

INSPECTION REPORT

FAIRFIELD INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Buxton

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112699

Headteacher: Mrs S Coackley

Reporting inspector: Mr C Kessell
20695

Dates of inspection: 15th – 18th May 2000

Inspection number: 220325

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bench Road Fairfield Buxton
Postcode:	SK17 7PQ
Telephone number:	01298 22441
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Stuart Percival
Date of previous inspection:	December 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Names of team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Chris Kessell Registered inspector	Information technology Physical education	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? The school's results and achievements. How well is the school led and managed?
Susan Dixon Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Sharon Brown Team inspector	English Music Religious education	Equal opportunities English as an additional language Special educational needs
Trevor Neat Team inspector	Art Design and technology Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Carolyn Powell Team inspector	Geography History Science Areas of learning for children under five	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school caters for children aged from 3 to 7 and has 202 full-time pupils and 104 part-time pupils in the nursery. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. There are no pupils speaking English as an additional language and all pupils come from white ethnic backgrounds. The number of pupils identified, as having special educational needs is average. Attainment of pupils when they start school is below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school which provides a friendly, caring environment for its pupils and achieves appropriate standards in the majority of its work. Most pupils are keen to learn and teaching is satisfactory. The school is well managed by the headteacher. There is a commitment by the headteacher and governors to improve standards. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The provision for the pupils' moral and social development is good.
- The governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The headteacher provides good leadership.
- School resources and staff expertise is used well to benefit the pupils.
- Pupils are well managed by the teachers and behaviour is good.
- Resources in the community are used well to develop the pupils' learning.
- The parents' views of the school are good. They are actively involved in the life of the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics are below expectations.
- Progress and pupils' learning in music are unsatisfactory.
- The use of assessment to monitor pupils' progress and plan future work is a weakness.
- The pace of some lessons and the use of time does not help pupils' progress.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection in December 1997. There are no longer any serious weaknesses. The quality of teaching has improved through good monitoring arrangements. A curriculum framework has been developed and procedures for curriculum planning have been put into place. The curriculum is now well monitored by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators. Although assessment procedures have been introduced, these need further development. The provision for children under five has improved significantly, although liaison between the Nursery and Reception is not effective enough. The key issues in the previous inspection for governors have been appropriately addressed.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	C	C	C	A
Writing	C	A	B	A
Mathematics	E	D	D	C

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

Results of the 1999 national tests indicated that standards in reading were average, in writing above average and below average in mathematics. However, when compared with schools of a similar nature, standards were well above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Evidence from inspection would indicate that current standards are average in English and science but below average in mathematics. Standards in information technology and religious education are also average. Although attainment in mathematics is still below average and standards are not high enough, the school is working hard to improve this situation. Since the previous inspection standards have improved in writing and mathematics. Although standards in English are average overall, the pupils' speaking and listening skills are below average. The school is still in the process of developing targets for pupils.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy their time at school and approach lessons and activities with enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is good and is a strength of the school.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships through the school are good. The pupils enjoy being given responsibility. Personal development is satisfactory.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Pupils are very positive. Personal development could be developed further.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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.

Although teaching is judged to be satisfactory overall, 37% of teaching is good or better. 6% of teaching is unsatisfactory; this is an improvement on the previous inspection. Although pupils make satisfactory progress overall the pace of some lessons could be better. Some of the higher attaining pupils do not make enough progress. The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory with literacy and numeracy skills being taught appropriately. However, in some lessons teachers need to have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. This would encourage pupils to be more productive. Where teaching is good, pupils' learning is more effective.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school offers a broad range of learning opportunities and there are effective strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. However, less than the recommended time is allocated to the curriculum and there is no policy for the teaching of personal and social education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs benefit from clear systems that are in line with the national Code of Practice. All individual education plans are reviewed regularly.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school's provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Moral and social education are both good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has good arrangements to look after its pupils.

Fairfield Infant and Nursery School takes good care of its pupils. Parents think the school is welcoming and that they are well informed about school life.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by the deputy headteacher. Literacy and numeracy are well managed; however, there is some inconsistency in the management of other subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very supportive of the school. Governors have a good understanding of their responsibilities and know the school well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Data and assessment information could be used more effectively by the school. However, the school is looking to improve and move forward.
The strategic use of resources	Staff and resources are used appropriately. However, time is not always managed well.

The school has an appropriate number of suitably qualified teachers. The accommodation is in a poor decorative state although displays of pupils' work do enhance the school building. There is a programme of improvements in place to develop the environment of the

school. Learning resources for the pupils are satisfactory. The school and governors are always striving to achieve best value for money.

The curriculum and teaching are well monitored. This is beginning to have an impact on the quality of teaching, pupils' learning and standards.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff are supportive and parents are welcomed into the school.• The children in the Nursery make good progress.• There are good social activities for pupils and parents.• Parents are able to approach the school with questions or a problem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework that the pupils receive.• The activities that the school provides outside lessons.

The above views are taken from the pre-inspection meeting that was attended by 14 parents and from the 66 responses to the parents' questionnaire. Evidence from inspection supports the parents' positive views. The school does not have a homework policy and the present provision for homework is unstructured and inconsistent. The activities that the school provides outside lessons are satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1 Pupils enter the school with attainment being below average. The children's mathematical development is well below average when they start school. This is confirmed by the school's baseline assessment and inspection findings. The children make good progress in their personal and social development and achieve standards that are in line with those found nationally. Relationships are good and the children behave well. The younger children take turns during play activities and those in the Reception classes concentrate and listen well during literacy and numeracy. All of the children are aware of the various routines in their classrooms. The children's language skills are developed effectively with satisfactory progress being made in speaking and listening and good progress in the others areas of language development. Children enjoy role play and listening to stories, but many of the Reception pupils have limited opportunities to develop their speaking. Books are handled appropriately and some of the older children are able to write simple words and phrases in their writing books without support. Overall, standards in literacy are similar to those found nationally by the time the children are five. Progress in mathematics is very good, with the children reaching appropriate standards. Children in the Nursery play number games to develop their mathematical understanding and Reception children practise counting to thirty and recognise simple two-dimensional shapes. They experience the addition and subtraction of numbers. Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They use the computer to support other areas of learning and manage the keyboard and mouse well. Children in the Nursery operate a cassette recorder without assistance while Reception children place past events in order by looking at photographs. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes use different media to create attractive displays. They sing songs and nursery rhymes and sing together in assembly. By the age of five children have made good progress in their creative development. Progress in the children's physical development is satisfactory and they reach standards that are found nationally. Younger children use wheeled toys in the garden area, but Reception children have to play in the large playground where their opportunities to develop their physical skills in a structured way are more limited. However, they are timetabled to use the school hall twice each week to practise climbing, balancing, small apparatus and dance.

2 The previous inspection identified the provision for children under five as an area of weakness. This has improved significantly and is likely to have an impact on standards through the school in the future. For example, the current children under five have made good progress in their learning and are achieving standards similar to those found nationally.

3 National tests for 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1 show that standards achieved were above average in writing, average in reading and below average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools standards were well above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. However, although the actual percentage of pupils that achieved level 2 or above in reading and writing was above the national average, the percentage achieving the higher level 3 in reading, was below the national average, although above average in writing. The percentage of pupils reaching level 2 or above in reading has improved on the 1998 results, whilst the results for writing have remained the same. The 1999 results in mathematics are slightly lower than 1998. Comparing these results with the findings of the previous inspection indicates some improvement, particularly

in writing and although standards in mathematics are still below average, test results in the year of the previous inspection indicated results that were well below average. The school is not complacent about the results that pupils achieve and are consistently looking at ways to raise standards. The school recognises that standards have to improve, particularly in mathematics. The pupils enter the school with mathematical standards that are well below average and to compensate for this, groups of pupils have been provided with additional support from teaching and non-teaching staff. The introduction of the numeracy strategy has been well implemented, but it is too early to judge its overall impact. There are also a number of other factors that the school has to manage, for example, there is considerable pupil mobility. One class in year 2 has also suffered by having a number of different teachers. This problem was resolved effectively by placing the deputy headteacher in this class during the academic year to bring stability. The school recognises that there are variations in standards between boys and girls but have not responded to this position with any action because of other priorities.

4 Evidence from inspection including lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and displays, and discussions with teachers and pupils, indicates that standards are average in English and science, but below average in mathematics by the time the pupils are seven. Pupils also achieve appropriate standards in information technology and religious education.

5 A significant number of pupils have a limited vocabulary and find it difficult to engage in conversations. Although most pupils demonstrate satisfactory listening skills a number of pupils find it difficult to sustain concentration. Overall, speaking and listening are below average. Standards in reading are average with pupils reading accurately and with an understanding of what they have read. Higher attaining pupils read fluently and with expression. Most pupils enjoy their reading. Although standards in writing are average overall, there is a variation of standards across Year 2 and in the quality of presentation. Much of this is linked to the quality of teaching provided. Pupils write for a range of purposes and most use capital letters and full stops correctly. In mathematics pupils count accurately and solve simple equations. They measure objects inside and outside the classroom and use standard measures such as litres and millilitres. They present their work in different ways using diagrams and lists but their use of tables and graphs has weaknesses. The pupils' investigative and experimental knowledge is sound. They are able to present their science work appropriately and understand why experiments are carried out although their understanding of fair testing is very limited. Pupils identify the sources of light, name some properties of materials and are able to identify what plants need to survive.

6 Overall, pupils achieve appropriately through the school, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In English and mathematics, varied work is offered to the different ability groups. However, this practice is not always successful and higher attaining pupils do not achieve as effectively as the other pupils. This would also account for the below average percentage of pupils achieving level 3 or above in last year's national tests. The school would also acknowledge the need to achieve more level 3's. In most other subjects pupils are presented with the same work and this impacts on the overall quality of learning for all ability groups. However, achievement overall in information technology, religious education, art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education is sound. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in music because of limited teacher subject knowledge and the narrow range of activities.

7 Those pupils having special educational needs attain standards that are below those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress, and some make good

progress, against targets set in their individual education plans. Most individual education plans have clear targets that contribute to the progress being made. Occasionally targets are too vague and this restricts pupils' progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8 Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to school. Pupils enjoy their time at school and most approach lessons and activities with enthusiasm. In lessons the majority of pupils work hard and maintain concentration throughout the day. Response to questions is appropriate and teachers encourage their pupils to offer ideas and extend their skills in expressing their opinions and feelings. For example in a Year 1 assembly where pupils discussed acts of bravery in their own lives. When required pupils can work well alone or with a partner. As pupils move through the school they learn some of the skills needed to become independent learners as seen in a Year 1 literacy lesson where pupils learnt how to use the index in a book. In a small number of lessons pupils have less good attitudes and some are disruptive.

9 Behaviour is good and is a strength of the school; it has a beneficial effect upon pupils' learning. Behaviour is good in lessons, assemblies and at lunchtimes which are particularly pleasant and orderly. Pupils are pleased with praise and reward for good work and behaviour and readily celebrate the achievements of others. Where behaviour is unacceptable and sanctions are applied they are effective at bringing about improvement. There is little conflict in school and any that occurs is dealt with swiftly. There have been two exclusions in the recent past, these have been effectively managed and supported by appropriate procedures.

10 Relationships are good throughout the school community. Adults present good role models and this is reflected in the pupils who work and play well together. Personal development is satisfactory. As children move from the nursery and through the school they gain in confidence and are encouraged to become independent. They accept opportunities to take responsibility with pride for example by ringing the bell and helping to tidy away. This area is not at present supported by a structured provision for personal and social education.

11 Levels of attendance are satisfactory. The school has worked hard to encourage parents to arrive on time and to let school know when absences arise. Absences are due to childhood illness and a small amount of holiday taking. There are a small number of pupils that have poor attendance records or are late for school. These pupils are well supported by the school and outside agencies but there is, none the less, a detrimental effect upon their learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12 Teaching is satisfactory overall with 94% of lessons being judged satisfactory or better. Thirty-four per cent of lessons were good, with one lesson in the Nursery judged as very good. Fifty-eight per cent of lessons were satisfactory and 6% were unsatisfactory. During the previous inspection teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory in the Nursery and in Years 1 and 2, although satisfactory in Reception. Thirty-four per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. On this basis, the quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. However, the proportions of good teaching were higher in one of the Nursery classes and in a Year 2 class and although the majority of teaching was judged

to be satisfactory, there are still some weaknesses, particularly in the pace of lessons and the use of time. The good teaching enables pupils to learn well.

13 The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. Teachers plan appropriately against the national frameworks for these subjects and lessons are generally conducted to the recommended structures and timing, although evidence from inspection would indicate the time is not always managed as effectively by some teachers. This can restrict the time for other subjects, particularly at the end of the morning. Teachers' subject knowledge, including the development of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is sound overall, although there are some individual weaknesses in music, physical education and information technology. Teachers plan for the pupils with different attainment levels in literacy and numeracy although this is not consistent across the other subjects of the curriculum, for example, science. This means that not all pupils learn effectively and make the progress of which they are capable, particularly the more able pupils. In some short-term planning, lesson objectives are too broad and assessment opportunities are not always identified. However, the teachers do plan together in their year groups, which is designed to ensure that the pupils receive the same educational experiences. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents commented that there is much less inconsistency between classes now, although some does remain. Some inconsistencies were found in the provision of information technology during the inspection.

14 The majority of teachers are good at managing the pupils so that they respond effectively to the experiences and opportunities provided. In some of the unsatisfactory teaching observed, behaviour management was inconsistent; this eventually led to the pace of lessons becoming unsatisfactory as pupils shouted out or failed to work appropriately in their activity groups. Pupils did not learn in these lessons. However, most pupils show respect for their teachers. Although the planned work for the week is displayed in each classroom, the teachers do not consistently share lesson objectives with the pupils. In the good lessons where this happens it ensures that pupils know what is expected and on what to focus. Time limits on work are also not always imposed which leads some pupils to work at a slower pace than they are capable of. These lessons are not so purposeful as good lessons and pupils are not engaged in learning all of the time.

15 When teaching is good, the pupils are inspired by the teacher's enthusiasm, as in a Nursery speaking and listening session where the pupils were discussing parts of the body and their senses. Other features of good teaching include the high expectations of pupils in terms of what they can do and achieve. All pupils are expected and encouraged to participate in the lesson and have a clear understanding about the work they are doing. These expectations do not extend across all classes and there are some shortcomings in the amount of work some pupils are expected to do particularly the more able pupils. Good teachers also use questions well to check on their pupils' understanding and to promote further challenges in the lessons.

16 The marking of work is not consistent and scrutiny of pupils' work provided some evidence of work not being marked at all. Teachers work well with classroom assistants to provide useful support to pupils. It is very rare to see a classroom assistant who is not effectively engaged and during teacher introductions they often support or monitor pupils.

17 Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. All teachers and support assistants are informed by the special needs co-ordinator of targets set for pupils with special educational needs. In the best practice, activities in lessons are adjusted to match the prior learning of pupils. This is particularly so in literacy and numeracy. However, it is not always the case, and in some subjects planning does not meet the needs of these

pupils through sufficiently clear objectives for what pupils are to learn. As a result progress is not as good in these subjects. Although all teachers have copies of individual education plans, they do not always reflect these within their short-term planning. Pupils with special educational needs are appropriately supported by additional support assistants who contribute effectively to progress being made.

18 Overall pupils acquire new knowledge, understanding and skills at a satisfactory rate. The majority of pupils are interested in their work and are keen to participate in their lessons. However, in a number of classes, a small minority of pupils continually take part in low level disruption that is characterised by poor concentration and a lack of commitment to their work. Pupils participate in discussions although for many of them this is very limited, but they are happy to talk about their work with visitors to the school. Regular and relevant homework is not used to support work across the curriculum.

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

19 The curriculum makes a satisfactory contribution to the standards that pupils attain and the quality of their learning. Children enter the nursery in September or January after their third birthday and attend on a part-time basis. All children under five follow the nationally recommended guidance that covers the six areas of learning. Appropriate emphasis is placed upon language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. Children are given many opportunities to develop through a balance of structured and free play activities, linked to the national learning targets for children under five. At Key Stage 1 the curriculum provides a suitably broad range of opportunities for learning, and there are effective strategies for teaching the skills of literacy and numeracy. The school teaches all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education; it meets the statutory curriculum requirements placed upon it.

20 All pupils on the school's special educational needs register have equality of access to the full curriculum. In the best practice tasks are adjusted to meet their requirements. Good provision is made for pupils with disabilities to enable them to participate fully. Since the last inspection effective procedures for earlier identification with the youngest children have been established and additional support provided in the two Reception classes, such pupils are well supported by additional support staff. The headteacher, as special needs co-ordinator has introduced target groups and works with such targeted pupils from Year 1 and 2 for mathematics and literacy. Ability grouping in literacy and numeracy is contributing positively to pupils' learning. Individual education plans are appropriate in most cases, regularly reviewed and updated to take account of changes in pupils' needs. All aspects of the national Code of Practice are properly met. Sound procedures are in place for assessing pupils with special educational needs. Statutory requirements are met.

21 Since the last inspection a great deal has been done to make the curriculum better. The most important improvement is that an agreed framework, setting out what should be taught and when, has been put into place. This has helped to make sure that new learning is based effectively on what has been taught before. The teachers responsible for pupils of the same age plan together to ensure that all pupils have the same opportunities to learn. Teachers now set out their planning in a way that is understood and used by all. Subjects tend to be taught separately, rather than as part of topics. These changes have helped to improve the quality of learning throughout the school. However, with the exception of English and mathematics, teachers do not always show in their planning, how they will

cater for higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. This reduces the learning opportunities for the pupils concerned.

22 The school attaches much importance to teaching English and mathematics, and this is clear from the above-average amount of time given to these subjects. However, the number of hours that pupils spend in lessons, overall, is less than the minimum recommended by the Department for Education and Employment. The time allocated to other subjects is, generally, appropriate. However, the two music lessons in one of the Year 2 classes are too short to allow pupils to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding as effectively as possible.

23 The programmes of work on which teachers will base their plans for each half term are nearly completed for each subject. The school intends to have written guidance, needed to help teachers implement these programmes effectively, finished shortly. The school now has agreed policies for sex education and for raising pupils' awareness of the dangers of drug misuse. However, there is still no policy or agreed schedule of work to guide the overall teaching of personal and social education. This reduces the effectiveness of the provision that the school makes.

24 Effective links with nearby schools, including the neighbouring junior school to which most of the pupils transfer, improve the opportunities for learning; for example, through the sharing of resources. Visitors to school and visits made from it enhance the curriculum well, especially in subjects such as art and design and technology. The school receives students from a nearby university. This makes a valuable contribution to the initial training of teachers and others who intend to work in schools. Some parents are unhappy about the range of opportunities provided for pupils outside lessons. None the less extra-curricular activities are satisfactory.

25 The previous inspection found spiritual, social and cultural development to be satisfactory and moral development to be good. Acts of worship made a sound contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Collective worship met statutory requirements. Judgements on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils remain at least satisfactory. Moral development remains good. There is evidence of improvement in social development that is now considered to be good.

26 Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Collective worship meets statutory requirements with appropriate opportunities for quiet reflection and prayer. The absence of teachers from such assemblies and their lack of involvement results, however, in missed opportunities to develop their understanding of how spiritual awareness might be developed as well as detracting from the whole school approach to collective worship. Spiritual development is not clearly understood by all teachers. The broadly Christian nature of assemblies contributes effectively to religious education. Awareness is also raised of festivals and celebrations in other world religions, in particular Hinduism, but this is not extended well into the classroom because teachers have not been sufficiently involved. Pupils are encouraged to explore and share thoughts and experiences and efforts are made to link themes to everyday life, through stories and role play. There are missed opportunities for pupils to listen and respond to music in assemblies. The contribution made to spiritual development through music is unsatisfactory. However, literature, art, religious education and science, as well as visits for example, to the well dressings, and celebrations, such as Diwali and Chinese New Year contribute soundly to pupils' spiritual awareness. The youngest children showed delight at a bough of almond blossom for example, whilst pupils in Year 2 listened in awe and wonder as the story of 'feeding the multitudes' was told.

27 Provision for moral development is good. The majority of parents consider behaviour in the school as good. The behaviour policy is shared by all and consistently applied. Pupils understand the school and classroom rules and most respect them. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong, responding well to rewards and praise for good behaviour, often highlighted in weekly achievement assemblies. Pupils are encouraged to care for the environment and consider the effect of rubbish and pollution for instance, on the environment through discussion in religious education, and how recycling might help to combat the problem. They show care and understanding through their responses. The school gives clear guidance to teachers on dealing promptly with any incidents of bullying. This does not seem to be an issue in the school from observations of breaktimes.

28 Provision for social development is good. Pupils generally work well together in groups, such as in literacy and numeracy hours. They visit the elderly to sing, deliver harvest baskets in the community and are involved in charitable fund-raising, having recently raised £782.40 for the National Children's Homes. Visits and visitors contribute effectively to pupils' social development. Visitors include the local police and fire service, a minister from the local church and a visit from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Pupils visit the local church, well dressings and explore buildings and shops in the local environment.

29 Provision for pupils' cultural education is satisfactory. There are effective contributions through assemblies when festivals and celebrations in the Christian and other world faiths are explored. Visits to Buxton Museum and the Halifax Museum, and the visit from a travelling theatre group make positive contributions through history and the arts to cultural development. Pupils study local well dressing customs, extending their knowledge and understanding of their own cultural heritage. Visiting authors, such as the local author Peter Noon's recent visit and a week's visit from an artist in residence - a prize for designing a leaflet for the Buxton Festival - all enhance learning for pupils.

30 The limited contribution made through the music curriculum is unsatisfactory. There are too few opportunities for pupils to listen and respond to music and to explore music making in a meaningful and systematic way. Opportunities to extend learning through other cultures are also limited. Pupils enjoy poems and stories such as *Handa's Surprise* and through the literacy strategy are presented with wider cultural awareness. African and Indian dance help to widen cultural experiences. The multicultural awareness through religious education is often too superficial to be very meaningful. Whilst the pupils' own cultural heritage is well promoted, wider cultural awareness requires further development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31 The school has good arrangements for the care and protection of its pupils. The school offers a secure and happy environment where all are well known and cared for. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy and the procedures for child protection are good. The staff are suitably trained and there is a good level of awareness. The rare occurrences of bullying are dealt with effectively.

32 The procedures for assessing pupils' academic achievement and progress are satisfactory. This area is much improved since the last inspection. There are good arrangements for assessment in English and mathematics but these have yet to be developed in other subjects. There are good plans in place to develop assessment, to

provide detailed individual records to assist in the monitoring of progress and to make more extensive use of information to inform the planning of the curriculum. At present the use of information gained from tests and assessments is not sufficiently well used. Although the progress of small groups of pupils is tracked carefully, this does not extend to all pupils and individual targets are not yet set.

33 The special educational needs co-ordinator, support staff and external support ensure that the progress of pupils with special educational needs is carefully assessed and recorded. The co-ordinator meets with the class teacher each half term to review and set new targets within individual education plans, using specialist outside support, such as a speech therapist and occupational therapist to advise where required.

34 There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. There is a good clear policy and an effective system of rewards and sanctions. These are well understood by all and are applied consistently throughout the school. There are good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance that meet statutory requirements and are well administered. The school is well supported by the education welfare service and some improvement in punctuality and attendance has occurred. Parents are given encouragement to maintain good attendance and to inform school about the reasons for absence.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35 The parents' views of the school are good. They are appreciative of the improvements that have taken place since the last inspection. They feel that the school is welcoming, that they are well informed about school life and that the staff are approachable and supportive. Some parents have expressed a wish for a more structured approach to homework and to reading and for a greater understanding of what is taught and the progress that their children are making.

36 The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is satisfactory. There are good relationships between parents and the staff and there is a keen response to invitations to join their children in the nursery and school for early morning activities. Parents attend special events and assemblies but at present there are limited opportunities to see pupils at work and to gain an understanding of what is taught. The school has recognised this as an area for development. The school does not have a homework policy and because of this the present provision for homework is unstructured and inconsistent. Parents are unable to provide full support for their children's learning and inspection findings support the feelings of parents.

37 The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. Parents are supportive and provide good levels of help in the classrooms and in the nursery. In addition a number of parents have become involved in the Parents as Educators course and the 'Story Sacks' initiative. There is a hard working and successful Parent Teacher Association.

38 Parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed of their progress and targets in individual education plans. Although the headteacher as special needs co-ordinator has a good dialogue established with parents, many are reluctant to attend review meetings. Only parents of statemented pupils do so at present. Parents are consulted and informed through regular parents' meetings and as seen necessary.

39 The quality of information for parents is satisfactory overall, although much is good. The school brochure, governors' report and newsletters are all pleasantly written and provide parents with sensible advice and useful information. Parents new to the Nursery or to the Reception class are provided with helpful booklets and guidance on helping their children at home, this is particularly so in the nursery. There is good information for all classes about the work that will be done in the coming week and the current topic. Leaflets are received which explain literacy and numeracy well. Reporting on pupils' work and progress is made at consultation events and with a written report in the summer term. At present these are inconsistent in their content and do not provide sufficient information about each pupil's progress and level of achievement. Problems are not sufficiently well identified and guidance for improvement, whilst good in some, is insufficient in others.

40 The contribution that parents make to their children's learning at home and at school is satisfactory. Parents respond well to the opportunity to take part in early morning activities throughout the school. They support homework well when it is provided and in many cases have taken the initiative and set and mark work for their own children. In some classes this work is well displayed giving it the prominence it deserves. The home school agreement is in place and has been met with a good response from parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41 The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by the deputy-headteacher and the governing body. The headteacher has a significant presence around the school and her energy and enthusiasm contributes very effectively to the development of the school and the progress it has made since the last inspection when serious weaknesses were identified. The development of teaching and the curriculum have been priorities and both of these are well monitored. The headteacher undertakes two classroom observations per class per term and shares her observations with the teachers. This provides professional dialogue and identifies areas for development. This process is operated within an agreed protocol that can be found in the school's policy for monitoring. The teachers are used to the process and many appreciate the feedback that they are given. It has contributed to the improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. The eventual aim will be for this process to be linked to professional development interviews and target setting. Although none of the subject co-ordinators undertake classroom observations at the moment, the school development plan identifies training for those staff with responsibility for literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is monitored by both the headteacher and subject co-ordinators. The headteacher takes an overview of the planning whilst the co-ordinators monitor subject coverage, progression and resources. Although the headteacher provides feedback on planning, the effectiveness of subject co-ordinators is inconsistent, although literacy and numeracy are well managed. Subject co-ordinators are also expected to provide reports on their subjects for the governing body.

42 The previous inspection was extremely critical of the governing body and the current governors would acknowledge that the criticism was justified. As a group they have developed significantly since the previous inspection and play an appropriate role in the management and development of the school. They are very aware of their responsibilities and work well with the headteacher and the school. The governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have observed lessons, talk regularly to staff and parents and monitor standards. For example, they are very aware of the need to develop mathematics in the school. The school has an appropriate development plan that identifies the school's priorities for development and the

governors are actively involved in the development planning process. Priorities identified for development are also linked well to budget setting. The chair of governors and headteacher draw up initial budgets which are considered by the governors' finance committee. The agreed budget is then presented to all governors for approval. This has become a very rigorous process as historically, the school has relied on budget surpluses from previous years to complete a budget. This is no longer the case as the school and governors have been determined to operate within the allocated budget. This was very difficult, particularly in the last financial year, when there was very little funding for resources, but the governors are determined to provide good value and give careful thought to spending and the impact it will have, particularly in raising standards. Governors have a sound understanding of the principles of best value. For example, extra support has been provided to some areas of the curriculum and a decision was made to move the deputy headteacher into Year 2 during the academic year to provide more consistent teaching and management for a Year 2 class. Year 1 have been provided with small classes for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science by employing a part-time teacher. Although this presents further organisational problems in the afternoons, it is generally managed well by the school. The school development plan identifies a redecoration programme for the school accommodation and a structural survey has been undertaken so that the governors can plan this more efficiently.

43 The school has an appropriate number of qualified teaching staff. A number of classes are operated through teaching 'job-shares'. Although the school does its best to ensure that this works effectively, for example, using liaison books, evidence from inspection would indicate that this occasionally leads to some inconsistency in teaching. This situation and long-term absence has also contributed to some of the inconsistencies in subject management. It is very difficult to co-ordinate a subject effectively if the co-ordinator is only in school for two days. Staff development and the funding provided for it, is managed by the deputy headteacher who produces a good staff development plan that is linked well to school, the local education authority and national priorities. However, there are some teachers who have not attended in-service training in their subjects for some time. Support staff, who have a wide range of experience, are effectively deployed in helping teachers to raise standards and midday staff work supporting the pupils and contribute significantly to the calm atmosphere at lunchtimes. The school office provides good support to the headteacher and the kitchen staff cope well with the busy traffic of the dinner queue.

44 Although the accommodation is used appropriately to provide learning opportunities for the pupils, it is in poor decorative order inside and outside the building, although the new Reception block is a clean, self-contained modern building. The school and governors are very aware of this situation and a programme of improvement is in place to develop the school environment. Many of the teachers have worked hard to create a bright, cheerful learning environment and the Nursery is a good example of this. Although there are many displays through the school that celebrate pupils' academic and creative work, these often vary in quality. The caretaker and cleaning staff work hard to keep the building clean. Some pleasant grassed areas surround the school and the playground is large enough for the number of pupils in the school. However, the children under five who are in the Reception classes do not have their own play area.

45 Learning resources are satisfactory overall and used effectively to bring practical experiences into lessons. However, there are some shortcomings. There are a limited number of artefacts in school for religious education and history and the range of musical instruments is small. Although each classroom does have its own computer, much of the equipment is old. Resources for design and technology are good.

46 The headteacher, as special needs co-ordinator, carries out her responsibilities effectively. She maintains an accurate register and ensures that all individual education plans are reviewed regularly with the class teacher and others as appropriate. All staff are kept well informed of pupils' targets with copies of plans provided for the class teacher. Since the previous inspection she has ensured clear systems are in place, in line with the national Code of Practice. The governor responsible for special educational needs is enthusiastic, supportive and actively involved in her role. She is kept informed of the impact of the special needs provision through regular meetings with the headteacher.

47 The additional funds made available for special educational needs are used wisely to provide additional staff as well as specific resources for learning. Efficient and effective use is made of the resources to enable pupils to make at least satisfactory progress towards targets set.

48 Although the school's expenditure per pupil is above average, with the improvements since the previous inspection, the satisfactory teaching, the pupils good behaviour and the headteacher's and governors' good management, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49 The inspection team recognises the school's desire to improve, but to raise the standards achieved and the quality of education the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- **Raise standards in mathematics by**

ensuring that work is consistently planned for the range of different ability groups within classes;

develop the teaching of mental mathematics.

(Paragraphs 3, 6, 85, 87, 88, 89)

- **Improve progress and pupils' learning in music by**

developing teachers' subject knowledge;

improving the range of activities for pupils;

more rigorous management and monitoring of the subject.

(Paragraphs 6, 13, 119 - 126)

- **Continue to implement and develop assessment procedures, including target setting, to ensure the effective monitoring of pupils' progress and to influence future planning effectively.** (Paragraph 32)

- **Improve the use of time and the pace of lessons by**

increasing lesson hours to the recommended levels;

ensuring that teachers use time targets;

sharing learning objectives with pupils so that they are clear about what is expected;

adhering to class timetables.

(Paragraphs 12 - 14, 22)

50 In addition, the following less important matters should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

Develop policies for homework and personal and social education;
(Paragraphs 18, 23, 36, 40)

Improve play facilities for the children under five in the Reception classes.
(Paragraphs 44, 70)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	62
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2	34	58	6	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	52	202
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	50

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	23	30

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	41	38	79

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	37	36	34
	Girls	35	36	34
	Total	72	72	68
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (82)	91 (91)	86 (88)
	National	82 (77)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	37	36	39
	Girls	36	36	37
	Total	73	72	76
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (87)	91 (91)	96 (89)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	202
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	2	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.5
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	118

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	435641
Total expenditure	445162
Expenditure per pupil	1733
Balance brought forward from previous year	2000
Balance carried forward to next year	-7521

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	254
Number of questionnaires returned	66

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	24	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	38	2	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	47	5	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	15	36	17	2	30
The teaching is good.	52	45	0	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	39	11	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	29	0	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	32	2	2	3
The school works closely with parents.	42	48	2	2	6
The school is well led and managed.	35	53	6	2	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	50	2	2	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	8	41	21	3	27

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

51 Children are admitted to the Nursery in two groups, in September and January. Most children transfer to the Reception classes in the year in which they are five. At the time of the inspection there were 55 children in the two Reception classes, 14 of whom were still under five and 104 children in the two Nursery classes attending part-time. The admission procedures help children feel secure on entering school and include visits prior to admission as well as a meeting for parents, together with a helpful booklet. Early assessment of children's levels of abilities show that attainment is below the level expected for children of this age, with children's mathematical development being well below. Parents are very supportive and are involved in children's learning by helping in lessons, supporting their children at home and working to make 'Story Sacks' to use at story times.

52 By the age of five children reach standards that are in line with the levels expected in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. All children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Support staff make a significant contribution to the teaching of all children in the Nursery and Reception classes. This is a much improved picture since the previous inspection.

Personal and social development

53 All children behave well, and most of the time they concentrate on their activities and work happily with their friends. Nursery children take turns when riding their bikes in the garden and share their food at snack time, paying good attention to 'please' and 'thank you'. For some children snack time is used effectively to extend children's vocabulary and encourage and develop social skills. Children in the Reception classes mostly concentrate well and listen to their teachers, as they become more familiar with literacy and numeracy lessons. In the Nursery children develop their independence in selecting from prepared activities, many children working enthusiastically. Children dress and undress for their physical education lessons in the Reception classes and when dressing up in the role play areas. All children are aware of the various routines and are keen to tidy away when asked.

54 By the age of five children make good progress in their personal and social development and achieve standards that are in line with those found nationally.

55 The teaching of personal and social skills is inconsistent. For some children, there is a good emphasis together with planned opportunities to develop children's personal and social skills well. For others there is less emphasis and the teaching of personal and social skills is often incidental.

Language and literacy

56 Children in the Nursery have planned opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and for some children this is very effective. Small group time for younger children encourages them to develop their language. For instance, when feeling the texture of natural materials they describe bark as 'scratchy' and 'bumpy' and a stone as 'cold' and 'heavy'. Reception children have more limited speaking opportunities as their work is planned around the literacy hour. All children under five enjoy the role play areas such as

the Laundry, Chip shop, café and home corners. They listen to stories such as *Peace at last* and *Mrs Lather's Laundry*.

57 Nursery children enjoy books and handle them with care, although some book areas were visited infrequently. All children enjoy the 'big books' and Reception children experience these in a more structured way, joining in with the 'big books' in their literacy sessions. Opportunities to access books in an independent way in the Reception classes are limited. Younger children listen to stories and practice rhyming words found in stories and games. Reception children learn the letters of the alphabet by shape and sound and are able to re-tell the story of *Where's my teddy*, in their literacy session. They recognise many familiar words, reading the first levels of their reading books confidently. Nursery children begin to recognise their own name when selecting it from others on arrival at each session.

58 In the Nursery children trace and draw, practising their writing patterns using glue and sand and record the fireman's visit in pictures. By the age of five children in the Reception classes can write their first names, however, some children use capital letters in the middle of their names. Some older children are able to write simple words and phrases in their writing books without support.

59 By the age of five children are reaching standards in language and literacy that are similar to the levels found nationally and they make good progress in all areas of language and literacy with the exception of speaking and listening. Satisfactory progress is made by children in the development of speaking and listening skills by five years of age.

60 Teaching is sound overall, with examples of good teaching in the Nursery. In the best lessons teaching is imaginative and uses methods, which stimulate children's interest and encourage them to listen and join in. For older children under five, there are limited opportunities for children to initiate ideas in order to promote independence and extend their learning. There is planned involvement of support staff in children's learning. Many ask questions skilfully and invite children to talk about what they are seeing and doing.

Mathematics

61 Nursery children play games, which develop their mathematical understanding well. They identify shapes and use them in their model making, naming a square when cutting shapes in play dough. In their counting activities, children count to six, sticking the appropriate buttons on 'Teddy's coat'. Reception children practise counting to thirty, and to one hundred in fives. They recognise a circle, rectangle, square and triangle during a sorting activity. Children take part in counting on and back along a number line and solve simple mathematical problems posed by the teacher. In their structured mathematics books children experience addition and some subtraction of numbers.

62 By the age of five children reach standards in mathematics that are in line with those found nationally and they make very good progress overall.

63 The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory, and for some children in the Nursery it is good. In the best lessons assessment is used well to ensure that children are working at the correct level and activities are well matched to children's abilities. Praise is used appropriately, helping to raise self-esteem and move children forward. Teaching for older children involves the numeracy lesson and for some children this is too structured. There are inconsistencies in the teaching of numeracy between Reception classes, reflecting the need for regular planning meetings for all part-time Reception teachers.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

64 Younger children explore objects that float and sink in their science activities and textures in their focus on the senses, looking at 'touch'. This focus is extended in lessons for the older children under five who experiment to find the best material from which to make a 'boat that floats'. In the Nursery, the understanding of the passing of time is developed by passing a teddy around a circle while children relate in turn, an event that happened 'yesterday'. Reception children place past events in order, looking at photographs of babies and listening to the poem, *The Old Lady* by Rodney Bennett. All children have been looking at their own locality, walking to the shops and drawing what they see. Nursery and Reception children use the computer satisfactorily to support their learning, operating the mouse control to click, drag and drop in the program, 'dress teddy'. Children in the Nursery operate the cassette recorder without assistance.

65 Progress is good in the children's knowledge and understanding of the world and they reach levels that are in line with those found nationally by the age of five.

66 The teaching of the knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory overall and sometimes good in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Lessons are well planned with imaginative resources to stimulate the children. Groups are taught sensitively, with good encouragement for children to make a valued contribution

Creative development

67 In the Nursery and Reception classes, children use different media to create attractive displays, such as 'Old Macdonald' and 'The Hungry Caterpillar'. Younger children paint attractive observational paintings of sunflowers and seeds and mimosa, with help of a magnifying glass. They look at pattern, shape and colour in their own surroundings producing an attractive spring display. In their work on texture and touch, children paint a teddy with their fingers, using textured paint. Older children experiment by mixing coloured paint together using the resulting colour to paint springtime frogs. Children use musical instruments a planned way to accompany songs and nursery rhymes and enjoy taped songs and rhymes which they select by using the tape recorder and headphones and clapping to songs such as 'Skip to my Lou', spontaneously. All children sing songs and nursery rhymes and sing together in assembly.

68 By the age of five children have made good progress in their creative development and they reach levels that are in line with those found nationally.

69 The teaching of creative development is satisfactory overall and sometimes good in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Lessons are well planned with imaginative resources to stimulate the children.

Physical development

70 Children in the Nursery have access to an outside area that is safe and secure. However the Reception children have no designated area in which to experience safe, adventurous play. They do not share the under fives' outside area but play in the large playground where there is little opportunity to explore or further develop their physical skills in a structured way. Younger children use wheeled toys in the garden area and have access to a climbing construction. All Nursery and Reception classes have a timetabled hall session where they can practise balancing and climbing but the Nursery children do not

benefit from this at present. Reception children use the hall twice each week to practise climbing, balancing, small apparatus and dance. Children use paintbrushes, glue spreaders and scissors sensibly to practise cutting and folding paper and card. In the Reception classes children make boats in order to test if they are able to float.

71 Children make sound progress in this area of learning and reach standards that are not significantly different from those found nationally.

72 The teaching of children's physical development is sound. Children are provided with various opportunities to make progress in this area. However, the daily practice of interrupting an activity session to take Nursery children into the outside play area is unsatisfactory. This interrupts the working environment and impacts on progress for this group of children. The garden area is insufficiently planned for in order to provide a meaningful learning environment at the present time.

73 A great deal of work has been done to improve the provision for the children under five since the previous inspection and this has resulted in a rise in standards for the under fives. However, at the present time there is no Early Years co-ordinator in the early years department or policy in order to ensure consistent practice between each year group and class. There are individual practices by some teachers that create inconsistencies in the early years curriculum. Regular planning meetings between all Nursery and Reception staff are designed to ensure a consistent team approach and prepare well for the Foundation Stage from September 2000.

ENGLISH

74 In the previous inspection in 1997, standards in English were judged to be in line with the national average both in terms of national test results and the inspection findings. Analysis of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show that standards in reading are in line with the national average. In writing, standards were found to be above the national average. When compared to similar schools standards are well above the national average. Speaking and listening is the weakest element of English. Attainment over time indicates rising standards in reading with a more fluctuating pattern in writing. Results indicate that girls are outperforming boys in writing but there is no significant difference in reading performance. Inspection evidence today indicates average standards overall in English reflecting the higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2 group. Fewer pupils are achieving the higher levels in writing. Nevertheless, given pupils' attainment on entry to the school, they make good progress over time, with accelerated learning at the end of the key stage due to the effective teaching experienced by a significant proportion of the oldest pupils. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress in reading and writing.

75 The standards in speaking and listening are below the national average. A significant number of pupils have limited skills in conversation. They do not have a wide use of vocabulary and do not always respond in sentences. Many lack the confidence and self-esteem to engage in extended conversations. The shared text at the beginning of the literacy hour provides good opportunities for speaking aloud, responding to questions and participating in extended speaking through story and poetry in particular. Most pupils demonstrate satisfactory listening skills but a significant minority has difficulty sustaining concentration. This is particularly true in the weaker teaching where they lose interest and become restless, often talking while the teacher is talking. Sometimes the discussions do not build sufficiently on pupils' current vocabulary. In shared reading the lack of expression

and excitement in some teachers' delivery fails to inspire or provide a good model for reading aloud with good expression. Since the previous inspection, the school has begun to address speaking and listening through a specific scheme of work. Good opportunities are provided by some teachers for pupils to engage in role play, in assemblies and lessons and speak to an audience. Not all teachers encourage pupils to expand their oral responses from a single word or phrase to using sentences and engaging in a more extended conversation. Progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs is satisfactory.

76 Standards in reading are average at the end of Key Stage 1. Many pupils read accurately, albeit mechanically in some cases. Higher attaining pupils read fluently and expressively and they have a good understanding of what they read. They enjoy reading and a few are able to discuss their reading and predict what might happen, but for the majority oral skills are more limited.

77 Since the previous inspection, which was critical of spelling standards, a phonic scheme of work has been put in place. Phonic skills and basic reading skills are often well taught. As a result, most pupils are able to use these phonic skills to help them build vocabulary, and self correct their errors. The majority of pupils understand terms such as 'author' 'illustrator' 'content page' and 'index' and there is a good focus on significant authors, particularly in Year 2. Lower attaining pupils have reasonable phonic skills and many have a satisfactory sight vocabulary. Although pupils show a growing awareness and understanding of a range of texts and authors, library skills are not developed systematically across the school. Sometimes higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged. The reading records maintained are not sufficiently diagnostic to inform a parent or child of where improvement can be made. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported through additional help in class and occasionally when withdrawn. However, high attainers rely on the class teacher to ensure texts are sufficiently demanding to challenge them. This is not always the case. As a result underachievement occurs. A major drawback to greater progress in reading is the fact that pupils do not take their reading books home to practise and share. Home/school diaries are not in place and this restricts the levels of communication with parents. Whilst there is evidence of the literacy strategy contributing to skills in reading and spellings, its affect on speaking and listening skills has yet to be felt. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in reading.

78 Standards in writing are average at Key Stage 1. Pupils write for an increasing range of purpose and audience as they move through the school. However, there is variation in the standards achieved across the year group, and in the quality of presentation. This is linked directly to the quality of teaching provided. In one class, pupils present work neatly, in a cursive style in many cases. This is not so in the other two classes, where cursive writing has barely been introduced. Choice of vocabulary in writing is often limited. Pupils write news, stories and personal accounts of visits. They rewrite simple traditional stories, often from a different view point. Worksheets indicate that most pupils understand the texts and tasks set in literacy hour. However, there is an overload of worksheets, a significant amount of which are unmarked. This does not value pupils' efforts and contributes to low standards of presentation and untidy work. Higher attainers sequence events in their writing, which is organised and sometimes imaginative. There is some evidence of the use of a widening vocabulary. Pupils write simple book reviews, compose a letter to a friend and identify and practise spelling patterns. Most use capital letters and full stops correctly and there is a growing awareness of punctuation such as speech marks. Within writing there is a focus on both fiction and non-fiction writing. Good use is made of a visiting author to support learning. In response to such a visit pupils made

their own little books, wrote poems, made lists for holidays and party food and completed diary entries. There is evidence of writing in other areas of the curriculum, extending literacy skills further. For instance, in Year 2, pupils made dictionary books and wrote in science about the conditions required for plant growth. The majority do not join their handwriting, except in practise books. This is not transferred or reflected in many pupils' free writing. Presentation by a significant minority is unsatisfactory.

79 Pupils enjoy the literacy hour but a high proportion do not engage sufficiently in oral discussions to develop good skills in conversation. Most pupils are attentive, behave well and show interest in their work. Higher attainers are not always challenged through sufficiently demanding work. As a result, there is underachievement by such pupils. There is evidence of the use of information technology to improve presentation and editing skills.

80 Most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their work. They enjoy literacy sessions when tasks are interesting and teaching is imaginative. A small minority have difficulty listening and concentrating, but are usually managed appropriately by teachers. The majority of pupils behave well and relate well to teachers and other adults.

81 Teachers have been soundly prepared for the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, although some teachers are not yet secure with some aspects, such as timing and use of the plenary session. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, and often good teaching was observed, particularly for some of the older pupils. Most teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge, use questioning effectively in an effort to improve speaking and listening and manage pupils well. In the better teaching, basic phonic skills and punctuation are carefully and systematically developed. Expressive reading is modelled well to encourage fluency and expression during shared reading sessions. Planning reflects the National Literacy Strategy and learning objectives are clearly identified. In the weaker teaching daily planning does not identify specific learning objectives. Teachers do not share objectives for the lesson with pupils so that they are clear about what is expected. Expectations of pupils are too low resulting in underachievement by some pupils, in particular, higher attainers. The pace of lessons is too slow and as a result pupils do not cover enough work in lessons.

82 Teachers do not always match work to the needs of individual pupils. The lack of any target setting, together with the lack of time targets in lessons means that all pupils do not always make sufficient progress. The lack of challenge affects the progress of more able pupils in particular. The marking of pupils' work is positive but approaches to marking are inconsistent, with little indication in most marking of how pupils can improve. The work of pupils with special educational needs is carefully assessed and used to inform individual education plans and set new targets. By contrast, whilst assessment strategies have been developed, information gained is not used sufficiently to inform future planning. Pupils' involvement through self-evaluation has weaknesses. On-going assessment within lessons is usually helpful and constructive, with praise used effectively by teachers to develop confidence and self-esteem.

83 The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the subject and provides good guidance through her own teaching. She has worked hard to produce and implement a good scheme of work for speaking and listening and phonics in response to the findings of the previous report. Since that time, resources have been improved to meet the new initiatives. Provision is satisfactory. Planning and writing are now monitored with the headteacher monitoring the delivery of the literacy hour. Non-fiction books have been put into classes in an attempt to address the issue of boys not performing as well as girls. This has resulted in a much smaller library. Library books are not classified and older pupils do

not have the opportunities for retrieving and locating information, or for developing appropriate library skills within a library setting. Parents are satisfied that their children are well taught and feel that the school expects them to work hard. They feel children are making good progress.

84 A wide variety of work on display celebrates pupils' achievements as well as enhancing some learning environments. Standards of display are not consistent in all classes.

MATHEMATICS

85 The results of the national tests in 1999 showed that attainment was below the average for all schools. When compared to schools with a similar intake, the pupils' performance was average. Standards in mathematics have risen since the previous inspection due largely to improvements in the quality of teaching and the curriculum. However, boys do not achieve as much as they could, and although the school has made some efforts to tackle this, more needs to be done to make sure that they learn as much as possible. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the present group of pupils in Year 2 is not as good as last year's, but there are a number of reasons why this is the case. For example, more special educational needs have been identified in this year's year group and there have been far more pupils joining and leaving.

86 Since the previous inspection, many improvements have taken place. The most important is the introduction of a commercially produced programme of work which all members of staff helped to choose. This has led to significantly better learning for pupils, since it helps to ensure that teaching is based firmly on what has gone before. Teachers have greater confidence in conducting lessons, and tasks are set for pupils of different levels of attainment, which challenge them effectively. The children's understanding of those aspects of work dealing with space, shape and measures has increased significantly, and mathematics is taught as a separate subject rather than as part of topic work. Also, the amount of time given to teaching the subject has increased considerably and the national strategy for numeracy has been introduced successfully. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

87 Pupils attain broadly similar levels in the different aspects of mathematics. Their numeracy skills are developed appropriately and this is supported effectively through work in other subjects, such as science. Higher attaining pupils make better progress when varied work is offered to the different ability groups in classes and they are provided with extension work.

88 Pupils in Year 1 show an increasing ability to understand the language of number and shape. They develop their use of numbers by, for example, working out what is ten more or ten less than the single digit number they are given. They count to 30 and show a growing understanding of the value of numbers made up of tens and units. These pupils can also draw coins to make various amounts of money up to twelve pence. The pupils in Year 2 present their mathematics work in different ways, including diagrams and lists. However, their use of tables and graphs is weaker. This is reflected in their test results and has been identified by the school as an area for improvement. They count, order and solve simple equations involving numbers to 100. They practise measuring skills and estimate the length of objects inside and outside the classroom. Most know that 1000 millilitres make one litre. They recognise and name common two and three-dimensional shapes, such as pentagons and cylinders.

89 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and is better in some lessons. The effective way in which most teachers manage and control their classes contributes positively to the quality of learning and the satisfactory progress made by most pupils. Good use of teaching resources helps pupils to learn more easily. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 1, the teacher had a "hopping frog." This focused the children's attention well and helped them to learn how to count on ten or to count back ten, by jumping appropriately. However, the pace of some activities is not fast enough, especially when mental skills are practised. Some lessons lack liveliness. This reduces the pupils' interest and eagerness to learn. Also, the needs of higher attaining pupils are not met consistently. The activities chosen for them are not always sufficiently challenging.

90 The work of the co-ordinator has a positive impact on the quality of learning and the standards that pupils attain. The introduction of monitoring of the quality of teaching and planning has had a significant effect on what is achieved. The national numeracy strategy has been appropriately implemented.

SCIENCE

91 Teacher assessment in 1999 indicates that standards in science by the end of Key Stage 1 are above the national average and above the average for schools of a similar type.

92 Inspection evidence from classroom observations, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of past work indicates that pupils in Year 2 are currently not meeting these standards, however, attainment is in line with national averages. Attainment has improved since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be below national expectations.

93 The development of pupils' investigative and experimental knowledge is sound. Pupils understand how to find things out in science and why experiments are carried out. They record their experiments by drawing tables, diagrams, pictures or written observations. In discussion, pupils' understanding of a fair test is very limited.

94 In Year 1 pupils learn about the parts of a plant and what is needed in order for a plant to grow. By the end of the key stage pupils know what makes habitats different and test this in an experiment involving snails and woodlice when studying mini-beasts. They are able to say what all plants need to survive and that seeds are needed to make more plants. Pupils are unable to explain the difference between living and non-living things. By the end of the key stage pupils can name some properties of materials and explain that water can be changed by cold and that heat will reverse this process. Year 2 pupils name some sources of light and know what is needed to make a bulb light up. However, they were unable to explain the difference between loudness and pitch or what causes an object to move or slow down.

95 Literacy skills are used well in the recording of experiments and the completion of worksheets and tables. However, information technology is not yet fully integrated into the science curriculum.

96 When teaching is effective, learning is sound and sometimes good, particularly in Year 2. Pupils are familiar with scientific vocabulary such as investigate, experiment and test, and frequently use worksheets to record their findings. In lessons where work is

assessed and well matched to pupils' individual needs, pupils are challenged and the progress they make is good. This does not always consistently happen.

97 Pupils' response is satisfactory in science and in better lessons it is good. Pupils enjoy their science lessons and mostly have positive relationships with their teachers, many showing an appropriate level of respect. Most pupils work effectively at their given task, listening to their teachers when asked to do so. Older pupils work in groups sensibly when investigating the preferred habitat of snails. They are excited but persevere and complete their task with pride.

98 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some good teaching in Year 2. Planning is generally satisfactory but gives insufficient attention to the more able pupils and some lessons become over directed by the teacher, particularly in Year 1. Planning for classes within the same year group is thorough and provides a consistent approach especially in Year 2. Teachers have good subject knowledge and mostly use appropriate scientific vocabulary in their explanations. Resources are well provided and are sufficient for all pupils, enhancing the learning where these are used well. Mostly teachers manage pupils well, but in lessons where expectations are not sufficiently high pupils become disruptive and behaviour deteriorates. Assessment has been reviewed since the previous inspection when it was found to be unsatisfactory. Assessment of units and teacher assessment documents are available for staff discussion this term. In the better lessons teachers make good use of praise to build pupil self-esteem and improve learning. Generally, relationships are good. There are no planned arrangements for homework in science.

99 The policy has been reviewed by the science co-ordinator who has been in post for less than one year. The school has adopted the government guidelines for science and the new structure has helped to improve confidence. The school proposes to create a portfolio of levelled work and introduce continuous assessment procedures in order to raise attainment and improve assessment in science.

ART

100 Pupils' displayed work and that contained in portfolios, shows that they have confidence in recording ideas in a variety of ways, using different techniques and materials. They use starting points such as natural objects as a stimulus for their work; for example, mimosas and daffodils are painted, and teasels and cyclamen are drawn with good attention to detail. They select resources carefully to achieve particular effects. For instance, grey patches of man-made fabric are cut out to become clouds as part of a collage. They work with different tools and media, such as clay, to produce three-dimensional artefacts including necklaces and lamps for Diwali. Pupils use their knowledge of the styles of artists such as Picasso, Lowry and Kandinsky to create their own ideas. For example, they make paper ties, aprons and belts, copying the bold, geometric fashion in which Mondrian worked. They make appropriate use of computers to generate their own versions of Monet's paintings, such as 'Autumn at Argenteuil'.

101 The timetable did not allow inspectors to see any art lessons, so an accurate assessment of the quality of teaching cannot be made. However, the evidence of pupils' past work suggests that teaching is satisfactory and that pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The pupils are presented with a wide range of stimuli, including drawing and painting from observation, and learn a variety of techniques, including printing and dyeing.

102 The support given to teachers by the co-ordinator has increased their confidence, and the number of teachers who have training in art has increased. These factors have had a positive effect on pupils' learning and progress is satisfactory overall. Resources for art are satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103 Pupils attain the expected levels in both the designing and making elements of their work. However, their ability to reflect on their designs is less well developed than their other skills. From an early age pupils begin to understand that materials are used for different purposes, and that there are reasons why houses are made of bricks and gates from metal. Those in the reception class make simple artefacts sometimes to help their work in other subjects. For example, they create folding books to contain their writing and drawings about their study of beans. Pupils in Year 1 start to use drawings to assist their making of, for instance, stick puppets. In Year 2, they develop these design drawings to include labels for the different components and materials, and annotations showing how they will make the object. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils showed how they handle malleable substances such as clay effectively, when making 'mini-beast gardens'. Pupils assemble and join a range of materials to produce objects such as paper windmills or model houses to illustrate their work about the artist Lowry. The evaluation of their finished product allows them to identify what could be improved.

104 Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained and the quality of teaching has improved. Good quality resources continue to contribute well to the standards that pupils achieve. The pupils make satisfactory progress.

105 The quality of teaching is entirely satisfactory. Teachers, generally, make effective provision for different age groups if they are taught together, and for higher attaining pupils. This has a beneficial effect on standards, and contributes directly to the satisfactory progress that most pupils make. In the best teaching, the enthusiasm shown by the teacher helps to increase pupils' interest and involvement in their work. Sometimes, however, the objectives set for the lesson are not defined closely enough. As a result, it is not easy to judge how much the pupils have moved forward. The description of the assessment that the teacher intends to make, of how well pupils have progressed, is also sometimes too vague. This makes it difficult to specify effectively the next steps in learning.

106 The work of the co-ordinator, including her monitoring of pupils' work and teachers' planning, has a positive effect on the quality of teaching and the standards achieved. Good links with local businesses, resulting in visits and visitors, help to improve the quality of learning.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

107 History and geography are taught in blocks of work each half term. As a result no geography lessons were seen during the inspection. Progress is judged by looking at previous work, displays, discussions with the teachers and co-ordinator and by talking to children.

108 The available evidence shows that there has been an improvement from the previous inspection in both geography and history and the progress made by the pupils is now satisfactory. The subjects are not taught as part of a topic as in the previous inspection

and therefore the time allocated, although limited, is clearly focused on the subject being taught. This is an overall improvement from the previous inspection. Literacy and numeracy skills are used well in lessons, for example, in the reporting of events and the use of the timeline in history.

109 In history in Year 1, pupils look at the past and present using photographs, pictures and books illustrating a seaside holiday. Using pictures, they identify differences between a Victorian holiday and the present day. Year 2 pupils use a timeline to place events in their own lives and research events surrounding the Great Fire of London. In discussion, pupils name Florence Nightingale and Queen Victoria as two famous people from the past and are able to explain differences between things in their own lives and those in Victorian times.

110 In geography pupils look at and draw plans of objects, of the locality and of the school. Older pupils have a good awareness of the need to maintain a good environment for example, the effect of litter on the quality of life. In discussion they describe how they drew a route from home to school and a map of their own town. Pupils know that England is part of the United Kingdom and a globe is a map of the world. Weather diaries are maintained by most classes however, information technology is not yet fully integrated into the geography and history curriculum.

111 In conversation pupils say they enjoy history and geography. Pupils behave well. They listen, concentrate and join in activities with interest and enthusiasm, particularly in a history lesson in Year 2.

112 The quality of teaching in history is satisfactory overall and good in Year 2. Planning is linked to the government guidelines for history and places good emphasis on the awareness of past and present. Work for older pupils is planned to meet the needs of individual pupils and this improves their learning. Teachers have sound expectations and use resources well, very often provided by themselves.

113 The government guidelines for history and geography are in the process of being established by the school and appropriate resources are to be purchased. Resources for history are unsatisfactory at the present time and there are no assessment procedures for history or geography or a planned programme for homework. However the new structured curriculum for both subjects is improving teacher confidence and the pupils' performance.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

114 A limited number of information technology lessons were observed during the inspection, so judgements are also based on discussions with pupils and teachers and scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and classroom displays. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards are in line with those expected for the pupils' age. This is similar to the previous inspection, when standards were described as broadly in line with the national average. Year 2 pupils are competent when working with the computers in their classrooms. They show a sound understanding of the subject's terminology and when confidently discussing their experiences of information technology show that they are able to enter and store information and, with support, retrieve their work. Pupils use words such as 'save', 'delete' and 'edit' when describing word processing activities. In links with science pupils create their own mini-beasts and then save their work. They design their own simple town plans and record some of their literacy work on tape-recorders. When talking about

their work with 'Roamer' they show that they understand that it can be controlled using a series of commands.

115 Pupils receive sound teaching, and progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. However, evidence from inspection would indicate that there are some inconsistencies in pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 1 lesson on controlling devices it was clear that not all of the pupils had experienced using the 'Roamer' when joining Year 2 classes in the afternoon. This meant that about a third of the class had a more limited experience and understanding of this aspect of the subject. The teachers provide a separate lesson for information technology once a week to provide new experiences or to develop new skills. These sessions often only last for about twenty minutes so time has to be used effectively. When lessons have pace and no time is wasted these are worthwhile sessions that introduce pupils to new aspects of the subject, reinforce their knowledge and provide them with a clear understanding of what they are expected to do when they use the computer on a rota basis. For example, Year 2 pupils clearly understood their work on word processing after a clear, brisk introduction by the class teacher. However, when time is used less effectively, pupils' learning is limited. During the previous inspection some unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This was not the case during the current inspection although not all teachers are confident with their subject knowledge.

116 The pupils use a 'tagging' system to take turns at activities on the computer. This enables lessons to continue with a minimum of disruption. Their turns are recorded on a record sheet. This is a sound strategy, but there are parts of the day when the computer is not it use.

117 Several subjects make an effective contribution to the development of skills and knowledge in information technology. Literacy sessions are usefully employed to develop pupils' word processing skills and Year 2 pupils were observed reinforcing their understanding of number work. However, some of these activities are incidental and teachers' planning does not always identify how information technology is to be developed in other subjects.

118 The subject co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject, but due to a long-term absence for illness, has had very little influence on the development of the subject in the last twelve months. She acknowledges that she has not got a clear view of the subject and that there are some areas that require development, for example, the subject policy. The information technology framework ensures the progressive development of skills and knowledge through the subject in principle, although, as has already been identified, some pupils can miss important learning experiences. Although every class has a computer, much of the hardware is old and there is only one CD-ROM in the school. During the inspection a computer in Year 1 was not working properly, which led the teacher to change her lesson. This situation will be remedied in 2001 when the school becomes part of the National Grid for Learning and resources will improve. There have been some improvements in the software to support the subject since the last inspection.

MUSIC

119 Standards in music have declined since the previous inspection, where they were found to be in line with national expectations, with pupils making at least satisfactory progress. The progress being made by all pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs is now unsatisfactory due largely to limited subject knowledge of many teachers, together with the more limited support available from the music co-ordinator who now teaches part time. A narrow range of activities was observed in Key Stage 1, mainly singing and very limited use of untuned percussion.

120 Although pupils sing tunefully when accompanied on the piano by the music specialist, they do not sing well in most lessons or in assembly, where the quality of singing often lacks a sense of rhythm and clear pitch. Pupils have a limited repertoire of songs and there is little evidence of increasing challenge as pupils move through the school. Pupils have some awareness of a limited range of untuned percussion instruments but do not always know the name of the instrument or the correct way to play it.

121 In other aspects of music, such as work on rhythm patterns, there is some evidence of a minority of pupils using simple graphic notation but pupils' knowledge and understanding of musical vocabulary such as 'pulse' is weak. A few pupils compose simple rhythm patterns but these experiences are not consistent across year groups or built upon sufficiently over time. There are limited opportunities to listen to a range of music and missed opportunities to reinforce listening and appraising and to extend pupils' cultural awareness. For example, the absence of music in assemblies and lack of emphasis placed on the music playing on occasions in lessons. Opportunities for pupils to explore tuned instruments or play recorders are lacking.

122 When given the opportunity, pupils enjoy music. They participate well in hymn practice with specialist support, but behaviour in lessons is sometimes unsatisfactory. This is due directly to weaknesses in teaching and the lack of teachers' knowledge in the subject.

123 Teaching is unsatisfactory overall, although occasionally satisfactory teaching was observed, and when the music co-ordinator was involved the teaching was good. Many teachers lack subject knowledge skills and confidence to teach music. Skills are not well taught nor are they developed systematically to enable pupils to build successfully on previous learning.

124 Expectations of many teachers are too low, resulting in undemanding tasks, and underachievement by a significant majority of pupils. Insufficient time is given to music to enable a satisfactory curriculum to be taught. In some lessons, pupils are not well managed. They do not work with interest or behave well because the tasks are not sufficiently demanding and expectations are unclear. There is little emphasis placed on developing pupils' musical vocabulary.

125 Occasionally, opportunities are provided for pupils to perform to an audience, for example in school concerts and singing to the elderly but too few opportunities exist for group music-making activities. As a result, music does not make a good contribution to pupils' personal, social and cultural development.

126 The music co-ordinator has good expertise but her reduced teaching time of two days, allows little time to support colleagues and raise standards in music. The scheme of work introduced since the last inspection does not take account of current developments

but does provide a framework linked to the National Curriculum. Because music provision is not monitored there is no clear evidence of what pupils have learned or the standards achieved. There are no strategies in place for assessment. The limited provision of music resources lacks a good range of multicultural instruments. The quality and range of resources do not make an effective contribution to standards in music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

127 During the inspection week lessons were observed in games and dance. Reception pupils are enthusiastic as they take part in a county dancing lesson. They apply good physical effort as they use movements that indicate appropriate control and co-ordination for their age. Pupils sensibly watch the performances of others and show an awareness of space as they skip around the hall to warm-up. Year 1 pupils dodge and chase with partners and then develop their games skills with a bat and ball. This work is continued in Year 2 with pupils receiving and travelling with a small ball. They practise simple skills safely and show good control. Pupils talk about what they have done and accurately describe the changes in their body as they undertake a rigorous warm-up.

128 During the previous inspection, teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall. Currently, the quality of teaching is satisfactory although some good teaching was observed. Good teaching is characterised by good pupil management, quick, clear instructions and a general enthusiasm that inspires the pupils. In these lessons, no time is wasted, which allows pupils to be continually involved in vigorous activity. These lessons have a good structure that includes a warm-up session, a main activity and warming-down period. It comes as no surprise that in these lessons the pupils' attitudes to physical education are good. They enjoy giving demonstrations of what they have learnt, which are applauded by other pupils in the class. In other lessons time is not always used so effectively, for example, equipment is given out slowly, or opportunities are lost to develop the pupils' understanding of how their bodies change during exercise. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory overall, although during the inspection some equipment was used inappropriately by pupils. However, physical education was used well to support numeracy in a Year 2 lesson, when pupils were asked to stand on odd numbers in the large number square that is painted on the playground!

129 Overall, pupils learn appropriately in lessons although their progress over time is more inconsistent. During the inspection the games lessons observed in both Year 1 and Year 2 were almost identical, when one would expect some difference. However, scrutiny of the physical education portfolio of photographic evidence indicates that the subject develops satisfactorily through the school and includes the essential elements of dance, gymnastics and games. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic about physical education and has developed an appropriate subject framework, with support from the local education authority adviser, which ensures continuity and progression.

130 Resources are satisfactory and games equipment is appropriately stored so that it is accessible for both pupils and teachers. The school hall is a good size and provides sufficient space for gymnastics, dance and indoor games. However, the storage of other equipment in the hall, for example, the school piano, can present potential health and safety problems if they are not positioned carefully. There is a satisfactory range of apparatus for educational gymnastics including a relatively new climbing frame. However, some of the old wooden benches are too heavy for the very youngest pupils. Although there are limited grassed areas for games the playground provides a large area for this

aspect of the subject. Pupils can attend extra-curricular activities to develop their sporting skills in football, gymnastics and tennis.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

131 At the time of the previous inspection, attainment in religious education was judged to be in line with national expectations and progress was found to be satisfactory. Some unsatisfactory teaching was observed linked to weaknesses in planning. Since then, standards have been maintained and are in line with the locally agreed syllabus. Planning now reflects the locally agreed syllabus but the emphasis is largely on factual information with limited development of spiritual values. Teaching remains undemanding, particularly for more able pupils who do not progress as well as they might because teachers' expectations are not high enough.

132 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know some of the special times of celebration and religious festivals throughout the year in the Christian faith. Knowledge of other world religions is more limited. Pupils are aware of Diwali celebrations but knowledge and understanding of Hinduism, the main world faith studied, is superficially explored, mainly through story.

133 Other celebrations explored include Chinese New Year, Hanukkah and pupils have some knowledge and understanding of the symbolism and artefacts associated with these festivals. Pupils have a sound understanding of Christianity by the time they leave the school. They know that Christians sometimes pray in church but few can make comparisons with the Hindu faith. They are aware of the need for rules. By the end of the key stage they are beginning to understand the significance of special books such as the Bible and are familiar with a range of stories, such as *The Creation* and significant biblical characters. They have some awareness in most classes of the Hindu version of *The Creation* story. In most classes, pupils show respect for each other's views and most are sensitive to other people's feelings. They are encouraged to care for the local environment and have a sound knowledge and understanding of their own cultural heritage, such as the focus on the importance of water through well dressings. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

134 Most pupils respond positively in religious education lessons. They listen with interest to stories, such as the story of 'Saint Bernadette' and, when inspired through good story telling, show awe and wonder. For example, as a teacher skilfully unfolds the miracle of 'feeding the multitudes', pupils are caught up in the crowd entering the role as they 'share food' and respond to questions such as 'have you brought any food?' Sometimes, when tasks are undemanding, pupils do not work as well as they can and the slow pace of the lesson results in a significant minority losing attention.

135 Teaching is satisfactory, with occasional good teaching observed. Where teaching is effective, teachers' own knowledge is secure. An appropriate atmosphere is created, for example using a focus such as music or a candle and the teacher captures pupils' imagination through inspired use of story and role play. In these lessons, pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own experiences and meaningful connections are made with everyday life. In the weaker teaching, the lack of pace and rigour in some lessons, means that insufficient work is covered during lessons. Undemanding tasks fail to challenge higher attaining pupils who do not make sufficient progress as a result. There is little evidence of any recorded work particularly for the older pupils. Sometimes teaching is too superficial

and does not ensure that concepts are clearly understood. Insufficient attention is given to reflecting on issues or to developing spiritual awareness.

136 The scheme of work, whilst reflecting the locally agreed syllabus, is not always translated through clear aims in planning into effective teaching and learning. Whilst sound links are made to speaking and listening, for example through simple role play, there is little focus on the skills needed to help pupils record. Links to literacy vary between classes and across year groups, but are unsatisfactory in terms of written evidence recorded.

137 The co-ordinator had good expertise and has produced a scheme of work, linked carefully to the locally agreed syllabus. However, resources do not appear to have developed much since the previous inspection and are limited, particularly religious artefacts to support and enhance the delivery of the subject. Improvements have been made to planning but daily planning does not always include specific aims to ensure teaching and learning is sharply focused. Currently, there are no formal strategies for assessing religious education and therefore it is difficult for teachers to monitor pupils' progress. There is limited contribution to religious education in the display about school.

138 Assemblies and collective worship make a significant contribution to pupils' religious education with the headteacher providing good opportunities for pupils to reflect and examine their own feelings often linking the theme to events and experiences in their every day life. However, the absence of teachers in assemblies and lack of teacher involvement in sharing this responsibility has a detrimental effect on standards and places an unfair burden on the headteacher. Teachers are unable to extend the learning taking place in assemblies and lack the knowledge shared and awareness of words to hymns as well as missing opportunities to develop their understanding of spiritual development.

139 The lack of any focus, such as flowers, candle or music to enter assembly often results in an unsettled start to what should be a very special time. A significant contribution is made to pupils' social and moral development. The contribution to spiritual and cultural development is more limited.