. Plans are in place to increase both the quantity and quality of resources. Effective use is made of the hall for music lessons, allowing pupils the space for pupils to create their own compositions.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

144. Standards are average in Key Stage 1. This is a similar picture to the one at the time of the last inspection. There are no significant differences in the standards of boys and girls or among pupils from different ethnic groups.

145. Pupils are keen and enthusiastic about physical activity, and their behaviour is good. The poor behaviour witnessed at the last inspection was not evident. Pupils maintain a good level of physical effort through the long gymnastics lessons and recognise the effect such exercise has on their bodies. They are developing a satisfactory awareness of space, for example when travelling around the hall during the warm up activity. Although some pupils in Year 1 initially had difficulty holding a balance, they improved rapidly during the lesson, with practice and well-focused direction from their teacher. As the lesson progressed they were able to show various positions and they began to challenge and extend themselves. Pupils in Year 2 are learning to be creative in finding different ways of travelling around the hall and have reasonable ways of linking movements into a sequence. Pupils are, in the main, confident. Additional staff carefully monitor pupils with special educational needs, or those who are less confident, and give encouragement and support as required, so that pupils can take part.

146. In the four lessons seen, teaching was at least satisfactory and had several good features. Lessons are well planned and follow a detailed scheme of work that builds up pupils' skills in a systematic and sequential way, both during lessons and over a period of time. A consistently strong feature is the careful attention to health and safety and this helps pupils to be aware of the need for self-discipline. They are well trained to listen carefully to, and follow, teachers' clear instructions. This helps to ensure that lessons are conducted in a calm and purposeful atmosphere which reinforces safety principles successfully. Pupils learn to carry large apparatus correctly and work together co-operatively.

147. Teachers help pupils to think about the quality of their movements and they give good feedback to individual pupils about their body positions or performance of sequences. Teachers make good use of pupils to demonstrate their expectations to others and to reinforce the teaching of skills. This ensures that all pupils, including those learning English as an additional language, understand what they have to do, and pupils' participation levels are high. However, a weakness is that teachers do not always say why a pupil's performance is good and this misses opportunities to extend and challenge pupils' performance further. Pupils watch others with interest but teachers give them limited opportunities to evaluate one another's ideas and performances or to reflect on their own. In Year 2, the arrangement of apparatus was similar to that for Year 1, and this imposes limitations on teachers' ability to provide a greater level of physical challenge for older pupils.

148. Just one outdoor lesson was observed, because of inclement weather. From the beginning of this academic year, pupils do not have the opportunity for a games lesson if it rains. Outdoor lessons are short in contrast to indoor lessons, which extend for a full hour. In the one outdoor lesson seen, pupils practised and improved their skills in throwing and catching, but time limitations meant that there was little opportunity to develop these skills fully or begin to use them in small competitive situations. The school needs to monitor this situation to check how often pupils miss games activities because of bad weather, and to evaluate the impact of this organisation on opportunities for pupils to develop, practise and apply games skills



149. The subject is led soundly. Staff have had some training to help them implement the new scheme of work, which ensures a satisfactory breadth of activities within the curriculum and the progressive development of skills over time. The subject action plan identifies further training for teachers as a priority. There are no after-school activities to enhance the sports provision but the 'Physical Fun Day' in the summer term helps to put pupils' skills into practice.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

150. It was possible to observe only a limited number of religious education lessons. Additional evidence was gathered from interviews with staff and pupils about their work, and an examination of teachers' planning and the displays around the school. The lesson observations and the interview with Year 2 pupils show that attainment in oral work is in line with that expected by the Agreed Syllabus. In Year 1, pupils talk about 'good life' and the importance of behaving well at all times. In Year 2 pupils discuss the moral in the story of Abu Bakre and Bilal, and relate the idea of 'helping others' to their own lives. They are developing understanding of the story and its characters, and increasing knowledge of the important elements of Islam. Pupils with personal experience of Islam willingly contribute to discussions and form a very good response to the story.

151. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 have good knowledge of their own religion and most display good understanding of the concept of belonging to a community, with a specific focus on the family. The younger pupils begin to develop their own ideas about appropriate personal responses to right and wrong by looking at events in their own lives. Most pupils' understanding of Christianity is largely confined to facts about festivals such as Christmas and Easter. Year 2 pupils know the story of Christmas and a few aspects of Christianity. They know that a church is a special place where prayers are said and that 'The Bible' is a special book of prayers. Pupils have some knowledge of the festivals of other religions, such as Diwali, Yom Kippur or Eid. Most are beginning to link this knowledge to other religions of the world with the idea that God is worshipped in different ways by different faith communities.

152. In the lessons observed, the teachers successfully related the subject matter to pupils' experiences and valued their contributions. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Discussions with pupils indicate that their attitudes and responses to learning are consistently positive. They listen carefully when a story is told or information is given. This was evident in Year 2 lessons. Teachers use appropriate methods to illustrate the main idea and focus pupils' attention. For example, the use of group discussions around simple questions, with reporting back to the rest of the class, was effective in reinforcing pupils' learning. Pupils behave very well and respond to questions with confidence. Most pupils show a positive willingness to talk about and share their personal experiences. Teachers' planning has improved since the last inspection, ensuring that pupils develop a sufficiently broad understanding of religious traditions and beliefs. There is an agreed approach to recording and assessing the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding through saving a sample of work each term. However, teachers do not plan future lessons based on what pupils have already achieved.

153. The teaching of religious education makes only a limited contribution to pupils' literacy skills. Discussions and questioning support pupils' listening and speaking skills, but pupils are not encouraged to record their knowledge by writing their own simple accounts. The new co-ordinator is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, but has had little opportunity to monitor the quality of planning and work in the classrooms so far. Resources are generally sufficient and include a small number of multicultural artefacts and books about other religions of the world. There are some opportunities to invite visitors from other religions to talk to pupils, and visits to other places of worship are planned for this term.