

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **HOCKLIFFE LOWER SCHOOL**

Hockliffe

Leighton Buzzard

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109529

Headteacher: Mrs. S. Walden

Reporting inspector: Mike Capper  
23239

Dates of inspection: March 4<sup>th</sup> - 6th 2002

Inspection number: 220849

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Woburn Road Hockliffe Leighton Buzzard Bedfordshire
Postcode:	LU7 9LL
Telephone number:	01525 210330
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. J. Dickens
Date of previous inspection:	January 2000

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mike Capper Registered inspector Original Inspector Number (OIN) 23239	Mathematics Art and Design Design and Technology Information and Communication Technology Physical Education Religious Education  English as an additional language Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Peter Oldfield Lay inspector OIN 1112		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Alison Cartlidge Team inspector OIN 23609	English Science Geography History Music Equal opportunities Special Educational Needs	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well are pupils taught? How good are curricular opportunities?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Hockliffe Lower School is located in the village of Hockliffe, near Leighton Buzzard in Bedfordshire. Pupils come from the local and surrounding villages, and are admitted between the ages of 4 and 9. There are 37 pupils on roll, and they are taught in three classes: a reception class, a Years 1 and 2 class and a Years 3 and 4 class. Children start in the reception class in the term after their fourth birthday, attending part-time for the first two terms. They are taught as a separate group by a nursery nurse in the morning. In the afternoon, full time reception age children are taught alongside Years 1 and 2 pupils. Pupils come from broadly average backgrounds, with an increasing number from outside the local village. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. There are 7 pupils identified as having special educational needs. None of these has a statement of special educational needs. These figures are below average. Children have very limited pre-school experiences and test results show that their attainment on starting school is variable but is often below average. The school has a small number of children who do not have English as their first language.

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

The school provides a good education for its pupils. Standards are good overall, with pupils making particularly good progress in mathematics and reading. Pupils behave well and are happy at school. Teaching is good in over a half of lessons and is never less than satisfactory. The headteacher and governors provide effective leadership and management, and have a good understanding of how the school can be further improved. The cost per pupil is very high, even for a school of this size and type. Nevertheless, funding is used appropriately to maintain very small class sizes. This has a good impact on standards and means that the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- By the end of Year 4, pupils achieve good standards in English, mathematics, information and communication technology, design and technology, history, geography and religious education.
- The headteacher and governing body have very effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.
- There is a rich and exciting curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 4.
- The small class sizes means that teachers are successful in meeting the needs of pupils of differing ability.
- Pupils enjoy school and behave well.
- The school has very good links with the local community and other schools

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

- The development of writing skills in the reception class and Years 1 and 2 is slower than it should be.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to apply their scientific knowledge to challenging investigative activities.

*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 made good progress since the last inspection in 2000, when it was found to have serious weaknesses. The quality of leadership has improved significantly. The headteacher and governors have monitored school development very thoroughly and established a very clear direction for the work of the school. This has helped to ensure rapid school improvement. Teaching has improved and standards of attainment are higher in subjects such as mathematics and reading. Provision for reception age children is now satisfactory, and these children are now making sound progress. Members of staff work together well, and this means that the school is well placed to improve further.

### **STANDARDS**

The table showing the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests has been omitted because of the small number of pupils taking the test each year. Standards of attainment vary significantly from year to year. This means that

comparisons with national standards using National Curriculum test data are not reliable indicators of attainment from year to year and need to be treated with caution.

Inspection findings show that pupils achieve well, making good progress overall. By the end of the reception year, children are on target to exceed the expectations for the end of the reception year in personal, social and emotional development. They are on target to reach expectations in all other areas of learning except communication, language and literacy, where progress in developing writing skills is unsatisfactory.

By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above average in reading and mathematics, and average in writing and science. By the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment is above average in English and mathematics, and average in science.

Throughout the school, pupils have good speaking and listening skills and become confident readers. They make satisfactory progress overall in writing. They make the best progress in Years 3 and 4, where pupils are given good opportunities to write purposefully. In Years 1 and 2, there is a limited selection of written work in pupils' books, and weaknesses in the way some pupils form letters makes the pace of their writing slow and laborious.

Pupils have good skills in using and applying their mathematical knowledge, with pupils' ability in mental mathematics a particular strength of attainment. In science, pupils have a good understanding of basic concepts but are less skilled at applying their knowledge to practical situations.

Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in ICT by the end of Year 2 and above national expectations by the end of Year 4. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations in design and technology, geography and history by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. In religious education, pupils' attainment is above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in art and design and music. Pupils achieve good standards in swimming, with many exceeding national expectations by the end of Year 4. In other aspects of physical education, pupils' attainment is satisfactory.

Since the last inspection, the school has begun to make far greater use of test data to help to set targets for attainment for all year groups and, more importantly, for individual pupils. The targets that are set are realistically challenging and based on a good knowledge of the differing capabilities of each year group.

#### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils are keen to learn and work hard. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 occasionally lose interest in the afternoons when the pace of learning is too slow.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils of different ages play together well. They behave well in lessons and are sensible at playtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils get on well together. The happy, family atmosphere helps pupils to become confident and mature.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory overall, though the figures are affected by the unsatisfactory attendance of two pupils

#### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Reception</b>	<b>Years 1 – 2</b>	<b>Years 3 – 4</b>
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good overall, with no unsatisfactory teaching. Basic skills are taught well in numeracy. The teaching of reading is particularly good in Years 1 and 2, and writing is taught especially well in Years 3 and 4. Teaching in science is less effective than in English and mathematics because pupils of differing abilities often carry out the same work, and higher attaining pupils in particular are given insufficient challenge in devising their own tests and methods of recording their findings.

In the reception class, teaching is most effective when children are taught as a whole group. At these times, learning is made interesting and the needs of individual children are met well. Teaching is not as effective when children are working individually, and they are not always given sufficient guidance at these times.

In Years 1 and 2, teaching is best in English, mathematics and history where lessons are thoroughly planned with stimulating activities that engage pupils' interest and build on their experiences. However, pupils can become restless in some other lessons when the pace of learning is too slow.

In Years 3 and 4, teaching is good in most lessons, with detailed planning that identifies what pupils of differing prior attainment are expected to learn. Lessons are well resourced, which helps to make activities interesting. Pupils also benefit enormously from the very small class size, which means that every pupil is given a lot of individual attention.

The quality of teachers' marking is consistently good. They write constructive comments on pupils' work to encourage them to improve.

#### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory for reception age children. There is a good curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 4, where a wide range of purposeful, practical activities meets the needs of individual pupils in most lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Their individual education plans provide clear and realistic targets in literacy and numeracy. They are well supported in lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. These pupils make very good progress in developing spoken English because of the individual attention they are given.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Specific lessons are effective in developing pupils' skills and knowledge, and teachers respond well to issues when they arise. There are good opportunities for prayer, and pupils develop an awareness of different cultures through planned visits and visitors.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school offers a safe and friendly environment where pupils of all ages, abilities and backgrounds are valued. Good procedures are in place for ensuring pupils' welfare. Assessment procedures are good overall.

The school has good links with parents. They are generally supportive of the school's work. Statutory requirements are not being met for reception children to attend collective worship.

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

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. There is a very clear educational direction to the work of the school. The headteacher is well supported by very hard working and conscientious members of staff.

How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governing body is very actively involved in monitoring the work of the school and successfully fulfils all its statutory duties.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Very effective monitoring procedures have helped the school to identify strengths and weaknesses and take effective action.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is good. Decisions about how to use the budget are carefully considered and the impact of spending effectively evaluated. The high level of parental consultation is a good feature of the school's application of 'best value' principles.

Staffing levels are good overall, with pupils benefiting from the very small class sizes. However, there are some weaknesses in staffing levels for children in the reception class. In the mornings, when the children are taught by a nursery nurse, there is no other adult available to support children who are working independently.

Accommodation is good. The school is kept very clean and is well maintained. There are realistic plans to improve the accommodation, including developing a secure outdoor play area for children in the reception class and enlarging the library. Resources are good, with no significant weaknesses.

#### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members of staff are friendly and approachable.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Children make good progress and are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• Progress since the last inspection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• The quality of leadership.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views but inspection findings do not support their concerns. The school is well led and managed and there is a satisfactory number of extra-curricular activities, given the size of the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Standards of attainment vary significantly from year to year because of the small number of pupils in each year group. Nevertheless, pupils' attainment has improved in many subjects since the last inspection, and pupils are now achieving well overall, in relation to their prior attainment. Standards of attainment are now higher in reading, writing, mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 and 4, high standards have been maintained, especially in English, mathematics and science.
2. Children have very limited pre-school experiences and test results show that their attainment on starting school is variable but is often below average. This is confirmed by a variety of teacher assessments made in the children's first few weeks in school. Inspection findings show that children in the reception year make sound progress overall and achieve standards that are appropriate to their ability. Standards of attainment are broadly similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Children are on target to exceed the expectations for the end of the reception year (the early learning goals) in personal, social and emotional development. They are on target to reach expectations in mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. In communication, language and literacy, children make good progress in developing reading, speaking and listening skills, but their progress in developing writing skills is unsatisfactory.
3. By the end of Year 2, inspection findings show that pupils' attainment is above average in reading and mathematics, and average in writing and science. The very small number of pupils in each year group means that comparisons to national standards using National Curriculum test data are not reliable indicators of attainment from year to year and need to be treated with caution. Nevertheless, test results in 2001, when there were only six pupils taking the tests, were well above average in mathematics, above average in writing and well below average in reading when compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment in the national tests was average in writing and mathematics but very low in reading. The low performance in reading is not typical and explained by the poor performance of one pupil who had special educational needs. In reading, all but one pupil achieved national expectations.
4. By the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment is above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. In English, pupils' attainment is better in reading than in writing. Although there are no national comparative test data for pupils at the end of Year 4, tests taken at the end of Year 4 confirm that attainment is good by the time pupils move to the middle school.
5. There is no significant difference between the attainment and progress of girls and boys in lessons. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall in English and mathematics. The progress of pupils with special educational needs has improved since the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory. Their needs are now met effectively. Pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress in English, especially in Years 3 and 4.
6. Standards of literacy are good throughout the school, with reading a significant strength. Pupils have good speaking and listening skills and most quickly become confident readers. Pupils make satisfactory progress, overall, in writing. They make the best progress in Years 3 and 4, where the teaching of writing skills is consistently good and pupils are given good opportunities to write purposefully. In Years 1 and 2, there is a limited selection of written work in pupils' books and weaknesses in the way some pupils form letters, makes the pace of their writing slow and laborious.
7. In numeracy, standards of attainment are good throughout the school. The numeracy strategy has had a good impact on pupils' learning, especially in improving number skills.

Pupils have particularly good skills in using and applying their mathematical knowledge. Their ability to work out calculations in their heads is a significant strength of attainment. Teachers give a good amount of time to developing and reinforcing these skills, and this has helped to raise attainment.

8. In science, the weakest aspect of pupils' attainment is their ability to use and apply their good knowledge to practical situations. This applies to pupils in both key stages. Pupils have a good understanding of scientific concepts. However, teachers do not give them enough opportunity to apply these skills to problem solving and investigative activities, for example by devising, planning and organising their own simple experiments or investigations in science. This has the greatest impact on the learning of higher attaining pupils.
9. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in information and communication technology by the end of Year 2, and above national expectations by the end of Year 4. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations in design and technology, geography and history by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. In religious education, pupils' attainment is above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
10. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in art and design and music. Pupils achieve good standards in swimming, with many exceeding national expectations by the end of Year 4. In other aspects of physical education, pupils' attainment is satisfactory.
11. The school has not yet identified any gifted and talented pupils, and does not have a policy to ensure that the needs of these pupils are met. Nevertheless, more able pupils are given appropriate opportunities to extend their skills in subjects such as music and physical education, through extra-curricular activities and additional music lessons.
12. Since the last inspection, the school has begun to make far greater use of test data to help to set targets for attainment for all year groups and, more importantly, for individual pupils. The targets that are set are realistically challenging and based on a good knowledge of the differing capabilities of various year groups.

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

13. The positive attitudes of pupils and their respect for others' feelings, values and beliefs are a strong feature of the school's work. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection.
14. Pupils have good attitudes overall towards learning. They are enthusiastic about their work and very keen to come to school. They work hard, showing great enthusiasm in most lessons for the work that they have been given. This was seen to good effect in a religious education lesson, where a pupil was very keen to continue a research task into lunchtime. However, in some afternoon lessons in Years 1 and 2, pupils lose interest in their work when the pace of teaching and learning is too slow.
15. As at the time of the last inspection, children settle well into the reception class. They behave well, show good attitudes to learning and have well-developed social skills. They are enthusiastic about school and try hard in all their activities. They show respect for property, as well as care and concern for each other, and develop a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. They play together amicably, waiting their turn patiently and concentrating hard when working. They share and look after resources without fuss. They are confident and enthusiastic about trying out new activities and are happy to talk about what they are doing. Times when children talk together are used effectively to encourage them to think about things that affect them, and to talk about the needs of others.
16. In Years 1 to 4, pupils' behaviour is good overall, both in lessons and at playtimes, and there is no evidence of bullying. Behaviour has improved since the time of the last inspection when several of the older pupils were rude and inattentive and called out during lessons. Pupils are particularly well behaved at lunch-time, when a good variety of play activities are made available for them to share and when they show good manners when eating their food. There

have been no recent exclusions and most parents are very pleased with the way that pupils behave.

17. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils form good relationships with each other and co-operate well in class. They are kind and considerate and show good respect for pupils from differing cultural backgrounds. Pupils are given good opportunities for personal development. They successfully take on responsibility for tasks around the school, such as setting up the overhead projector and tape player for assembly.
18. Attendance is below average compared with national figures, but this comparison is not valid since the attendance of all except two is at least satisfactory. The overall figure is pulled down by the unsatisfactory attendance of just two pupils. This means that attendance is not as good as at the time of the last inspection when it was very good.

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

19. The quality of teaching is good overall with no unsatisfactory teaching. This is an improvement since the last inspection when there were significant weaknesses in teaching, especially for reception children. Parents are now pleased with the quality of teaching.
20. Throughout the school, teachers demonstrate a good knowledge of the subjects they teach, provide meaningful activities and ensure that pupils understand the purpose of the work they are given. Teachers' specific strengths are used effectively to teach science, music and history throughout the school. Teachers encourage pupils to think carefully and deepen their understanding. Teachers' planning for English and mathematics is thorough and shows clearly what pupils of differing abilities are expected to learn. Basic skills are taught well in numeracy. The teaching of reading is a particular strength in Years 1 and 2, and writing is taught particularly well in Years 3 and 4. In writing, teachers' expectations of what more able pupils in Years 1 and 2 should achieve are too low, and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write purposefully in subjects other than literacy. This is not the case in Years 3 and 4. The teaching of science throughout the school is less effective than in English and mathematics because pupils of differing abilities often carry out the same work and higher attaining pupils in particular are given insufficient challenge in devising their own tests and methods of recording their findings.
21. In the reception class, teaching by the nursery nurse is satisfactory overall. The good relationships and levels of care seen at the time of the last inspection have been successfully maintained, and children are given good support in their personal, social and emotional development. There have been improvements in lesson planning and whole class teaching. The times when children are taught as a whole group are largely effective. At these times, learning is made interesting. In a numeracy lesson observed, good use was made of number rhymes to involve all children and help them learn how to order numbers. However, there is an occasional lack of challenge for more able children. This was evident in the same numeracy lesson, where a child who could count in 2s to twenty was given the unchallenging task of completing a simple dot-to-dot exercise. This slowed the pace of his learning.
22. In the reception class, teaching is not as effective when children are working individually, and children are not always given sufficient guidance at these times. For example, children sitting with an adult formed some letters incorrectly but this was not corrected. This is partly a staffing issue, as there is only one adult in the class for most of the time. This makes it difficult for the nursery nurse to support groups and children working independently at the same time. This problem is less apparent in areas of learning such as knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. For these subjects, the organisation of lessons means that the nursery nurse has more time to support children who are working independently. This was seen to good effect in a lesson about sinking and floating. The nursery nurse had set up a range of activities, all linked to the central theme. Rather than working solely with one group of children, she managed her time very effectively by supporting different children as they worked independently. Good use was made of questioning to assess learning and, where appropriate, to extend skills and knowledge. As a result of this good quality support, all children made good progress in this lesson.

23. The other time when the needs of reception age children are not fully met is in the afternoon when they work alongside older pupils. At these times, there are occasions when not enough account is taken of their specific needs and they are not always fully involved in activities. Teaching is most effective in the afternoons, when children are able to join in with Year 1 and 2 activities for some of the time, but also have time to work in the reception class on some less structured activities, planned specifically for their needs.
24. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is particularly successful in reading, mathematics and history, where lessons are thoroughly planned and stimulating activities engage pupils' interest effectively. In a good numeracy lesson, the teacher set a range of challenges that met the needs of pupils with the highest and lowest attainment. Questioning was used effectively and individuals were well supported. Where pupils made mistakes, for example in not being certain how to find the difference between two numbers, the teacher successfully used these difficulties to help develop the learning of all pupils. Teachers plan activities that build on the pupils' own experiences. For example, in a successful history lesson, pupils had talked to their parents about where they went on holiday when they were young. This helped pupils to learn that people travel further for their holidays now than they did in the past. However, the pace of learning is too slow in some lessons, and pupils can become restless at these times. This was evident in a science and an ICT lesson, where pupils lost interest in what they were doing. In the ICT lesson, they began to waste time and were too noisy, with the result that the lesson was not as effective as it should have been.
25. In Years 3 and 4, teaching is good in most lessons, with thorough planning identifying what pupils of differing prior attainment are expected to learn. Lessons are well resourced, which helps to make activities interesting. In a good numeracy lesson, for example, the teacher had carefully prepared a variety of weighing resources to help pupils learn how to estimate different weights. Groups were well organised according to ability, and each group was given different tasks. This helped to ensure that the needs of all pupils were met.
26. Very good use is made of adult helpers to support less able pupils. Pupils also benefit enormously from the very small class size, which means that every pupil is given a lot of individual attention. The impact of this is very clear, especially in the progress made by the small number of pupils who have English as an additional language. A virtually non-English speaking pupil has learnt to speak fluent English in less than a year, thanks to the high level of individual support available in the class.
27. Learning support assistants provide effective help for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. For example, a Year 1 pupil receives almost daily additional support from a learning support assistant. This has helped her to make quick gains in knowledge. Well-organised groups in Years 1 and 2 enable lower attaining pupils to increase their knowledge and understanding effectively in reading and writing.
28. The quality of teachers' marking is consistently good. Constructive comments are written on pupils' work to encourage them to improve. Pupils report that they find the marking helpful. They are careful about reading written comments and try to ensure that they do not repeat errors.
29. Information and communication technology (ICT) is successfully used to support learning. Especially in Years 3 and 4, the computers are frequently in use to give pupils opportunities to use their ICT skills for practical purposes.
30. Pupils are given interesting and relevant homework linked to what they have been learning in class. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 take home spellings reinforcing word endings learnt in class. Every term, parents receive an informative newsletter showing what their children will be learning in literacy, enabling them to provide additional support at home. Parents are happy with the amount of homework that their children receive and feel that it helps them to be involved in their learning.

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

31. The curriculum is good overall. A wide range of purposeful, practical activities meets the need of individual pupils in most lessons. Effective links are made between different subjects throughout the school. The use of information and communication technology is successfully planned into most subjects. Parents agree that the school offers a balanced curriculum and are pleased with the way that the local area is used to support learning.
32. The curriculum for reception children is satisfactory overall. The quality of planning has improved since the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory. However, there are restrictions in the opportunities for children to learn outside due to the lack of a designated outdoor area, and there is a lack of balance between teacher directed and child initiated activities. The time allowed for children to develop skills in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world is also lower than normal. This is because, at the time of the inspection, the majority of children were attending school for mornings only, when a large amount of time is devoted to developing language and number skills.
33. There is a good curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 4. The school has developed clear plans for each subject, showing what pupils are to be taught through the two years they spend in each class. More detailed plans show activities to support pupils' learning each term.
34. The school's strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are successful and have had a good impact on raising standards since the last inspection. Planning for these subjects is thorough, identifying clearly what pupils are expected to learn in a particular lesson. There is now a far greater focus on teaching skills in mental mathematics, which has helped to make these skills a significant strength of their attainment. In literacy, there is still scope for providing pupils with more opportunities to write in different curriculum areas.
35. As at the time of the last inspection, very good use is made of the local community to enhance teaching and learning. The local village is used as a teaching resource, and pupils take part in a wide range of community activities, such as a 'Songs of Praise' in a local church. Visitors to the school, including a nurse and the local vicar, make a very effective contribution by talking about their work. There are very good links with other schools. For example, pupils shared an art project and a theatre visit with pupils from other schools, and teachers meet together for training. There are regular opportunities for pupils to take part in a variety of sporting, dance and drama activities with other schools.
36. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and has improved considerably since the time of the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory. The individual education plans of these pupils set out clear and realistic targets in literacy and numeracy. All pupils are given equal opportunities, and care is taken to ensure that support given outside the classroom does not interfere with learning in different subjects.
37. The school provides suitable opportunities for pupils to take part in activities outside lessons, although some parents would like more variety. There is good provision for competitive sport, taking into consideration the size of the school and the age of the pupils. The school is particularly successful at annual unihoc tournaments and swimming galas, competing well against larger schools.
38. There is good overall provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Specific lessons are effective in developing pupils' skills and knowledge, and teachers respond well to specific issues when they arise. A strong feature of the school's work in this area of the curriculum is the additional support given by 'The Vandyke Pyramid Support Group', a social inclusion project based at the local upper school. This involves a teacher visiting the school each week to work with small groups of pupils, to help them develop greater self-esteem and confidence by rewarding achievement and supporting learning. These lessons have a very good impact on pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

39. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Parents feel this is a positive feature of the school's work. There are opportunities for prayer and quiet reflection during assemblies and before lunch. The weaknesses in collective worship seen at the time of the last inspection no longer exist, and pupils are now responsive in assemblies. Pupils are given good opportunities to learn about the differing beliefs and customs of people from the major world faiths. However, statutory requirements are not being met for reception children to attend collective worship.
40. Well-planned assemblies cover a wide range of activities and topics, making a good contribution to pupils' moral development. In one assembly, for example, pupils increased their awareness of the importance of the gift of water and respected the fact that water is scarce for some people. Parents are pleased that their children are taught good manners and values at school.
41. The provision for social development is good. Members of staff are good role models and successfully encourage pupils to become caring, helpful and responsible. Class rules are prominently displayed and well understood by all. A 'congratulations' board in the hall is successful in helping to value and celebrate the achievements of individual pupils. Pupils are consistently encouraged to care for one another and play together harmoniously at playtimes.
42. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop an awareness of different cultures through planned visits and visitors, such as the teacher from Zimbabwe who visited the school. Pupils learnt about canal boat life at a waterway museum. Attractive displays are used to show a good range of resources and pupils' work, for instance on major festivals such as Diwali. Effective use is made of the heritage of pupils at the school to share differences and similarities in ways of life, clothing and customs.

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

43. The strengths found at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. The school offers a safe and friendly environment where pupils of all ages, abilities and backgrounds are valued. Good procedures are in place for ensuring pupils' welfare. Teachers and learning support assistants have a genuine concern for all pupils. They work well with individuals and groups to promote learning. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection. She has a good understanding of the procedures and requirements of the local area Child Protection Committee, but acknowledges that she would benefit from additional training to update her on recent changes in policy and legislation.
44. There is an effective health and safety policy to ensure and support the welfare of all pupils. Appropriate first aiders are well trained, dealing with minor accidents in a calm and sensitive manner. Parents are informed in writing about injuries in line with school policy.
45. The school has satisfactory procedures for monitoring and improving attendance, but has no practice of totalling the registers daily or weekly to give a clearer oversight of absences. Due to the very small numbers of pupils, absences are clearly shown. Generally, parents are pleased to give satisfactory explanations to support absences. The very low numbers of unauthorised absences are clearly recorded. Appropriate contact is maintained by the educational welfare services and governors have begun to take a stronger line on holidays during term time, so as to discourage unnecessary absences.
46. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for eliminating oppressive behaviour. Pupils know and understand the school's expectations. All parents have a copy of the behaviour policy, available at the parent's notice board. There was no evidence of poor behaviour during the inspection, and pupils interviewed were confident that bullying did not exist. They are happy and feel very well supported at the school. Adult supervision is always on hand to give good pastoral care. Adults are good role models, and pupils feel confident about approaching them with any problems.
47. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection in the way pupils' personal and academic progress is monitored. The small size of the school means that pupils

are known well by all members of staff. This means that their personal needs are monitored effectively, both formally and informally. Parents who were spoken to during the inspection were happy about the personal support their children are given, both in and out of lessons.

48. Test data is now analysed very rigorously. The information collected is used to plan school development and to set targets for individual pupils in English and mathematics. This information is successfully shared with parents and pupils. Very thorough assessments in English and mathematics are used successfully to plan suitable work for pupils of differing prior attainment. Whilst good information is collected in science, this information is not always used to plan what individuals need to learn next in that subject. In other subjects, appropriate notes are kept to support teachers in their planning. All members of staff understand the personal needs of the pupils in their care and share concerns where necessary at twice-weekly staff meetings.

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

49. The good partnership enjoyed at the time of the last report has been maintained. Parents support the school well and most of the expectations outlined in the home-school agreement have been achieved. The school values its links with parents and has the full confidence of the greater majority of them; it responds well to views expressed, and parents feel welcomed if they have to approach staff upon any matter.
50. The school has worked hard to develop the partnership, offering good information about school life and events. A termly 'Literacy News' sent to parents keeps them well informed of the termly literacy topic to be covered in lessons. Regular letters are sent out, which help to keep parents informed about the work of the school. A regular newsletter from the governing body is particularly useful in giving parents extra information about the organisation of the school.
51. The school brochure and the governing body's annual report to parents meet statutory requirements and provide parents with a great deal of information. The school makes good efforts to encourage parents to attend meetings, where good levels of information are provided. For example, a larger than average number of parents attending the governing body's annual meeting heard an informative presentation from a member of the finance committee, which enabled them to develop a fuller understanding of the school's finances. A notice board is well situated at the entrance mostly used by parents in the morning, allowing matters of mutual interest to be easily seen.
52. Some parents feel that the range of activities outside lessons is not satisfactory. Inspection findings do not support this view, but the school has tried to involve parents in improving extra-curricular provision. This has resulted in a new art club, held at lunchtimes, which is led by three parents. This has been a welcome initiative and nearly all pupils now attend it.
53. Homework is regularly set and marked. A clear statement of the school's expectations for homework is shown in the homework policy, which is displayed in the entrance hall. Parents stated that the amount of homework is generally 'about right', and prepares their children for transfer to middle school. Annual reports of progress have been revamped to provide parents with more information. They now give a very good explanation of the work done in the year, identifying individual targets for improvement, and clearly showing the levels of pupils' attainment. Where assessments have been made, the levels stated give a good indication of how well attainment compares with national expectancies. This keeps parents fully aware of how well their children are developing.
54. A small number of parents regularly help in classes. The school has sought to increase this number, to provide even more effective support, but many parents have small children or are working during school time. A group of very active parents are involved in the work of the school association. The association has given excellent support to the school and also provides opportunities for the community to be supportive, for instance through the Easter, summer and Christmas Fairs. The association has already identified a clear project for the future, which is to provide and enhance a play area for young children at the school. This

enthusiastic support has been much valued by the school and has had a good impact on its effectiveness.

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

55. The leadership and management of the school have improved significantly since the last inspection, when they were found to be unsatisfactory. This is no longer the case. The work of the school now has a very clear educational direction. The very effective monitoring of the school's work since the last inspection has helped to ensure rapid improvement. The headteacher is well supported by an active and committed governing body and by very hard working and conscientious members of staff. Such teamwork, with a shared sense of purpose that is apparent throughout the school, means that it is well placed to improve further in the future.
56. The headteacher has a strong commitment to school improvement and there is a far greater understanding and acknowledgement of the school's strengths and weaknesses than at the time of the last inspection. School development is carefully planned. The school development plan has been greatly improved since the last inspection and is now good. It is detailed and sets a clear and appropriate agenda for improvement, including criteria for how achievement is to be measured. However, it includes many areas of school management that are ongoing rather than issues for development, which means that the most important priorities are not always clear from the documentation.
57. The monitoring of the school's work is far more effective than at the time of the last inspection. All aspects of the school's work have been monitored since the last inspection, and this is now the most significant strength of the school's leadership and management. Test data are carefully analysed to show trends in attainment and identify areas of weakness. The individual performances of pupils are carefully tracked from year to year so as to measure progress. Where parents raise concerns, they are monitored and fed back. A good example of this happened last year, when parents raised concerns about behaviour at swimming lessons. A governor monitored this behaviour and produced a detailed report to show that the concern was not justified.
58. Subject co-ordinators in English and mathematics are actively involved in monitoring the school's work. The headteacher has established a climate within the school where the monitoring and evaluation of teachers is accepted as an everyday part of life. Teachers are regularly observed at work in the classroom. The information gained from this is used successfully to acknowledge strengths in teaching, to set individual targets for improvement, and to identify priorities for personal and professional development.
59. Training for teachers and other members of staff has been given a clear priority, and this has helped to develop teachers' confidence. Training is carefully linked to the school development plan or targets identified as part of the teacher's own professional development. This has had a good impact on standards. For example, the nursery nurse has had opportunities to attend training on early years' provision. This has helped to improve the quality of provision in the reception class. Taken together, these different strategies have had a good impact on the quality of teaching throughout the school and have led to teachers becoming more reflective about the effectiveness of their own teaching.
60. The governing body makes a very good contribution to the work of the school and successfully fulfils all its statutory duties. The good relationship that exists between the governing body and headteacher means that improvement can be carefully and sensitively planned. The governing body is pro-active in initiating change and taking responsibility for managing it. This is a good feature of the governors' work because it means that the workload is shared and does not all fall on the headteacher. There are several useful working committees, all of which take an active management role. The curriculum committee in particular is very active in monitoring the work of the school, giving the headteacher excellent support in this area. The governing body is now provided with good quality information about special educational needs provision. This was not the case at the time of the last inspection.

61. Financial planning is good. The school receives a very high budget, even when compared with schools of similar size. Governors and the headteacher have made the conscious decision to maintain three classes in the school, despite the current low number of pupils on roll. This is very cost-intensive, but it does have a good impact on standards. The day-to-day management of finances is efficient and budgeting is systematic, based on a good understanding of the needs of the school. Decisions about how to use the budget are carefully considered and the impact of spending is monitored effectively. The governing body has identified appropriate budget priorities for the next financial year.
62. The school successfully seeks additional funding from a range of sources, and these grants are used well so that they have a positive impact on learning. This is most noticeable in the good impact on standards of government money allocated to improve literacy skills in Years 1 and 2. Regular small group sessions, taken by a learning support assistant, are a significant contributory factor to the good progress made by younger pupils in developing reading skills. The school ensures that competitive bids are sought for all large purchases. Parents are consulted about major issues; for example a questionnaire was used to evaluate parental views of special educational needs provision in the school. This high level of parental consultation is a noteworthy feature of the school's successful application of 'best value' principles. Parents make a significant contribution to the financial security of the school. The money they raise is spent well to improve resources and accommodation.
63. Staffing levels are good overall, with pupils benefiting enormously from the very small class sizes. Teachers have an appropriate range of skills, which they use effectively to support learning. The good number of well trained support staff help pupils to learn well, especially those who have special educational needs. The secretary and bursar help the school to run smoothly on a day-to-day basis, with routine tasks such as the upkeep of attendance registers well managed. However, there is an important weakness in staffing levels for children in the reception class. In the mornings, children are always taught by a nursery nurse, and on most occasions she is the only adult working in the classroom. This has a negative impact on learning as it means that, when the nursery nurse is working with a group of children, there is no other adult available to support children who are working independently.
64. Accommodation is good. The school is well maintained and kept very clean. Classrooms are spacious and attractive. Good use is made of the playground and playing fields for physical education lessons, and pupils also have swimming lessons at a nearby leisure centre. The school has realistic plans for further improvements to the accommodation, including developing a secure outdoor play area for children in the reception class and moving the library to an area where it can be more easily used by individuals or groups for research purposes. Comparative weaknesses in accommodation are the lack of a headteacher's office and a medical room.
65. Resources are good, with no significant weaknesses. They have been sensibly improved over time in the light of national initiatives in the different curriculum areas. The most important weakness at the time of the last inspection has been fully addressed, in that resources for children in the reception year are now good.

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

- ◆ Raise standards in writing in the reception class and Years 1 and 2 by:
  - Raising teachers' expectations of what higher attaining pupils should achieve when writing.
  - Giving younger children more support when they use their writing skills in free choice activities.
  - Giving pupils more opportunities to write purposefully in subjects other than literacy.
  - Improving the teaching of handwriting.

(Paragraphs 6, 20, 34, 80, 96, 98)

- ◆ Raise standards in science by:
  - Making more use of assessment data to identify what different pupils should achieve.
  - Providing greater challenge for higher attaining pupils in lessons.
  - Ensuring that pupils do not all complete the same work whatever their prior attainment.
  - Giving pupils more opportunities to plan, carry out and record their own investigations and to consider and record reasons for their findings.

(Paragraphs 8, 20, 118, 119, 120)

In addition, the following areas for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Ensure that all children of statutory school age take part in a daily act of collective worship. (Paragraph 39)
- Consider strategies for providing a greater level of adult support in the reception class. (Paragraphs 22, 63, 72)
- Use the monitoring of teaching to ensure that there is a consistently good pace to learning and pupils are actively engaged in the work that they are given. (Paragraphs 14, 21, 119, 149)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

22

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

19

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	1	11	10	0	0	0
Percentage	0	5	50	45	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	34
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5
<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	4	2	6

**Test results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 have been omitted because of the small number of pupils taking the tests.**

**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	3
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	27
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

**Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13
Average class size	11.3

**Education support staff: YR – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	20

**Financial information**

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	167927
Total expenditure	165440
Expenditure per pupil	4136
Balance brought forward from previous year	3458
Balance carried forward to next year	5945

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0.9
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.6

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Results of the survey of parents and carers**

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	37
Number of questionnaires returned	12

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	25	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	33	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	8	75	8	0	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	67	8	0	0
The teaching is good.	50	50	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	25	58	9	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	25	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	50	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	8	75	17	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	8	67	25	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	67	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	25	33	9	0

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

**AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

66. Children start in the reception class in the term after their fourth birthday, attending part-time for the first two terms. At the time of the inspection, there were 10 reception age children in the reception class, seven of whom attend for mornings only. The three remaining reception age children are taught alongside pupils in Years 1 and 2 in the afternoons. Children are taught by a nursery nurse in the mornings and by a qualified teacher in the afternoons.
67. Provision for reception age children has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. The quality of teaching has been improved and the curriculum has been developed in the light of national initiatives. There is now a more balanced curriculum, and this is having a positive impact on children's learning.
68. Most children start school with very limited pre-school experiences. Children visit the school in the term before they start, which helps them to settle in quickly. Their attainment on starting school in the reception year varies from year to year, but overall it is below average. This is confirmed by assessments made in the children's first few weeks at school. Inspection findings show that children in the reception year make sound progress overall and achieve standards that are appropriate to their ability. Standards of attainment are broadly similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Children are on target to exceed the expectations for the end of the reception year (the early learning goals) in personal, social and emotional development. They are on target to reach expectations in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. In communication, language and literacy, children make good progress in developing reading, speaking and listening skills, but their progress in developing writing skills is unsatisfactory.
69. The curriculum for the reception year is satisfactory. Strengths in provision are the carefully planned and well taught group sessions at the start of most lessons. These are used effectively to introduce new topics and to assess children's learning. Less effective are the times when children work independently. At these times, they work largely unsupported, with the nursery nurse working with a small group of children. The lack of support for children working independently means that opportunities to extend their learning are missed, particularly in the development of writing skills.
70. Medium term planning is detailed and shows clearly how children's learning is to be developed over time. The nursery nurse plans a wide range of interesting activities for each area of learning, although the purpose of some child-initiated activities is not always clear from lesson planning. Since the last inspection, there have been improvements in the organisation of the classroom. Educational resources are now colourful, of good quality, accessible to the children and used effectively to support learning. The lack of a secure outdoor work area is a relative weakness in curriculum provision as it limits the opportunities children have to work freely outside. The school is aware of this issue and has plans to develop a new secure outdoor work area. This is scheduled to be in place shortly after the inspection.
71. There are sound methods for assessing children's attainment and progress. Children are assessed shortly after they start school, and there are many ongoing assessments to show progress in different aspects of learning. These assessments are regularly updated, discussed with the children and used to plan lessons.
72. Staffing levels in the reception class are satisfactory overall, but there are some weaknesses. In the morning, a nursery nurse teaches the children, and she is the only adult working in the classroom on most of these occasions. This has a significant impact on learning as it means that when the nursery nurse is working with a group of children, there is no other adult available to support children who are working independently.

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

73. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good, especially in the morning sessions when reception age children are taught separately. The nursery nurse has a good knowledge of children's individual emotional and social needs and is very caring. Children's behaviour is well managed. The nursery nurse works hard to develop self-esteem, and children are successfully encouraged to become independent, to relate well to each other and behave sensibly. Times when children talk together are used effectively to encourage them to think about things that affect them and to talk about the needs of others.
74. Children are very happy at school. They are enthusiastic about the work that they are given and try hard in all their activities. They show respect for property as well as care and concern for each other. They develop a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Children are often expected to get resources out without adult help, and they happily tidy away at the end of an activity. As a result, levels of independence in the reception year are good.
75. The nursery nurse has high expectations of how children should work. Children are encouraged to think for themselves about how they are going to work and what they are going to do. The teacher plans a range of free choice activities for each session, with children encouraged to make their own choices about where they are going to work. This aspect of personal development could be developed further if greater emphasis was given to encouraging children to talk exactly about how they are going to work on a particular activity. This would enable the nursery nurse to assess learning more accurately and to measure the level of support children will need when working independently.
76. In the afternoon sessions, when children are taught alongside older pupils, personal and social needs are less well met, with planning sometimes taking insufficient account of the different needs of younger children. This occasionally leads to children being uninvolved in the work they have been given.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

77. There is a good emphasis on developing children's language skills, with regular literacy sessions on each day for all children whether full-time or part-time. This helps children to make good progress in many aspects of literacy, though their progress in writing is less secure.
78. Speaking and listening skills are well developed. Children are given many opportunities to take part in discussions and talk about their lives, so they become confident in talking to large or small groups as well as to individuals. For example, in a lesson about floating and sinking, there was an interesting discussion about the differences between an ark and a house.
79. Reading skills are taught effectively, with elements of the literacy hour used appropriately to ensure that there is sufficient challenge for higher attaining children. The nursery nurse assistant has good expectations of what children should achieve. Stories are read well, and children enjoy listening to them. Children respond appropriately to different types of stories, joining in with the teacher when they recognise a text. By the end of the reception year, most children are beginning to read simple texts and can talk accurately about the events in the story. They have an appropriate knowledge of the sounds that letters make and use this to help them read unknown words. There is a very clear structure to the teaching of these skills, with good use made of a commercial reading scheme. This leads to even lower attaining children beginning to be confident about sounding out how to read new words.
80. The teaching of writing is satisfactory when children are working with the nursery nurse in a group, but there are important weaknesses when children are working independently. The good aspect of the teaching of writing is that children are given good opportunities to write freely in the classroom. There is a designated writing area, with supplies of paper, pens and pencils always available. Children readily use these for a range of purposes, making marks to represent lists, stories and descriptions, and they are enthusiastic about using their writing

skills. However, few children are yet using recognisable words when they write for their own purposes, and the teacher does not allow enough time to support children when they are writing independently.

81. Homework is carefully planned and makes a good contribution to children's learning, especially in the development of reading skills. Children regularly take reading books home, and this helps them to extend their skills.

### **Mathematical development**

82. Children develop sound mathematical skills. By the end of the reception year, most children recognise numbers to ten, with the small number of higher attaining children recognising higher numbers. When working orally, higher attaining children can work out 'one more than' a given number. Children enjoy playing simple number games on the computer, and confidently use appropriate mathematical language, such as 'bigger than' and 'smaller than'.
83. Teaching is satisfactory, with a good range of practical activities planned for each lesson. Good use is made of number songs and rhymes to help children to learn how to order numbers. Lesson planning identifies expectations for children of differing prior attainment, so that children's needs are met well on the whole. There are suitable activities for less able children, and most are making at least sound progress. However, there is an occasional lack of challenge for the most able children in the class. This is most evident during group activities and lessens the rate at which they learn new skills.
84. A good feature of teaching is the quality of support given to individuals. In one lesson observed, the nursery nurse worked with lower attaining children, helping them to count and match numbers. There was good use of resources for this activity, which helped these children to learn well. In contrast, the dot-to-dot activity for more able children who were working without adult support lacked challenge, and their learning could have been extended further.

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

85. Children develop a satisfactory range of skills and knowledge, though the rate at which they learn new skills is limited by weaknesses in the curriculum. Because the majority of children in the reception class at the time of the inspection only attend part-time, there is not enough time for all areas of this aspect of the early years' curriculum to be covered in sufficient detail. Children only have access to a full curriculum once they are attending full-time, when they are taught in the afternoons alongside Year 1 and 2 pupils.
86. Nevertheless, children make sound gains in knowledge and understanding. They describe the life cycle of different plants and animals, and can identify different habitats around school. They successfully name the different parts of a flower and understand what plants need to help them grow. Work on faiths such as Judaism and on stories from the Bible helps children to understand that not everyone is the same or believes in the same things.
87. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. Activities are carefully planned and are interesting. The organisation of lessons means that the nursery nurse has more time to support children who are working individually. This was seen to good effect in a lesson about sinking and floating. The nursery nurse had set up a range of activities, all linked to the central theme. Rather than working solely with one group of children, she managed her time very effectively by supporting different children as they worked independently. Good use was made of questioning to assess learning and, where appropriate, to extend skills and knowledge. As a result of this good quality support, all children made good progress in this lesson.
88. Children who attend the school full time also develop skills in this area of learning when they work with older pupils in the afternoon. The quality of learning at these times is variable, as they are not always fully involved in activities. Planning does not consistently identify how the

needs of these children are to be met. This is a weakness in provision that limits progress in afternoon sessions.

### **Physical development**

89. Children develop an appropriate range of physical skills. Although there is no secure outside area, children have regular opportunities to work outside under the supervision of the nursery nurse. Children's learning is also enhanced by regularly timetabled physical education lessons. The quality of teaching in the one lesson that was timetabled was good. In this lesson, new skills were carefully introduced and children were fully involved in activities. They listened carefully to instructions from the nursery nurse and to a tape. They responded sensitively to different types of music, using their body to show different types of moods. The teacher allowed sufficient time in the lesson for the teaching of specific skills, but also gave children time to 'experiment' with their own ideas. The teacher gave good support to individual children, helping to ensure that the needs of children across the range of attainment were fully met. Children were encouraged to develop their own ideas and then given effective help to produce a final 'performance' when they put all of their movements together. This helped to ensure that learning was purposeful and progress was good.

### **Creative development**

90. Children use a range of materials to create pictures and models. They confidently manipulate different materials to make models of boats, which they then experiment with to see if they will float. There are good cross-curricular links, which help to make learning purposeful. Children sing unaccompanied well-known rhymes with actions, and clap in time with the music during physical education lessons. The classroom is well organised so that children have good opportunities for imaginative play. These areas are popular with the children and enable them to extend their vocabulary and develop their creativity effectively whilst playing together.

## **ENGLISH**

91. Overall, pupil's attainment is above average by the end of Year 2, though speaking, listening and reading are better developed than writing. Pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 4. Pupils make good progress in reading in Years 1 and 2 and in writing in Years 3 and 4. Speaking and listening skills develop well throughout the school. Pupils' attainment and progress are similar to the findings of the last inspection in Years 3 and 4, but they have improved in Years 1 and 2 where they were below average overall at that time.
92. There is no significant difference between the attainment and progress of girls and boys in lessons. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall. The progress of pupils with special educational needs has improved since the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory. Pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress in English, especially in Years 3 and 4. Parents are pleased with the progress that their children make.
93. A small number of pupils take the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 each year, and results vary according to the number of pupils with special educational needs. Taking the last three years together, attainment has been consistently weaker in reading than in writing. In 2001, attainment was well below average in reading but above average in writing. Weaknesses in reading have been due to the greater focus on developing writing, with less time allowed for pupils to develop individual reading skills. Reading is now being supported well in Years 1 and 2, and the weakness is no longer evident in class work.
94. In speaking and listening, pupils make good progress throughout the school. Drama is used effectively in Years 1 and 2 to encourage pupils to speak in front of the class using clear, loud voices and to help them to listen to each other. In Years 3 and 4, these skills are further extended when pupils put forward arguments during discussions. During a geography lesson, for example, pupils suggested good reasons for and against building proposals in the village. Throughout the school, pupils increase their ability to sit and listen, with older pupils being particularly attentive and interested.

95. By the end of Year 2, all pupils are very keen to read and are confident when answering questions about the story of a book and its characters. Most pupils read fluently, correcting any errors they make. They make good use of their knowledge of the sounds groups of letters make to help them read unfamiliar words. All pupils, including those with lower attainment, are likely to reach the expected level for seven-year olds in the end of year tests. By the end of Year 4, pupils have clear preferences for types of book and authors. Higher attaining pupils discuss the likely outcome of events described in their books, drawing on their own experiences to make their predictions. Lower attaining pupils use a range of strategies to help them read unfamiliar words. All pupils know how to use the non-fiction library to carry out research, and most use their knowledge of alphabetical order when using a dictionary.
96. In writing, pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in Years 3 and 4. By the end of Year 2, most pupils write well-punctuated sentences. However, the accuracy of their spelling is variable, and no pupils write using joined handwriting. Whilst most pupils are likely to attain the expected Level 2 at the end of the year, higher attaining pupils are not consistently expected to produce work at a higher level. There is a limited selection of written work in pupils' books, and weaknesses in the way some pupils form letters make their pace of writing slow and laborious. By the end of Year 4, pupils write neatly and use a range of adjectives effectively to make their writing more interesting. They edit their own work to improve the content, and write for a wide range of purposes. There are still some weaknesses in spelling and grammar, especially amongst lower attaining pupils.
97. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers' planning shows what pupils of differing prior attainment are expected to learn, and a good mix of practical and written activities helps to make learning interesting. In Years 3 and 4, for example, a matching game was used effectively to help pupils develop their knowledge of silent letters in words. Lessons are well organised and activities are explained clearly, enabling pupils to settle quickly to their work in most lessons. Targets for individual pupils help encourage pupils to try hard and concentrate on weaknesses in their work. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils, and encourage good behaviour by praising those who sit and listen sensibly. Questioning is well focused so pupils extend their knowledge and understanding effectively and give more detailed or specific answers. In one lesson for Years 3 and 4, good questioning was used to help pupils consider what verbs would be most useful when giving directions. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning in the subject. For example, pupils in Year 1 retold a traditional story by using the word processor.
98. Throughout the school, teachers demonstrate a good knowledge of the subject. They are careful to use the correct terms, such as 'phoneme' and 'proper noun' when discussing parts of words or the structure of sentences, and they explain the purpose of work effectively. In Years 1 and 2, the teacher supports pupils effectively in developing their reading skills by demonstrating the use of expression well. Expectations for writing are higher in Years 3 and 4 and pupils of differing prior attainment are challenged well. In contrast, there is an occasional lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are encouraged to use a good variety of types of writing, such as letters, book reviews, factual accounts and stories, both in literacy lessons and in other subjects. This is less evident in Years 1 and 2, where some opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills across the curriculum are missed.
99. Learning support assistants are used effectively to support small groups of pupils throughout the school.
100. Teachers take care when marking pupils' work and write constructive suggestions to help them improve. There are very good assessment procedures. Individual targets are kept at the front of pupils' workbooks as a useful reminder to pupils and members of staff.
101. There is a good pattern of homework, linked to what pupils have been learning in class. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 take home spellings that reinforce word endings learnt in class. Each term, parents receive an informative newsletter showing what their children will be learning in literacy, enabling them to provide additional support at home.

102. Overall, there is a good, broad and balanced curriculum, with a suitable scheme of work that gives teachers clear guidance in their lesson planning. There are good opportunities for pupils of differing backgrounds and abilities to learn. Lower attaining pupils are given effective additional support in small groups, and pupils with English as an additional language are supported individually. The subject makes a good contribution towards pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, with good opportunities to write and appreciate poetry and a range of traditional stories.
103. The subject is led and managed effectively, and there is a good understanding of what needs to be developed. Management was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. Teachers' planning and test results are very carefully monitored and the information gained is used to improve provision and standards in the subject. Educational resources support learning well and there is a clear understanding of how resources should be expanded as further funding becomes available.

## **MATHEMATICS**

104. Pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards of attainment were below average in Years 1, 2 and 3. National Curriculum test results for pupils at the end of Year 2 confirm inspection findings. Since the last inspection, there has been a year-on-year improvement in test results.
105. There are several factors that have led to the improved standards of attainment. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good. The numeracy strategy has also had a good impact on pupils' learning, especially in improving number skills. Improved assessment procedures mean that pupils' skills are developed more systematically. As a result of these improvements, all pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, are achieving well compared with their prior attainment.
106. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of basic number concepts. They add accurately using money, and can successfully identify multiples of five and ten. They count forwards and back in ones, twos and fives, and add and subtract using numbers up to at least one hundred. More able pupils confidently work with larger numbers than this. Pupils can halve shapes and numbers, and sort objects into sets according to colour, shape and size. They measure accurately using everyday objects, and are beginning to use centimetres and metres to measure distance. Higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of place value.
107. By the end of Year 4, pupils have begun to work confidently with larger numbers. They have a good understanding of multiplication and division, and accurately order numbers up to a 1000. They understand the different values of each digit in a four-digit number, and add and subtract accurately. Pupils recognise equivalence in fractions and have a good knowledge of shape. They identify different 3-D shapes, rotational and reflective symmetry, and calculate the perimeter of regular shapes.
108. Pupils have good skills in using and applying their mathematical knowledge, with particularly good ability in working out calculations in their head. Teachers give a good amount of time to developing and reinforcing these skills. This has helped to raise attainment. Pupils enjoy mental mathematics and respond well to the work that they are given. Teachers have high expectations in this aspect of the subject and ensure that pupils are suitably challenged. This support means that pupils develop good skills at explaining the strategies they have used to work out a calculation. The sharing of these strategies helps to develop the skills of all pupils as they learn about the different methods that might be used.
109. The quality of teaching is good. There have been improvements in teaching over the last two years. Teachers are now giving a far greater emphasis to the teaching of mental mathematics skills and are assessing learning more accurately. These changes have had a good impact on standards. Pupils also benefit enormously from the very small class sizes,

which means that they are given a lot of individual help from either the teacher or adult helpers. This means that problems are quickly overcome and do not hinder progress over time.

110. Teachers have good expectations of what pupils should achieve. They plan lessons carefully using the format recommended by the numeracy strategy, ensuring that suitable tasks are planned for pupils of differing prior attainment so that the needs of all pupils are fully met. In a good oral mathematics lesson in Years 1 and 2, for example, the teacher set a range of challenges which met the needs of more able and less able pupils. Questioning was used effectively and individuals were well supported. Where pupils made mistakes, for example in not being certain how to find the difference between two numbers, the teacher effectively used these difficulties to help extend the skills of all pupils.
111. Teachers make effective use of praise, ask suitable questions to ensure that pupils understand, and make appropriate use of a review session at the end of lessons to share and reinforce what has been learnt. Behaviour is managed effectively and, as a result, pupils behave well in lessons. Teachers are enthusiastic and resource lessons well. As a result, pupils are well motivated and keen to learn. For example, in a Years 3 and 4 lesson, good use was made of different sorts of weights to help pupils understand the difference between grams and kilograms. Pupils were enthused by the practical emphasis to the activity, and there was a buzz of purposeful conversation as they estimated the weight of different objects. In this lesson, pupils supported each other well and showed good tolerance of each other's ideas, even when they were wrong.
112. Teachers give pupils appropriate opportunities to use their numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics. For example, they measure in science and design and technology and count in physical education lessons. A scrutiny of previous work shows that pupils are able to use ICT to support their learning. Attractive displays of work show how pupils have used data-handling programmes to present data in different ways.
113. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and the numeracy strategy is firmly embedded in school practice. A commercial scheme is used to good effect to support teachers when they are planning work. There are good procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress, and teachers use this information effectively to decide what needs to be taught next. Work is regularly marked, and teachers sometimes add written comments to identify how pupils could improve. This is good practice and helps to involve pupils fully in their learning. The school makes effective use of National Curriculum tests and other assessments to measure progress through Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4. These results are carefully analysed to identify how pupils' attainment could be improved and to set targets for what pupils should be achieving. A good feature of target setting is the way that pupils are involved in the process.
114. Management of the subject over time has been good. The recently appointed subject co-ordinator is well trained and is already taking a good lead in developing the subject. Very effective monitoring of teaching and learning has helped the school to address the issues identified as weaknesses at the time of the last inspection. The rigorous monitoring of the school's work has been a very significant factor in the rapid school improvement since then.

## **SCIENCE**

115. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment is in line with national averages at the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations for this year group, though their knowledge of scientific facts is stronger than their investigative skills. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress overall.
116. In Year 2, the teacher's assessments in 2001 show that most pupils attain the expected Level 2 and a good number attain the higher Level 3. However, teacher assessments support inspection findings that pupils' knowledge is greater than their skills in devising and recording the results of their own investigations. By the end of Year 2, most pupils carry out a simple

test with help from an adult and make good observations. Higher attaining pupils use scientific terms correctly and understand scientific facts well. For example, they know that plants use the sun to help them make their own food. However, pupils are not good at suggesting ways of testing whether their knowledge is correct.

117. By the end of Year 4, pupils have developed a good factual knowledge of topics covered recently and they make well founded observations. However, their written work does not show that they consider the significance of findings of investigations or devise their own ways of recording these findings. Pupils use their numeracy skills when measuring but make limited use of graphs for recording findings.
118. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with an example of good teaching observed in Years 3 and 4. The teacher has a good knowledge of the subject and teaches scientific vocabulary and facts effectively. Lesson planning is clear, though it does not show what pupils of differing prior attainment are expected to achieve. This means that pupils often complete the same work, irrespective of their ability. The teacher makes good use of resources to demonstrate scientific processes and to make learning interesting. For example, in the lesson in Years 3 and 4, a kettle and cold metal lid were used effectively to show how water evaporates and condenses in the water cycle.
119. The teacher is careful to explain the purpose of lessons and is successful in involving pupils in their learning by providing good opportunities to take part in practical tasks. Learning is clearly linked to everyday life. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 discussed why washing on a line dries quickly, what happens to puddles on the playground, and why windows steam up. Probing questions, such as 'How do you know that plants need water?' are asked to encourage pupils to think in more depth. However, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not always attentive during whole class discussion, or when the teacher does not create a sense of urgency that encourages them to complete tasks quickly. At these times, the pace of learning is slower. In Years 3 and 4, the teacher has a good relationship with the pupils and they are keen to listen and answer questions. Throughout the school, pupils have few opportunities to plan, carry out and record their own investigations. Pupils are not given enough opportunity to consider and record reasons for their findings, which means that higher attaining pupils in particular are not always challenged enough.
120. The curriculum is broad and balanced, with sound coverage of all topics, although pupils have limited opportunities to devise and carry out their own investigations. Homework is used effectively to extend pupils' learning. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 kept a food diary as part of a topic on healthy eating. Teachers carry out detailed assessments of pupils' attainment and progress, although not enough use is made of this information when planning work suitable for pupils at different levels of attainment. Older pupils have limited opportunities to use graphs to show their findings. There is little evidence of information and communication technology being used to support learning.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

121. Only one lesson in art and design in Years 1 and 2 was on the timetable during the inspection. Judgements on pupils' attainment and progress have been made by scrutinising samples of pupils' work and teachers' lesson planning.
122. Pupils attain standards that are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. This is lower than found at the last inspection, when the quality of teaching was good, with a member of staff having particular skills in teaching the subject. The quality of teaching in the one lesson timetabled during this inspection was satisfactory, with pupils making sound progress.
123. By the end of Year 2, pupils paint pictures in the style of Van Gogh. They paint and draw using a range of media, such as pencils, crayons and paint. When producing sea pictures, pupils observe carefully and experiment successfully with different techniques. Older pupils develop a wider range of skills and begin to produce more accurate paintings and drawings. In Years 3 and 4, pupils worked successfully with different coloured paper to make a collage.

They chose colours that complemented each other and then extended and improved their designs by trying out different ideas and deciding which looked best. They learn about a range of artists and are able to reproduce work in their styles. For example, older pupils had studied the techniques of Winslow Homer, looking at his painting called 'The Fog Warning'. They successfully reproduced his style in their own painting of a sea rescue.

124. The quality of teaching was satisfactory in the one lesson that was timetabled in Years 1 and 2. The lesson was carefully planned to give pupils appropriate opportunities to try out a range of techniques as they produced collage pictures of fish. There were good links to the theme of water that pupils were learning about in different subjects. Pupils were encouraged to plan their work before producing the finished product, though this did not have the intended effect because there was little teacher input. This meant that some pupils repeated the same mistakes rather than improving their work after informed evaluation. For example, a pupil made three attempts at producing a template for her fish collage, but each time the template was much too small and yet the mistake was repeated. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are interested in artwork, but do not always maintain their interest for a whole lesson. Some younger pupils lose interest in their work when the teacher does not closely supervise or support them.
125. The curriculum is planned carefully using a recommended scheme of work. Appropriate records are kept of what each pupil has achieved over time. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to link learning in art with their work in ICT. For example, they use a range of art programmes to produce paintings and carry out research about different artists using the internet or CD-ROMS.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

126. Only one lesson in design and technology in Years 3 and 4 was on the timetable during the inspection. Judgements on pupils' attainment and progress have been made by scrutinising samples of pupils' work and teachers' lesson planning.
127. Pupils' standards of attainment are above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection when standards were also high. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, make good progress throughout the school. Pupils continue to benefit from good quality teaching and a carefully planned and interesting curriculum that gives a good emphasis to planning, making and evaluating skills. All of these factors have had a positive impact on standards throughout the school.
128. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn to experiment with different materials and ideas, for example when making fruit salads or model boats. They work carefully with various materials such as paper, card, and fabrics, showing a good range of both planning and making skills. This is seen to good effect in a project involving making a model classroom in a shoebox. Pupils produced simple plans of their classrooms, based on a well informed understanding of what makes a 'good classroom'. They make good quality models showing a range of skills and then successfully evaluate their work to identify how they could improve further in the future.
129. Pupils consolidate and extend these skills in Years 3 and 4. They use a range of materials, including natural ingredients such as food, and there is a clear focus on developing pupils' ability to evaluate what they have made. They do this well, reviewing why something has worked or how it could be improved. Pupils design and make different sorts of salads or pizzas, then taste them to decide which flavour or topping is best. During the inspection, pupils were working on a long-term project involving designing and making books for the reception class. This was a very purposeful task, with the teacher giving pupils opportunities to practise a wide range of skills. There are very good cross-curricular links, with pupils initially researching what sort of books the younger children enjoy and then using this information to write their own stories. Pupils designed books that used different techniques to make them interesting. Some books included pop-up pictures, while others used levers or pivots to make a character in the story move. All of these skills were applied well to the task.

130. The quality of teaching was good in the one lesson timetabled in Years 3 and 4. The teacher skilfully managed the activities and made learning purposeful. Activities were exciting and challenging, with pupils able to develop and practise skills at their own pace, according to their prior attainment. As a result, most pupils were well motivated. The teacher prepares well for lessons and uses a good range of teaching methods. At times she teaches skills to the whole class, sometimes successfully using examples of pupils' work to show how it could be improved by the application of a particular skill. At other times, the teacher works with individuals or small groups, helping them to improve their work. This was seen to good effect during the inspection. The teacher spent some time talking to the pupils about what they had already completed and how they were going to use pivots or levers to make their books. The class looked at examples of different types of pivots or levers to ensure that they understood how they worked. When pupils were working individually, the teacher and adult gave them effective help by talking to them about what they had made and how they could improve their finished product.
131. Classrooms are well organised so that pupils are able to work independently. They are encouraged to think about what skills they were going to use, and most become very involved in their work. They make sensible choices about resources and tools, and handle them safely and sensibly. Pupils are given good opportunities to evaluate their work and share their ideas, which leads to good levels of co-operation in lessons.
132. There is a broad and balanced curriculum, with the school allocating a large amount of time to the teaching of the subject. Good use is made of a nationally recommended scheme of work to support teachers in their planning. Teachers often record on their lesson plans what pupils have achieved, which gives them sound information on what needs to be taught next.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

133. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Good standards have been maintained since the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language, make good progress throughout the school.
134. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are good at comparing features seen at the local brook with facilities at a seaside resort, and they label features of the cliff and seashore correctly. They identify quiet and busy roads on a map of the village, and make sensible suggestions as to how busy roads could be made safer.
135. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are good at considering the impact of change on the environment. For example, they discuss how the formation of an artificial lake changes facilities and wildlife. They draw suitable sketch maps showing local towns and important features and make correct references to the points of the compass.
136. The quality of teaching in the one lesson observed was good. Teaching was also found to be good at the time of the last inspection. The purpose of the lesson was explained clearly to pupils and previous lessons were reviewed effectively to give a solid base to new learning. Pupils were given good opportunities to consider the impact on village life of proposed changes in the use of buildings. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils enjoy geography lessons and behave well. Pupils' literacy skills are used more effectively in Years 3 and 4.
137. Homework makes a good contribution towards learning in the subject. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoyed collecting traffic survey data to share with the class.
138. The curriculum for geography is good and a suitable scheme of work supports teachers in their planning. Effective use is made of visits and visitors to enrich learning. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 looked at the plans for proposed housing in the village and visited the site to help them consider the pros and cons of the development. Suitable assessments are made to monitor pupils' progress.
139. Information and communication technology effectively supports learning in some lessons. For

example, pupils use the word processor to help make interesting covers for their topic folders.

## **HISTORY**

140. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations by the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 4. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress throughout the school. Good standards of attainment and progress have been maintained since the time of the last inspection.
141. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are confident when explaining their personal histories to the class, and have a good awareness of how their needs have changed since they were babies. They are good at describing how life has altered in Britain, for example comparing Victorian fashion with clothes worn today and listing some modern inventions.
142. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have a good understanding of the impact the Vikings had when they invaded Britain and how we can still see a legacy of their occupation. Pupils use a range of evidence to find out about the past.
143. The quality of teaching in the one lesson observed was good. No judgement on the quality of teaching was made at the time of the last inspection. The teacher has a good knowledge of the subject and asks probing questions to encourage pupils to think about the past. For example, pupils were asked to consider why few families took holidays abroad forty years ago. The purpose of the lesson was carefully explained to pupils and a timeline was used effectively to help them to develop a sense of time passing. Effective use of pupils' own family histories made learning interesting and relevant.
144. Homework makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 asked their parents questions about previous holidays and brought photographs from home to share with the class when explaining what they had learnt about their family history from the evidence collected.
145. There is a good curriculum. It is broad and balanced, with an appropriate scheme of work to support teachers in their lesson planning. Teachers show clearly in their planning their expectations for differing abilities and year groups. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are given good opportunities to extend their literacy skills by writing about what they have learnt in their own words, and younger pupils develop their speaking and listening skills well when discussing the past. Teachers carry out satisfactory assessments of pupils' progress and this information is used to plan for pupils' differing needs.
146. Information and communication technology makes a satisfactory contribution to learning. Pupils enjoy using the computers to produce short pieces of writing, to illustrate their work or carry out research. Good use is made of visits such as to a local open-air museum to learn about how people used to live. There are good links with other subjects. For example, older pupils made Anglo-Saxon jewellery, candles and weaving as part of a design and technology project. Younger pupils extended their understanding of the importance of preserving artefacts from the past when they set up their own toy museum for their parents.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

147. Pupils' standards of attainment are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and above national expectations by the end of Year 4. Standards are broadly similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Progress is now greatest in Years 3 and 4 where pupils get more opportunities to use their ICT skills on a daily basis. Provision in ICT has continued to be developed since the last inspection. Resources are good. They have been improved in the light of developments in the subject and teachers have further improved their skills. These factors have helped to maintain high standards.
148. Throughout the school, pupils are becoming confident about using their computing skills for a range of practical purposes. By the end of Year 2, pupils are very familiar with the layout of a keyboard and confidently type simple texts. They successfully add text to pictures and

produce simple graphs. By the end of Year 4, pupils can change the font type, colour and size of their text, and present their work in a way that is attractive to an audience. In their writing, they use different colours and font styles to make it more exciting. They understand how computers can be used to present information in different ways. They successfully use clip-art to make their writing interesting, and are learning to use the computers to present data in a variety of forms. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 produce interesting graphs and sort data using different criteria.

149. Pupils have a good knowledge of the many applications of information and communication technology and understand that it involves more than just working on the computer. For example, they know how to scan pictures and have appropriate opportunities to use programmable toys. They understand that the internet can be used to find information, and they do this confidently both in lessons and at home. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 confidently use tape-recorders to listen to stories.
150. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 and 4, where pupils are given more opportunities to use ICT skills in different curriculum areas. Pupils were observed developing their skills in a range of subjects, including literacy, numeracy, design and technology and religious education. This gives pupils good opportunities to practise new skills and helps to reinforce learning and make work purposeful. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are very well motivated and are keen to use their skills. They work hard, either independently or as a pair, sharing skills where necessary and offering each other support. In Years 1 and 2, in the one lesson timetabled, pupils showed varying degrees of interest and behaviour was not managed as effectively as in Years 3 and 4. The teacher allowed too much noise to develop. As a result, not all pupils learnt as well as they should have done.
151. Good quality displays of pupils' work show how skills are used in different subjects. These displays help to make learning purposeful to the pupils and show the progression of skills across the school.
152. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. The school carefully records what has been taught to pupils and what skills have been developed. Teachers are beginning to link this information on progress to planning what needs to be taught next. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are beginning to be involved in evaluating their own learning. This is good practice and involves pupils in identifying for themselves things that they can or cannot do.

## **MUSIC**

153. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 4. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall. Attainment is broadly the same as at the time of the last inspection, with improvements in the enthusiasm shown for singing. Pupils listen sensibly and thoughtfully to pre-recorded music and give valid opinions about the mood portrayed. Most pupils sing tunefully when unaccompanied and keep a steady beat by clapping their hands. Older pupils alter the tempo or dynamics by following the teacher's lead, and play a simple tune on the descant recorder. Higher attaining pupils show good knowledge of various musical terms, such as 'staccato' and 'minim', and accurately follow rhythm patterns written in musical notation.
154. The quality of teaching in the one lesson observed was good. A clear lesson plan showed what pupils were expected to learn and good variety of activities held their interest effectively. The teacher had a good knowledge of the subject and carefully shared the correct names for a number of musical features with the class. Effective guidance was given in how to improve the quality of sound when learning to play the recorder. Pupils worked together sensibly to compose a simple piece of music and perform it for the class. Pupils' attitudes in music lessons have improved since the last inspection, when some pupils were rude and silly and their behaviour was not well managed.
155. The curriculum is satisfactory, with teachers' planning showing that pupils have a suitably broad and balanced range of opportunities to listen, sing, play and compose music.

156. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have good opportunities to listen and comment reflectively to music during assemblies, and to sing and play music together. Pupils regularly perform to parents and the local community, for example taking part in a 'Songs of Praise' at a local church.
157. Satisfactory assessment arrangements are in place for teachers to monitor pupils' progress. Information and communication technology is used to support the subject. For example, pupils take responsibility for playing pre-recorded music in assemblies.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

158. During the inspection, only lessons in dance for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and gymnastics for pupils in Years 3 and 4 were timetabled. Judgements on the attainment of pupils have been based on the work seen in the timetabled lessons and on discussions with pupils and members of staff.
159. The school has maintained the standards found at the time of the last inspection, when pupils' attainment in swimming was found to be good. This continues to be the case, with many pupils already swimming at least 25 metres by the time they leave school at the end of Year 4. In other aspects of physical education, standards are in line with national expectations.
160. In the dance lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils showed satisfactory skills for their age. They are able to move in time to music, walking on the spot, clapping to the beat, stretching arms and bodies, and swinging their hips. They successfully used their imagination to make imaginary fish movements. However, they do not listen carefully enough to the music provided as a stimulus. They enjoy performing to each other, although the quality of their evaluations is limited to saying whether they enjoyed what they had seen.
161. In Years 3 and 4, pupils show satisfactory gymnastic skills. They are beginning to develop sequences of movements using a variety of turns and jumps. They work carefully on the apparatus as they begin to transfer their sequences to different situations. Pupils enjoy gymnastics and work hard. They are able to sustain energetic activities for an appropriate amount of time and understand why exercise is good for the body.
162. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Good use was made of music in the dance lesson in Years 1 and 2, where activities had been carefully planned to allow pupils to develop and practise a range of movements. Pupils were given good opportunities to show the rest of their class examples of their good work, which helped them to share skills. Behaviour was managed effectively and pupils responded well to the work they were given. The teacher made good use of questioning to encourage pupils to work independently and to develop their own ideas as they improvised movements. Skills were developed at an appropriate rate, though most pupils tended to work in isolation from the music so that their movements were not linked closely enough to it. This slowed the pace of learning and limited the effectiveness of the lesson.
163. In the gymnastics lesson, pupils in Years 3 and 4 benefited from the very small group size, which meant that they were given a lot of individual attention. The teacher successfully encouraged pupils to share ideas and to work together. They began to turn their jumps into sequences of movement around an imaginary square, though they were not given enough time to work on the apparatus. More time was spent getting the apparatus out than was available for pupils to work on it, and this slowed the development of skills.
164. The curriculum is carefully planned to include all aspects of the National Curriculum. Planning is detailed and shows how pupils are to develop skills over time. Teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress effectively by evaluating learning at the end of each lesson, although this practice is not yet consistent throughout the school.
165. Learning is enriched by a range of extra-curricular opportunities that is satisfactory for the size of the school. There is a commercial football-training club, which is well attended and gives pupils good opportunities to practise and develop skills outside lessons. Pupils are given

suitable opportunities to take part in competitive sport. Particularly noteworthy are the school's consistently good achievements in unihoc tournaments and swimming galas. In both of these, pupils achieve well against schools that have many more pupils to choose from.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

166. Pupils' attainment is above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 4. This is broadly similar to the findings of the last inspection. Pupils make good progress in learning about Christianity and other major world faiths.
167. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 confidently retell Bible stories in a variety of imaginative ways. They write prayers and understand what happens at a Baptism. A visit from a local vicar had a good impact on learning, helping pupils to understand why baptism is an important ceremony to Christians.
168. By the end of Year 4, pupils have developed a wide knowledge of different world faiths. Teachers make good use of the pupils' own experiences to make learning relevant and interesting, and this has a good impact on standards. For example, a pupil who had recently returned from a visit to India talked about what it means to be a Hindu. Pupils researched the religion, finding out about different ceremonies and exploring their significance. Pupils confidently related their own experiences to those of a Hindu, comparing and contrasting the different ways that people pray and talking about the various celebrations. Pupils successfully learn about different places of worship, such as a mosque and synagogue, and explain the importance of faith in everyday life.
169. Throughout the school, pupils are successfully encouraged to consider the needs of others through work about Oxfam and various contributions to both local and national charities. This makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and cultural development.
170. The quality of teaching is good. Lesson planning is clear about what is being taught, although it does not always show what pupils of different ages or abilities are expected to learn in a particular lesson. Nevertheless, teachers have realistic expectations of what pupils should achieve. This means that, in practice, pupils are suitably challenged whatever their prior attainment. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to take part in discussions and to relate issues of faith to their own lives. For example, in a lesson in Years 3 and 4, pupils confidently explored aspects of the Hindu faith, contrasting it with their own experiences. They are given good opportunities to carry out their own research, and they do this enthusiastically.
171. Teachers' lesson planning shows that good use is made of a range of resources to make lessons interesting, including visits to the local Anglican Church. Information and communication technology is used appropriately to support learning, with pupils using their well-developed word-processing skills to record their work or find out information from CD-ROMs or the internet.
172. Collective worship makes a valuable contribution to pupils' understanding of faith and beliefs. Prayers are said at different times during the school day, for example before lunch. Assemblies include a strong Christian element and reinforce learning in class, as well as encouraging pupils to think about how everyone is unique and special and should be valued.
173. There is an appropriate curriculum, with a suitable amount of time allocated to the teaching of the subject. Teachers' planning is closely linked to the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils' attainment is assessed through evaluating learning at the end of lessons and by marking work. This gives teachers sufficient information to help them decide what needs to be taught next, ensuring that pupils' learning consistently builds on what has already been taught.