

INSPECTION REPORT

BROUGHTON INFANT SCHOOL

Aylesbury

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110284

Headteacher: Mrs F E Holland

Reporting inspector: Mr B Allsop
1245

Dates of inspection: 18 – 22 September 2000

Inspection number: 224277

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Broughton Infant School Narbeth Drive Aylesbury Buckinghamshire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Judy Parce
Date of previous inspection:	4 March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Barry Allsop, Registered Inspector (1245)	Mathematics Geography History	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? Equal opportunities English as an additional language
Geraldine Osment, Lay Inspector (9646)		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Steve Crumpler, Team Member (30713)	English Religious education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
John Adams, Team Member (8530)	Science Information and communications technology Design technology	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Broughton Infant School caters for pupils aged between 4 and 7. It has 152 pupils on roll and 26 attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Almost all the pupils come from within the school's identified local catchment area. The locality of the school has changed in recent years with an increased number of rented properties and a wider range of ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals has increased to 10 per cent of pupils but is below the national average of 20 per cent. The percentage of pupils who have English as an additional language is high at 18 per cent. The number of pupils with special educational needs at 28 per cent is also high. The main special educational need that the school caters for is moderate learning difficulty. The attainment of the pupils on entry to the school is broadly average. The school is in the process of establishing itself as an infant school after recent re-organisation from a first school with Year 3 pupils.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Broughton Infant School is an effective school with a number of good features. Standards are above average in English and mathematics; however, at times the most able pupils are not stretched enough. Overall, the quality of teaching is good, particularly for pupils in the nursery and the reception class. The overall leadership and management of the school by the senior staff are good. The headteacher and deputy head, together with the governors, are an effective team. The ethos of the school is good. It provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good.
- The pupils in the nursery and reception class have a very good start to school.
- Standards in English, mathematics and art are above average.
- The pupils have positive attitudes and overall have good standards of behaviour.
- The social development of the pupils is very good.
- The school takes great care of the pupils.
- The support for pupils with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is good.
- There is good leadership by the senior management team.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communications technology are not as high as they could be.
- The quality of teaching in the mixed-age class is, at times, unsatisfactory.
- The use of assessment information to set challenging tasks for more able pupils.
- The quality of information in pupils' reports and the frequency of formal parents' evenings need improving.

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 satisfactory improvement since it was last inspected in March 1996. The standards in English and mathematics have improved despite a decline in the National Curriculum test results in 1999, when a large number of pupils with special educational needs took the tests. However, standards in information and communications technology are below average. Standards in art have improved. The monitoring and evaluation of the teaching have improved with regular observation by the headteacher and external advisers from the local education authority. The English and mathematics co-ordinators, however, do not monitor classroom practice. The quality of teaching has improved, with the proportion of

good teaching having doubled, although there is still some unsatisfactory teaching. The assessment and record keeping have improved, but insufficient use is made of that information to plan work appropriate for the more able pupils. The work for the pupils with special educational needs is now, however, effectively matched to their needs. The reports to parents have not improved.

The accommodation and quality of education for the foundation stage have improved. The school has developed a nursery class, which together with the reception class offers very good provision for the youngest pupils in the school.

The school is in a sound position to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

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

Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. The table above shows that by the time the pupils leave the school they are generally above average, apart from 1999. The school has an increasing proportion of pupils with special educational needs and of those with English as an additional language. The year 2000 test results show a return to the above-average standards. When compared to those in schools with a similar intake, last year's results show the school to be average. The findings from the inspection show the school to be above average in English and mathematics and average in science. Standards meet expectations in all other subjects except information and communications technology, where they are below those expected. However, standards in art are above expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory. Achievement in the Foundation Stage is good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils are enthusiastic in the vast majority of lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good, both in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Overall satisfactory. Relationships are good, but pupils are not offered enough opportunities to work independently or take responsibility around the school.
Attendance	Below average. The rate is below that of other similar schools.

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and the school works hard to encourage all to respect and support each other. Despite the nursery and reception classes successfully offering children choices and developing independence, the school in general does not get the children to be responsible for their own work. Attendance is below average despite the school's efforts. Some parents keep their children away from school without good reason or explanation.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Very 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 overall is good. The teaching is satisfactory or better in 97 per cent of the lessons, good or better in 65 per cent and very good or excellent in 21 per cent. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was seen in the mixed-age Year 1 and Year 2 class where there was a lack of effective planning and class management. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection partially due to effective training of teachers for the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.

The teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage. It is good overall at Key Stage 1 but does vary from excellent to unsatisfactory. The teaching of both literacy and numeracy is good throughout the school. The recent additional training for teaching these subjects has resulted in increased teacher confidence and expertise. The teachers generally plan well to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. As a result these pupils make good progress. Despite sound teaching being seen in information and communications technology lessons during the inspection, the teaching is unsatisfactory over time as the pupils are not yet taught all of the required curriculum. The teaching in art and physical education is good. The planning and organisation to meet the needs of the more able pupils is not done consistently and at times these pupils are not stretched in their work. The pupils concentrate on their work and generally remain focused on tasks for a considerable length of time. The pupils in the Foundation Stage worked with confidence and enthusiasm despite only having been admitted to the school for just over one week.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality of the curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage is very good. The curriculum is satisfactory for pupils at Key Stage 1. There is insufficient coverage of the curriculum for information and communications technology at Key Stage 1.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The pupils are given clear targets. The support from the co-ordinator for special educational needs and the classroom assistants is good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The co-ordinator and new support teacher are active in planning support. The teachers and classroom assistants are sensitive to their needs, and the pupils make good progress.

Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for the pupils' social development is very good. The provision for moral and cultural development is good. Spiritual development is sound.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very good systems to ensure the pupils' welfare, health and safety. The monitoring and assessment of the pupils' academic performance is not used effectively to promote the performance of the above-average pupils.

The learning experiences in the nursery and reception class are very good. Pupils are offered many stimulating opportunities to experience the full range of the early learning goals. The curriculum at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, but the pupils are not taught all of the required elements in information and communications technology. The school is good at helping pupils to appreciate the richness and diversity of different cultural traditions. The school analyses attainment data for each year group. However, the use of information about individual pupils' progress to set targets for improvement is still limited.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school. The senior management team is an effective group. The staff and governors work well together to set priorities for development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors effectively fill their responsibilities and take an active part in shaping the development of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Sound. The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching. The English and mathematics co-ordinators have not monitored the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's spending decisions relate closely to its priorities. Good use is made of the accommodation and staff.

The headteacher adopts a team approach to managing the school and works closely with the enthusiastic and capable deputy head. Responsibilities are effectively delegated to the senior management team. The management of the Foundation Stage, special educational needs and art is good. The governors effectively monitor the curriculum and finances of the school. The teachers' expertise is generally well matched to the curriculum, especially for the Foundation Stage. The school soundly applies the principles of best value in its management of resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The children like the school.• That the school is helping the children to mature and be responsible.• The children make good progress.• The teaching is good.• They feel comfortable in approaching the school with any questions or concerns.• The behaviour is good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of interesting activities outside lessons.• The information they receive about how the children are progressing.

The inspection team endorses the parents' positive views of the school. However, the team felt more could be done to give the children greater responsibility for their work. In relation to the concerns of parents the team also felt that the school could give them another formal opportunity to discuss the children's work with the teacher. The team would agree that the range of out-of-school activities currently offered is limited.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children start the school aged four with levels of attainment that are broadly average. In the assessments done when they first come into the school the children attain average scores in most aspects but are below average in literacy skills.

2. The 1999 results of the National Curriculum tests for pupils aged seven were average in reading, above average in writing and average in mathematics. These results do not represent improvement over previous years in English and mathematics as the year group of pupils contained a higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs. However, when the results for the last four years are analysed the school is usually well above average. The initial results for the year 2000 appear to show a return to the usual above-average levels. When the 1999 results are compared with those in schools in similar circumstances pupils were shown to be below average in reading but average in writing and mathematics. Over time the boys have performed slightly less well than the girls.

3. The inspection findings for the end of Key Stage 1 show the pupils to be above average in both English and mathematics, and in line with expectations in science. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are having a strong impact on the quality of teaching in the school. These findings illustrate a significant improvement in English and mathematics since the time of the last inspection, when standards were average. The standards have not improved in science. There has been no whole-staff training in the subject and the very capable co-ordinator was recently seconded to another school for a year.

4. The children who are in the Foundation Stage are in line to meet the early learning goals by the end of the reception year and this is because of the very good teaching at this stage. Their personal, social and emotional development is good. They rapidly settle to school routines. They speak confidently to the adults in the rooms and share, take turns and co-operate in the many stimulating activities inside and outside the classrooms. Standards are above average in communication, language and literacy. The children in the nursery readily express opinions about a story, and are beginning to know the names and sounds of the letters of the alphabet. The reception-class children recognise familiar words and can write their own names. The children's mathematical development is good. Many of the nursery children count to five and those in reception confidently count to ten and beyond. They enjoy sorting and matching objects and confidently name common shapes. The children are in line to achieve expectations in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They discuss why objects float or sink in the water tray, mix paint and predict what will happen, follow stories about life in other countries and competently use the computer to consolidate language skills. The pupils make good progress in their physical development and move confidently on apparatus, cut shapes accurately, and confidently use simple tools. The readily-available resources and secure environment give the children confidence to paint pictures, produce collages, sing songs and readily engage in role play. As a consequence their creative and physical development is good.

5. By the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils' standards in English are above average in speaking and listening throughout the school. They listen carefully and use a growing range of vocabulary with increased confidence. The standards in reading are above average. The majority are fluent and confident readers, and can make good use of phonic skills to help them read unfamiliar words. The most able pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction, and can use an index and contents page in a book.

6. Writing is also above average. Pupils can punctuate correctly and use a wide vocabulary in their poems and stories. However, they do not make good use of the computers to word-process their work. Whilst these standards are good for the majority, the low proportion of pupils attaining at the higher levels in English shows more able pupils are not fully stretched.

7. Standards are above average in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1. The teaching methods and content encouraged by the National Numeracy Strategy are having a positive effect in the school. Pupils count competently, add and subtract, and can explain how they arrived at the answers to calculations. They know the major shapes and can record data in simple graphs. They do not, however, have enough opportunities to display their skills in practical weighing-and-measuring activities, selecting equipment and methods to solve everyday problems. The most capable pupils do not always achieve at an appropriately high level.

8. In science standards meet expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. The pupils develop a satisfactory knowledge of the life processes of humans, animals and plants and how to make a simple circuit. They undertake simple experiments and record the results. However, pupils are not sufficiently challenged to predict possible outcomes to investigations or to suggest their own ways of finding out.

9. In information and communications technology (ICT) standards are below expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. Whilst the school is working hard to raise standards by providing some specialist teaching and improved resources, the pupils do not, overall, have sufficient width or depth of experience to meet the required level.

10. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The pupils know about Christianity and other major world faiths, their customs and religious artefacts. Pupils' standards in design and technology meet expectations for their age. The regular timetabled lessons and use of a range of materials, tools and techniques enable pupils to reach a sound standard. Standards in history and geography are in line with expectations. The pupils know about and describe the differences between kitchens and bathrooms in the past and present. They competently draw and write about the differences in houses in the Iron Age, post war "prefabs" and their own homes. They develop an understanding of how Aylesbury differs from more distant locations.

11. Standards in music are also in line with expectations for this age group. The pupils sing with expression, listen to, repeat musical patterns, and use a variety of instruments. Standards in art are above expectations. Pupils paint well, replicate a variety of styles developed by famous artists such as Monet, and make good observational drawings. Standards in physical education are also in line with expectations. Pupils have an understanding of the importance of warming up for exercise and the health benefits of physical activity. They have good control and balance, and show awareness of others as they skilfully, hop, skip and run.

12. The pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress towards their individual targets when working within classes or when supported by the classroom assistants. The pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress. All teachers are aware of their specific needs, and classroom assistants are effectively directed to offer them support. The school has yet to identify any gifted or talented pupils, but it has plans to set the pupils in Year 2 into ability groups for English and mathematics lessons as the year progresses.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The children in the Foundation Stage have very positive attitudes to school. They come into the nursery and reception classes calmly and happily. The children show good levels of independence and they respond well to the very clear expectations and procedures of the staff.

14. Throughout the school the pupils have good attitudes and this has a positive effect on their learning. However, there is a small minority of pupils who are unable to sit still and concentrate for very long. All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that their children like coming to school. Pupils enjoy their schoolwork, settle promptly to set tasks and want to learn. For example, pupils in Year 2 become completely engaged when working on framing images in an art lesson. During a Year 1 English lesson the pupils listen well and concentrate hard when writing simple sentences based on the story of 'Funnybones'.

15. Pupils' behaviour, both in and out of class, is good overall. When teaching is good and lessons are well planned to meet the needs of all, pupils behave well in classrooms. However, in a minority of lessons when teaching is unsatisfactory, disruptive behaviour can surface quickly. This results in a slower pace of work and unsatisfactory learning. This was evident in a mixed Year 1/Year 2 class art lesson when the teacher had not planned or organised the lesson effectively.

16. Pupils respond readily to the requests and instructions of teachers, classroom assistants and midday supervisors. The pupils are polite and courteous to each other, to teachers and other staff, and to visitors. They are trustworthy and show respect for property, treating the resources they use with care. There were no exclusions from the school during the year prior to the inspection. Inspection findings confirm the views of 89 per cent of the parents that behaviour is good.

17. The personal development of the pupils is satisfactory. They have good relationships with fellow pupils and adults, built on tolerance for the work, ideas, beliefs and values of others. They work well as individuals, in pairs and in small groups. The pupils are learning to be kind to each other, take turns and help their classmates. They support charities through fund-raising activities including Save the Children, Friends of Florence Nightingale House and St. John Ambulance. However, pupils have too few opportunities to develop their independent learning skills through devising experiments and investigations in science or selecting equipment and apparatus in maths lessons.

18. The level of attendance is below the national average. This is due to pupils being taken out of school for extended holidays during term time. Also, as reported at the time of the last inspection, there are a number of pupils who are persistently late for school. Registers are marked correctly in the morning and afternoon sessions and legal requirements are met. Parents are regularly reminded in the prospectus and newsletters of their responsibility for their children's punctuality and attendance, but do not always ensure that their children's education is not interrupted by absence.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. It is satisfactory or better in 97 per cent of the lessons. It is very good or excellent in 21 per cent and is unsatisfactory in 3 per cent of lessons. The unsatisfactory teaching is in the mixed Key Stage 1 and 2 class. The quality of teaching in the school has improved since the last inspection, when it was judged as broadly satisfactory. It was good in 25 per cent of the lessons, whereas it is now good in 65 per cent. The teaching is consistently good in the nursery and is particularly good in the reception class. Very good and excellent teaching were seen at times in both Year 1 and Year 2.

20. The highest proportion of good teaching was seen in English, mathematics, geography, and art. The teachers' training for the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has helped to ensure that staff are competent in the two core subjects of mathematics and English. The good teaching in art and geography stems from the teachers' enthusiasm and competence in the subjects.

21. The unsatisfactory teaching was seen in the mixed-age class of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. Here the teacher lacks a good grasp of management strategies to keep pupils working hard. The pupils lose concentration and noisy behaviour can predominate. The planning is not sufficiently detailed to ensure that work is given which really meets the needs of all pupils.

22. The teaching in English is good. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced to good effect. Good planning enables lessons to proceed at a brisk pace and they are full of interest for the pupils. Lessons are well prepared, resources used well, and targets set, and the good class management supports the pupils in their learning. Whilst the work is always well matched to the needs of pupils with special educational needs there is, at times, a lack of challenging extension work for the most able.

23. The teaching of mathematics is good. The National Numeracy Strategy is effectively applied in all lessons. The lessons are well planned; the children know what they have to learn and a brisk pace, varied activities and the consistent organisation of lessons help the pupils to feel confident. They gain a sound understanding of the addition and subtraction of number. High expectations encourage the pupils to concentrate on tasks and enjoy the lessons. The best teachers focus time and attention on teaching a particular ability group in the class. The classroom assistants are well briefed to provide support to groups and individuals, especially the SEN pupils. The work is not, however, always effectively matched to stretch the most capable pupils.

24. In science the teaching is satisfactory, with good or very good teaching in just under half the lessons. The teachers show a sound understanding of the curriculum. They generally plan well for lessons and use a range of teaching methods. However, the completion of worksheets predominates in a few lessons. High expectations of behaviour, establishing learning targets and clear explanations of the tasks enable pupils to make steady gains in scientific skills and knowledge. At times, however, the teachers talk for too long and do not give pupils enough opportunities to carry out practical investigations.

25. Despite the part-time specialist teaching of information and communications technology (ICT) seen during the inspection being sound, overall the teaching of the subject is unsatisfactory. This is because the teachers as a whole fail to make sufficient use of the available computers. The teachers do not plan the use of the computers to support such subjects as English, mathematics or science.

26. The teaching of religious education is sound overall. The good relationships in the classrooms establish an atmosphere in which pupils confidently share thoughts and feelings. The teachers successfully link lessons to themes explored in the acts of collective worship. Skilful questioning effectively encourages pupils to express opinions. The effective use of music and drama captures the pupils' interest in a wide range of world religions.

27. The teaching in design and technology is sound throughout the school. The teachers provide a variety of interesting tasks and competently teach the safe use of tools and equipment. They are generally enthusiastic and make good use of made artefacts to help pupils understand how things are made. At times, however, they lack the confidence to encourage the children to draw effective designs.

28. The teaching of physical education is good overall but with examples of both excellent and unsatisfactory teaching. The good teachers provide an effective balance of coaching and activity. The lively well-planned lessons proceed at a brisk pace and the skilful sequencing of activity helps pupils to improve technique and understand the need for regular physical exercise. The unsatisfactory teaching in the mixed-age class is characterised by a series of disjointed activities in which the pupils are not shown or advised on how to improve. Pupils in this class behave badly and do not concentrate well when they are not given challenging enough work.

29. The teaching of geography is good, with some very good teaching. The teachers plan well and manage the classes effectively. A range of interesting strategies is used to capture pupils' interests. Good use is made of visits to strengthen the pupils' understanding of how places differ from their own environment. The teaching of history is sound, with good use made of visits to museums, and looking at objects in the home and comparing past with present. The over-reliance on commercially produced worksheets, however, detracts from the teaching of historical skills and researching for information about the past.

30. The teaching of art is good. The lessons contain a good balance of teacher direction and demonstration linked to good opportunities for pupils to be creative. The teaching of music is sound with, however, examples of excellent teaching. High expectations of the pupils listening to music and replicating sounds using a wide range of instruments capture their enthusiasm and promote enjoyment in music making.

31. There are considerable strengths in the teaching in all year groups. The teachers generally have good subject knowledge in the core subjects of mathematics and English. The work is generally well planned and a wide range of resources and techniques immediately gain the pupils' attention. Most teachers are very aware of focusing their time on individuals or groups for part of the lesson. Objectives for the lesson are frequently shared with the pupils and at times targets are established for individual pupils. Class control and management are generally good, lessons progress at a brisk pace and stimulating activities are interspersed with good questioning by the teacher. The relationships with the pupils and the management of behaviour are both good. Homework is set to sound effect mainly in literacy but also at times in wider aspects of the curriculum. The classroom assistants are effectively briefed and deployed and at times used to gather and record information about how the children are progressing during the lesson.

32. There are however, weaknesses in the teaching. The long-term recording of progress and attainment across the subjects of the National Curriculum for each pupil is inconsistent. A key subject such as information and communications technology does not have any recorded information for pupils. This prevents the teachers from setting precise targets in learning for individual pupils to make sure they constantly build upon previous attainment. This lack of detailed recorded information sometimes prevents the more able pupils from making good progress. In the few unsatisfactory lessons, a lack of firm class management and inadequate planning to meet the needs of pupils with different levels of ability causes them to lose interest and make little progress.

33. The pupils with special educational needs are offered work often well matched to their needs when they work inside or outside the classroom with the learning support assistants. They know the pupils well. The Individual Education Plans are regularly reviewed and kept readily available and there is evident progress against identified targets. The pupils with English as an additional language are also capably supported and this ensures good progress.

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

34. The school provides the pupils with a good, broad and balanced curriculum covering all National Curriculum subjects, religious education and personal, social and health education. There are effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy. The time dedicated to each subject is appropriate, although some literacy and numeracy sessions tend to be overlong and pupils' attention is lost. The quality of provision for teaching art is also a strength of the school, with pupils producing some high-quality work. The curriculum provision for the teaching of information and communications technology is unsatisfactory, with pupils given insufficient opportunities to develop their skills.

35. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is very good and well planned. It provides children with rich, varied and stimulating opportunities to develop skills in the required areas: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; personal, social and emotional development; physical and creative development. Activities have a clear focus and children's learning is well structured. Children's social skills are very well promoted. Continuity between the nursery and reception class is good.

36. The overall planning of the Key Stage 1 curriculum is satisfactory. The teachers make use of the guidance provided by the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and guidance for other subjects provided by the government's Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Teachers in parallel classes plan together, providing good continuity. Plans do not always provide detailed opportunities to challenge more able pupils and encourage them to use their own initiative. Opportunities for pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language are included in teachers' plans. Provision for these pupils is good.

37. The school has taken good account of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy in its curriculum. This has had a good impact on standards, with an increasing number of pupils reaching the required standards in English and mathematics. Pupils in Year 2 have been placed for sets for literacy and numeracy to allow the teachers to focus on a relatively narrow range of attainment in each group.

38. All pupils have equal access to the school curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language receive extra adult support and have a high priority within the school. Nearly all reach the expected levels by the time they leave school.

39. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. There is no formal policy or scheme of work but issues are addressed through other curriculum areas, circle time and the Family Links project. Aspects of sex education are included in the science curriculum; for example, when a mother brought her new baby to school and answered the children's questions. In 'circle time' pupils discuss healthy lifestyles, and the Family Links project provides opportunities for pupils to discuss their feelings.

40. There are currently only limited opportunities for children to take part in extra-curricular activities despite the prospectus detailing a range of out-of-class clubs.

41. A range of visits and visitors enriches the curriculum. For example, children in Year 2 recently visited an open-air museum, and parents are invited into school to celebrate Eid and to help prepare a meal. There are good links with the local community; many local groups make use of the school and local elderly residents appreciate children's visits with harvest produce and being invited into school for Christmas entertainment.

42. There are good links with other institutions. Local headteachers and other staff meet regularly and liaison with the junior school is good. Students from the secondary school and from teacher training institutions also work in the school.

43. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural education is good. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. In the Foundation Stage, expectations are clear and good relationships are prominent. There are clearly-established routines within the school and good links with the wider community. Provision for pupils' moral and cultural development is good. In class discussions and assembly, pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong, and stories focus on issues such as friendship and helping others. Pupils are taught to appreciate that their actions and the decisions they make will have an effect on those around them. Stories from other cultures are also told and pupils celebrate a variety of religious festivals, reflecting the range of religions within the school. There is a clear policy to foster acceptance of the values and worth of all cultures. Spiritual development is satisfactory and is fostered through assembly as pupils reflect on the stories told and through the other curriculum areas.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. As reported at the time of the last inspection the school takes very good steps to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. It actively promotes the Family Link Nurturing Programme, which ensures a consistency in approach to behaviour management by the whole school community. There are good relationships at all levels and all pupils feel confident that there are sympathetic adults to whom they can go with any problem. All staff work hard to maintain positive relationships. They know the pupils well and are able to monitor personal development informally.

45. Overall the arrangements and procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic performance are unsatisfactory. The children are assessed effectively on entry to the nursery and reception classes and here good use is made of that information to plan the work for the children. In Year 2, pupils undertake the pre-Chiltern Reading Test, and with information from these results and informal information from previous teachers the pupils are eventually placed in sets for English and mathematics. Teachers in Key Stage 1 do not, however, analyse assessment data and records sufficiently and this contributes to a lack of challenge for more able pupils. The school has very few records to show how well the pupils are progressing in the majority of subjects.

46. The teachers plan to find out how well the pupils are progressing but make insufficient use of the information they gain. They do not set new work carefully matched to the pupils' needs. There is some good practice in English where personal targets have been set and shared with pupils, and teachers refer to them when marking work. Day-to-day marking is good, with some teachers providing a useful analysis of what pupils have been doing to help them improve their work.

47. The school successfully identifies those pupils with special educational needs. They receive good support and as a result the standard of their work improves. Pupils with English as an additional language are also well supported and make good progress in their learning throughout the school. The above-average pupils are, however, not so readily identified and supported.

48. The school has an appropriate health and safety policy. The governors and staff with responsibility for health and safety make regular risk assessments and report to the premises committee. Fire practices take place regularly and are recorded. There are suitable arrangements in place for first aid and medical support. The school has good arrangements in place for child-protection issues. The headteacher is the named responsible person and has received training for this role. The school promotes healthy and safe living through 'circle time', assemblies, physical education and science lessons.

49. Administrative staff regularly monitor attendance registers, and follow up unexplained absences. The school receives support from the Education Welfare Service and has recently set up a computerised system for registration. This will enable staff to track pupils' attendance more closely. Parents are happy that the school is helping their children become mature and responsible.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. Overall, the school has a satisfactory partnership with parents, and the pre-inspection questionnaire and meeting with parents and carers show that they think the school is performing satisfactorily. However, parents expressed a number of concerns, including: children getting the right amount of work to do at home, the lack of information they receive on the progress their children are making and the current lack of extra-curricular activities.

51. There is evidence to support the views of parents who feel that they are not kept well informed about their children's progress. There was only one formal parent/teacher consultation during the last school year. The written annual reports to parents do not give a clear picture of the progress pupils are making or inform parents what pupils need to do next to improve their performance in each subject. However, teaching staff are very approachable and happy to talk to parents with concerns or give more information on their children's progress. The vast majority of parents would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept fully informed of their children's progress and are involved in reviews.

52. Throughout the school spelling and reading homework is set and the reading notebooks show that many pupils regularly read at home. The amount of homework set is satisfactory. The school does not currently provide the range of activities outside lessons as described in the school prospectus. However, the inspection team considers that the school is providing an enriched curriculum through the range of visits and visitors.

53. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date with the day-to-day life of the school, and the prospectus and topic newsletters provide information on the curriculum. Important information is also translated into other languages to ensure communication between school and as many families as possible. The annual governors' report to parents does not contain all of the required statutory information. Meetings were held for parents on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and parents are invited to Book Week, Christmas and Eid celebrations and sports day. The school works hard to celebrate the ethnic backgrounds of the pupils. The school nurse works closely with the school to deliver the Family Links Nurturing Programme to groups of parents. The good induction procedures for the youngest children in the nursery and reception class also ensure that their parents and carers feel welcome and comfortable in the school. Through the Friends of Broughton Infants School parents are supportive of the school, and funds are raised from a variety of events. All of these factors show that the school has a satisfactory range of links with parents and carers which have a positive impact on learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The overall leadership and management of the school are good. The senior management team meets regularly and provides a clear vision for the development of the school. The deputy headteacher, recently returned from a long secondment in a school experiencing difficulties, brings enthusiasm and energy to the team. The headteacher has successfully guided the staff through the uncertainty and turbulence of the recent re-organisation from a first to an infant school. She successfully delegates responsibilities to the senior staff. The school is now in a good position to move forward.

55. The headteacher and key staff are successfully promoting high standards in English and mathematics for the vast majority. The skill of the individual teachers helps to promote these levels of attainment. The role of the subject co-ordinators has improved since the last inspection, with a much fairer distribution of responsibilities amongst the staff. However, the English and mathematics co-ordinators are still not sufficiently active in monitoring the quality of teaching and standards of individuals and specific groups of pupils. The quality of teaching has, however, been improved since the last inspection through effective training to teach the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The management of the early years, special educational needs and art is good. The skills and enthusiasms of these co-ordinators help to promote good progress for the pupils.

56. The governors effectively fulfil their responsibilities. The committee structure works successfully and the governing body clearly understands the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The governors monitor the school by visiting and asking subject co-ordinators to provide curriculum presentations for themselves and the parents. Governors are appointed to oversee the provision for SEN and literacy. There is close and effective involvement by governors in the creation of the school development plan and financial planning and control. The governors have reluctantly set a small deficit budget for this year but now see this being recovered before the end of the financial year.

57. The school has started to improve the systems for monitoring and evaluating its performance and taking action to improve. The headteacher in conjunction with key staff from the local education authority undertakes regular monitoring of teaching. They give full feedback to staff on the strengths and weaknesses in their work. The co-ordinators for English and mathematics regularly see the planning for the subject and informally monitor the quality of work and standards. There are too few opportunities for them to see teachers in action or judge the work of all pupils and comment on it. The headteacher does carefully monitor standards and change over time, and this is a sound improvement since the last inspection.

58. School development planning is good. The development plan is comprehensive, has appropriate priorities and shows costs, persons responsible and success criteria. It is a useful document to aid school improvement. The headteacher has as a key priority to raise the levels of attainment of the above-average pupils. Target setting for them and other pupils is starting to take an effective role in the school. Targets are often set and shared with pupils in English. The school reports, however, do not clearly indicate what pupils need to do to improve.

59. The school's spending decisions relate closely to priorities. The principles of best value are applied and the senior staff and governors check to see if there has been value for money. The governors have had to challenge and discuss spending in a much more stringent manner as the pupil numbers have been cut since the loss of the Year 3 pupils. They have not stood back from difficult decisions.

60. The school's aims and values are, generally, reflected well in its work. The aims listed in the school brochure are largely realised through the curriculum and general ethos of the school. The good support for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language reflects the desire for all to feel valued and respected. The management of the provision for SEN is good. The co-ordinator has some limited release time to monitor SEN across the school. The individual education plans (IEP's) are good with clear manageable targets for the pupils. The co-operation between the co-ordinator and the SEN support assistant is good. All classroom assistants feel valued and provide effective support for the pupils. The newly appointed part-time teacher co-ordinating English as an additional language is enthusiastic and capable. She is establishing effective assessment and records for the pupils and offers good support.

61. The number and qualifications of the staff effectively match the needs of the school. The teachers have good experience, except in information and communications technology (ICT), where further training is required to improve standards and fully cover the requirements of Curriculum 2000. The staff are hardworking and collaborate well, and good liaison with the classroom-support assistants and helpers in the nursery ensures that they are well briefed and have a significant impact on pupils' progress. Induction procedures are effective, and new staff and helpers are well supported. Staff training is well linked to school development priorities, and effective training for literacy and numeracy has ensured its successful introduction across the school.

62. The school has good accommodation. The buildings and the grounds are spacious and are well used to support the children's learning. Since the last inspection the school has improved the library and toilet facilities. It has also made good use of space which became available when Year 3 transferred to the junior school, by creating a very good nursery suite and a classroom for small teaching groups and for specialist ICT lessons. The school also has plans to further improve provision for ICT by creating a new suite for 16 computers in the former kitchen. The spacious classrooms provide good accommodation for all subjects and particularly for practical lessons in science, design and technology and art. The large school hall is also well used to enhance opportunities for physical education and music, and to accommodate whole-school and community activities. Good use is made of display to celebrate the pupils' achievement and to support learning in classrooms throughout the school. The lack of provision of a quiet room to care for pupils who are ill remains a difficulty in the school.

63. Resources for learning are generally adequate. They are good for art, music and the Foundation Stage. They have improved significantly for physical education since the last inspection and are now good. The school has a higher than average number of books per pupil, and the school and class libraries are well stocked and used well to support learning. The school also makes good use of the local community to support children's learning, which includes visits to the rare breeds centre, town and country walks and invitations to local residents to provide first-hand accounts for history. There is insufficient computer software, particularly to support learning in maths and science, and more resources are needed to enhance opportunities for active learning in maths and science, and to increase the range of opportunities in design and technology.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

1. Improve the standards in information and communications technology by:

- raising the level of staff confidence and skill in using information and communications technology;
- implementing the scheme of work;
- producing and making good use of a pupils' record of coverage and progress;
- increasing the use of information and communications technology across the curriculum and widening the range of software;
- the co-ordinator monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching, learning and standards achieved.

(See paragraphs 9, 25, 63, 100, 104, 121, 122, 124 and 125).

2. Improve the match of work for the more able pupils by:

- making better use of the current assessment information to make an early identification of the higher-attaining pupils;
- carefully planning lessons in which challenging tasks are set for all pupils, particularly these who are above average;
- carefully tracking pupils' progress and setting appropriate targets;
- using the information to write appropriate reports to parents;
- the subject co-ordinators monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' progress.

(See paragraphs 6, 7, 22, 23, 36, 45, 88 and 93).

3. Improve the quality of teaching for pupils in the mixed-age Year1/Year2 class by:

- improving the planning to ensure that the needs of the pupils of differing abilities are well met;
- improving the strategies to manage the class, particularly when engaged in practical or independent activity;
- the headteacher and senior staff regularly monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching.

(See paragraphs 28, 102, 107 and 133).

4. Improve the quality of information for parents by:

- ensuring that the annual reports give clear information about the gains made in skills and knowledge in each subject and what a pupil needs to do to improve;
- offering the parents another formal opportunity to meet the pupils' teachers to receive an oral report on their children's progress.

(See paragraphs 50, 51, 53 and 98).

Other weaknesses, which are less serious but which should be considered by governors in drawing up their action plan, are: increased opportunities for pupils to show initiative and independence in science and mathematics lessons (see paragraphs 17, 24, 36 and 110); implementation of the strategies to raise attendance levels (see paragraphs 18 and 49).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	61
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	68

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	18	44	31	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		152
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		58

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	19

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

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.4

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	34	27	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	27	32
	Girls	27	26	25
	Total	52	53	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (96)	87 (91)	93 (92)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	31	33
	Girls	26	26	24
	Total	53	57	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (94)	93 (95)	93 (94)
	National	82 (80)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	2
Pakistani	19
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	116
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 – Y3

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y3

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	97

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	99/00
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	£
Total income	368908
Total expenditure	367892
Expenditure per pupil	2000
Balance brought forward from previous year	7929
Balance carried forward to next year	8945

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	152
Number of questionnaires returned	38

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	32	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	42	47	11	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	26	63	5	5	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	16	61	16	3	5
The teaching is good.	34	55	8	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	53	24	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	42	47	11	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	24	61	11	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	18	61	13	5	3
The school is well led and managed.	24	63	0	8	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	29	66	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	3	32	34	13	18

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

64. Children can start at the school on a part-time basis in the nursery when they attain the age of four. Some pupils start at the beginning of the term in which their fifth birthday falls. They are placed in the reception class. They attend full-time school from the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday. The end of the year in which children are five marks the end of the newly named Foundation Stage.

65. There has been a significant improvement to the provision for the children in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection, when much of the work was found to be sound. The nursery was not in operation at that time, but is now well established. The overall very good teaching of the children in both the nursery and the reception classes is having a positive impact on their learning. The school has worked very hard to establish this provision. The vast majority of pupils will meet the Early Learning Goals and a few will be working on the National Curriculum by the time they leave the reception class.

66. The tests the children take when they first come to school (baseline assessment) show the children to be average in speaking and listening, mathematics and personal independence and just below average in literacy skills. The information gained from the baseline assessment is used effectively to identify areas for development for individual children and to set learning targets for them. The standards shown by the new pupils in the first two weeks of this school year are unusually high.

67. Children in the Foundation Stage receive an appropriate, well-planned curriculum that is supported by a very good scheme of work written by the early years co-ordinator for all six areas of learning. This provides for breadth, balance and purpose to learning, leading towards the Early Learning Goals. There is a nursery nurse attached to the nursery class and a classroom assistant to the reception class. This additional adult support positively enhances the learning opportunities for the children in the Foundation Stage.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

68. The children enter the nursery class with an average range of personal and social skills. By the time they leave the reception class they are achieving the Early Learning Goals. This shows good achievement and reflects the skilful teaching in the Foundation Stage. The children enjoy coming to school and settle very quickly to the daily routines of the classes. The children are encouraged to speak out in circle time, developing their confidence and self-esteem, and are polite and show consideration of each other by listening attentively.

69. There are a large number of parents who help on a regular basis in the nursery class and the room buzzes with conversation, with adults encouraging children to talk about what they are doing. There are positive, supportive relationships between the staff and children, who respond well to this caring ethos. The learning activities in both classrooms teach children to share, take turns and co-operate with each other; for example, when using the wheeled toys outside. The children show a remarkable capacity to concentrate on tasks when working independently. For example, in the nursery class, when finding out how many objects a boat can hold before sinking or when drawing lions in the reception class, they show great attention to detail. They learn to tidy away at the end of sessions.

70. The reception-class children are able to dress and undress for physical education with a minimal amount of help. The nursery children can put on and take off coats when going out to play independently.

71. Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to develop children's personal, social and emotional development as they go about their work and play in the classrooms, helping them to become independent.

Communication, Language and Literacy

72. In both the nursery and reception classes the children enjoy listening to stories and sharing books with each other and adults. In the nursery they are able to talk about favourite books and characters and express an opinion about a story. In both classes the children handle books carefully and know that words go from left to right and convey meaning. In the nursery the children are developing knowledge of initial sounds. Children in reception are learning the names and sounds of letters of the alphabet. All the children in reception and many in nursery can recognise their own names and are encouraged to write them. Children are taught to hold pencils and form letters correctly. In both classes the children are encouraged to think of themselves as readers and writers, whatever their stage of development. Writing materials are provided for them to develop their skill; for example, in the nursery role-play area, where children can write lists and take orders in the café. The classrooms are rich with text, including alphabets, labels and words to help with writing. Books are displayed so that children have easy access to them. Some children in reception are able to recognise familiar words; for example, 'yes', 'look' and 'you' contained in big-book text.

73. The classes are full of conversation; the adults encourage the children to explain what they are doing, often introducing or reinforcing language appropriate to the activity; for example, 'lighter' or 'heavier', when the children are discovering what floats or sinks or posing 'what if' questions for children to develop and connect ideas. They show children that they value their efforts in communicating by praising and encouraging them. Stories are read with enthusiasm and expression by teachers, providing children with very good models of how to read and enjoy text.

74. The teaching of literacy is very good. Great sensitivity is shown to children whose home language is not English, the skilled teacher making good eye contact and smiling to help allay any fears. Children of all abilities are achieving well and are in line to meet the Early Learning Goals.

Mathematical Development

75. The vast majority of children in both classes are working in line to meet the Early Learning Goals for mathematics at the end of the Foundation Stage and a significant number will exceed them. In the nursery many children can count to five and beyond, and recognise a circle, square, triangle and a star. The vast majority in reception can count to ten and beyond both forwards and backwards. They can match numbers to objects and sort gloves by colour into pairs.

76. The teachers help the children to see the mathematics all around them, by providing a range of different and interesting activities for them to do. In the nursery class the children were encouraged to cut triangular shapes to be used as sails for the boats they were making. All are gaining a good understanding of shape and number. Very good use was made of number songs and rhymes in both classrooms to help children remember number order. Children are encouraged to work independently in reception when practising their sorting, matching and counting skills.

77. The learning activities in both classes are practical and imaginative, and capture children's interest and enthusiasm. The teaching of mathematics in the Foundation Stage is very good. Teachers and other adults make valuable interventions to extend learning and pose questions to deepen knowledge and understanding.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

78. Teachers help the children in both classes to build on the knowledge and understanding of the world that they have by providing practical and investigational activities for them to find things out for themselves. A group of children in the nursery class work in the water tray to discover which objects sink and float and explain to others why. Groups of children in reception mix yellow and black paints and are asked to predict what will happen. The teachers use good questions to probe and deepen children's understanding.

79. The use of an African story in the nursery helps the children, where English is not the home language, understand about life in an African environment, and builds up a vocabulary about fruits and animals. A simple programme on the computer is also very supportive to a child who needs to develop a vocabulary matching initial sounds to objects.

80. Children using the computer in the nursery class are able to select keys to match colours on the screen, and two children in the play cottage can load a tape into a recorder and start the machine. Children in reception can click on and drag a font or image with increasing accuracy across a computer screen.

81. In both classes children can select resources and tools safely to construct and build. They have a good sense of how things can be joined together. In the nursery they can use sellotape to secure paper sails to boats they make. The children are in line to achieve the levels expected of them by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Physical Development

82. The children achieve well in this area of learning because the teaching is very good. In both classes they show very good fine motor control. Many of the youngest children can use scissors to cut out shapes accurately, use glue to stick paper together, hold and use pencils and paint brushes correctly and manipulate play dough into shapes. They show developing spatial awareness when playing on the big-wheeled toys in the playground, by avoiding each other and moving into the spaces. They can run and chase each other confidently. The outdoor area for play is good, and children have space to run, climb and use big-wheeled toys and to develop their skills.

83. The children in reception use a range of tools confidently, including scissors, paintbrushes and crayons. They can handle a pencil well and write their names. They enjoy PE lessons in the hall, where they show a good awareness of space. They like to copy actions that are demonstrated by the teacher and can stop and start on a signal. They respond well to the sound of a tambour to make light or heavy movements. The children are able to choose their favourite movements and link two together which they practise and share with the class, showing good control. They are able to talk about the effect exercise has on their bodies and that their hearts beat faster when they have been running about. The children are in line to meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Creative Development

84. The organisation of the classrooms for both the nursery and reception helps children to achieve well in this area of learning. They are in line to achieve the levels expected of them by the end of the Foundation Stage. The readily available resources and the activities for learning encourage children to experiment and be independent. Children in the nursery class make fish using a wide range of chosen resources such as paint, glitter, collage, clay and different coloured paper. They are able to talk about their choices. The reception pupils mix paint; experimenting with how to make lighter and darker shades, and then create pictures, describing what they are trying to do.

85. The children in reception use musical rhymes to welcome each other every morning and they build up a repertoire of songs in the nursery. They particularly enjoy role-play, using the props and resources imaginatively. In the nursery, children play with farm animals, creating stories and characters. This is well supported by the nursery nurse, who takes the role suggested by the children. They are able to sustain characters for long periods. Children pretend they are singers recording a song. They make up the words and sing with gusto. The children have good role-play opportunities in reception, successfully pretending to be characters in a story about a café, which they thoroughly enjoy.

ENGLISH

86. By the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 2, attainment in English is good. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999 together, the figures show that the performance of pupils in writing and in reading was well above the national average. The figures for 1999 show that pupils' results are above the average for similar schools in writing but below the average for similar schools in reading. This is due to the fact that the number of pupils attaining the higher reading levels was below the national average. The year group did, however, contain a higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs. In the year 2000 tests a very high proportion of pupils achieved the expected levels in reading (93 per cent) and writing (96 per cent).

87. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged to be sound. Standards overall have now improved, with more children achieving expected levels.

88. The inspection evidence supports these assessments. Overall, standards are above average. The high-quality support provided for those pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language enables them to make good progress. Work is well matched to their needs. Teachers and classroom assistants working with the pupils are well briefed and know the children. The average pupils make sound and sometimes good progress in lessons. However, opportunities to extend the most able pupils so that they can make good progress and fulfil their capabilities are not fully exploited.

89. In Year 1 children build on the high standards seen in the foundation stage and make sound progress. The pupils are encouraged to listen to the teacher and to each other. They are generally keen to answer questions and show appreciation of each other's answers. Pupils are able to talk about books they have read and in one lesson a confident pupil worked with the teachers, taking the role of a character in a book, and read extracts to the whole class, with good expression. However, in some lessons children lack confidence and are reluctant to share their ideas. The pupils in Year 2 are attentive and the majority demonstrate good listening skills. They speak confidently and clearly when answering questions and use some good vocabulary. For example, several pupils are able to explain the difference between the terms "endangered" and "dangerous". Pupils are able to discuss the thoughts and feelings of a character in a book. When given the opportunity, they are willing and able to give personal opinions.

90. The Year 1 pupils enjoy books and have good phonic skills; they know initial letter sounds and initial blends and recognise familiar words with common spelling patterns. The most able pupils are able to read appropriate books and sentences with expression and understanding. Pupils in Year 2 are able to use phonic skills to break down words. They are able to identify words with long vowel sounds and recognise that the same sound may have different spellings. Most children are able to match words which rhyme and show a good knowledge of word meanings. The most able pupils can explain the difference between fiction and non-fiction and can correctly use a contents page and an index. They are fluent and expressive when reading aloud. They demonstrate good comprehension skills and are able to make predictions about what will happen next. Pupils take reading books home

regularly and are also provided with opportunities to make use of the attractive and well-appointed library.

91. In Year 1, pupils' writing shows that they are aware of sentence structure and how to sequence their writing. Spelling and punctuation are good, having improved since the last inspection, reflecting the implementation and impact of the National Literacy Strategy. The less able pupils in Year 2 show good progress with their writing; the majority reaching average levels of attainment by the end of the year. Most pupils use punctuation accurately, being able to write sentences using capital letters and full stops correctly. More able pupils in Year 2 are able to use commas and speech marks. They also demonstrate some flair with creative writing, producing some descriptive poems and alliteration. In an observed lesson, able pupils wrote amusing and correct sentences, demonstrating their knowledge of vowel phonemes. Pupils form their letters well and take a pride in presentation. Their writing is well displayed in the classrooms and around the school. However, pupils in Year 2 are not yet joining their letters and all pupils have had only limited opportunities to use information and communications technology to process and draft their work. Much work is based on prescriptive worksheets which limit opportunities for pupils to be creative. Pupils are given few opportunities to extend their answers or to enter into discussion. Neither are they set collaborative tasks requiring them to discuss and negotiate with one another.

92. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils speaking English as an additional language is good. In Years 1 and 2 small groups of pupils benefit from a programme of additional support provided by a teacher (funded by the Key Stage 1 class-size initiative) and a very effective classroom assistant. The EAL pupils receive very good support from the EAL teacher. Individual children receive help during whole-class input and small groups are supported during the group-work sessions of the literacy hour. Some SEN pupils also receive individual support outside the class from the learning support assistant in the afternoon. This has a positive impact on their learning.

93. The teaching of English, including the teaching of the basic skills of literacy, is good. In observed lessons, teaching was always satisfactory and good or better in nearly 90 per cent of lessons. Very good teaching was seen in just over 20 per cent of lessons. This represents an improvement since the last inspection and reflects the impact of the literacy hour. However, the previous report stated that extension activities for the most able were not always intellectually challenging. This remains the case. Work is carefully matched to the needs of the less able pupils, but average and more able pupils are often set the same task. Features of the very good lessons are well-matched activities for all pupils, brisk pace, enthusiasm, clear learning objectives and good subject knowledge. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher kept up a good pace by constantly delving and encouraging pupils to really think about poetry. Pupils' answers were valued and praised, building confidence and raising their self-esteem. In the less effective lessons, teachers do not plan for the more able pupils, and children spend too long listening to the teacher or on set tasks, resulting in some restless behaviour. The marking of pupils' work has recently improved. Pupils are now set targets and teachers' marking relates to these targets, informing pupils how they might progress. Individual targets are regularly reviewed and relayed to the next teacher when children move classes. Teachers also keep a simple tick list of pupils' achievements. These records are satisfactory, but lack the detail to help teachers set work which makes sure the pupils are fully challenged and making as good a progress as they can. The lack of detailed records also means that the annual written reports do not give enough information about what new skills and understanding has been gained.

MATHEMATICS

94. The standards in mathematics are above average. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests 93 per cent gained the expected level compared with 87 per cent nationally. The results had been much better in previous years, but the group of pupils who took the tests in 1999 contained a high proportion with special educational needs. When compared to those in similar schools, the 1999 results were average. Overall, the results from the last four years show the pupils performance to be well above average. The May 2000 test results indicate a return to the previous high standards. The inspection evidence confirms that standards are above average. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were average.

95. By the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils work securely with numbers. They know addition and subtraction facts to 20 and work confidently with numbers up to 100 and sometimes beyond. The pupils are successfully developing a range of good strategies to solve number problems. They recognise number patterns and this helps them to predict the answers to questions. The experiences offered by the National Numeracy Strategy are encouraging pupils to undertake a range of mental calculations. They recognise and name major shapes and produce simple bar charts to record such data as the eye colour of other pupils. They do not, however, have sufficient opportunities to select mathematical equipment and employ their skills in practical weighing, measuring and timing. Nevertheless they can tell the time, measure length and recognise lines of symmetry. They do not make sufficient use of information and communications technology to practise skills or record simple data. Over time the pupils make good gains in their confidence and competence in handling numbers, eagerly counting backwards and forwards and using the 5-times and 10-times tables.

96. The pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress as a result of well written and carefully followed education plans and effective support from adult assistants. The more able pupils, however, do not always receive such well matched work or additional support. The lack of more-challenging work sometimes acts as a break on higher attainment and greater progress.

97. The pupils like mathematics. They generally enjoy lessons and show high levels of concentration. They respond with enthusiasm when asked questions and confidently explain how they solved a problem. The majority of pupils know and respect systems for independent working time and help each other. A small minority of pupils, however, lose concentration when transferred from working as a whole class to groups. In the one mixed-age class pupils tended to become noisy and lack motivation except where under the direct supervision of the teacher or other adult.

98. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. The teachers have a secure knowledge of mathematics, plan thoroughly and have appropriate expectations for the vast majority of pupils. They make clear what the pupils are to learn by sharing the targets for the lesson and often reviewing progress towards them at the end of the lesson. The teachers use sharp and pertinent questions; for example, when pupils are challenged to add six and five by putting six "into their heads" and then counting on a further five. Teachers constantly praise pupils to build confidence and self-esteem, and maintain a steady pace to the sessions. The learning-support assistants and other adults are well briefed and work effectively with groups and individuals. They keep adequate records of pupils' progress, but this information is not used effectively to plan appropriate work for the few more able pupils. The written reports for parents give good coverage of the pupils' experiences in mathematics but do not say enough about their progress and attainment in the subject.

99. In one very good lesson the teacher engaged the whole class in reading the planned targets together, thereby immediately involving all and also effectively supporting literacy skills. The teacher's confidence and good understanding of how to teach place value enabled her to move at pace through the elements of the lesson. The lively presentation kept pupils

interested. The careful questioning promoted thinking and checked pupils' understanding of tens and ones. Good classroom management skills together with frequent praise for concentration and hard work kept all pupils on task throughout their group and individual work. The teacher focused her time and attention on teaching one group. The classroom assistant worked with the pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, using lots of practical equipment to aid their understanding of tens and ones.

100. The leadership of the subject overall is sound. The subject is planned using the National Numeracy Strategy. Whilst the current mathematics policy is dated, there are firm plans to update it and to produce a scheme of work making use of the new National Curriculum documents. However, whilst the teachers' planning is regularly checked and the annual test results analysed, the actual teaching of the subject is not monitored by the co-ordinator. There is a brief mathematics record in place, but this offers little support to teachers when they are writing reports. Whilst resources are generally adequate there is a lack of computer programs to support the teaching of the mathematics curriculum, and some classes have only limited practical mathematics equipment.

SCIENCE

101. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils achieve standards that are in line with expectations. The proportion of pupils gaining Level 2 or higher is above the national average and has been so since the last inspection. However, the proportion of pupils reaching Level 3 is below average and has declined since the last inspection. Some of the more able pupils underachieve in science. This is confirmed by the results of national tests and by the pupils' work seen during the inspection. The pupils generally have sound knowledge of the life processes of humans, animals, and plants, and of physical processes such as electricity, and a sound understanding of materials and their properties. In Year 1 the pupils are able to identify a range of common animals and group them according to the ways that they move. In Year 2 the pupils understand how mains electricity reaches their homes and can make a circuit to light a bulb. Pupils successfully carry out simple experiments and make drawings of what they see. However, their ability to use their knowledge and understanding to predict what may happen, explain what they find and suggest their own ways of finding things out is often below expectations. This contributes to the underachievement of some of the more able. Pupils of average ability generally make good progress in science, as do most of the lower attainers and those pupils for whom English is an additional language.

102. The quality of teaching and learning in science is generally sound and is good or better in 40 per cent of lessons. In most instances the pupils have good attitudes to learning and are keen to share their own knowledge and understanding in class. They work hard and concentrate well during practical activities, except in one class, where the disruptive behaviour of a small number of pupils distracts the others.

103. In the best teaching, the teachers share with pupils what they should learn during a lesson and help them to recognise their own success at the end of the lesson. The teachers also have high expectations, continuously build on previous learning and provide pupils with opportunities to explore ideas and share their own findings. For example, in one good lesson, pupils in Year 2 shared what they already knew about electricity and the teacher explained what they should learn that afternoon. During the lesson the pupils used their knowledge of electricity to experiment with components in order to find out how to make a circuit. Once they had successfully completed the task they shared their findings with the rest of the class and, with the help of the teacher, established the important facts they had learned. All pupils made good progress and the teacher extended the more able through challenging questions and additional tasks to extend their learning. However, where teaching is less successful, the pupils often have insufficient opportunities to learn through practical activities, with too great an emphasis on teacher talk and worksheets. Also teachers fail to provide more-

challenging tasks and expectations for the more able in order to help them reach higher levels of understanding.

104. The long-term secondment of the co-ordinator for science had an adverse effect on the quality of provision last year. However, since her recent return she has made significant progress in providing detailed curriculum planning to address Curriculum 2000. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of science are generally sound, but many need training in how to provide appropriate opportunities for the more able and to improve the pupils' investigative skills. The headteacher has monitored teaching in science. However, there is currently little oversight of the teaching and learning by the co-ordinator. Accommodation for science is good, yet some additional resources are needed for practical activities and to make greater use of computers to support learning in science.

ART

105. Standards in art are good, with a significant number of children achieving above what might be expected for their age. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Evidence was gathered from observed lessons and from work displayed around the school, photographs and teachers' planning. There is real enthusiasm from all the teachers about the importance of teaching artistic skills so that children can improve what they do. They give the pupils time to practise their skills. Their work is valued and attractively displayed around the school. There are good examples of paintings using the style of Monet as a stimulus and of close observational charcoal drawings of everyday objects. There is often a buzz of activity and excitement during art lessons, with children taking great pride in their work.

106. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 learn how to use pastels for different tasks. The pupils in Year 1 were shown a portrait by Rembrandt and discussed what the sitter was wearing. They then chose costumes to dress in, were photographed and now use the photograph to copy from. The completed portraits show skilful use of pastels and high standards of work. The pupils in Year 2 make pictures based on 'what I can see from my window'. They use pastels to create a framed view and the work is good. The teachers make good links between art and geography teaching. Children are asked to imagine a view from a fixed point on an island they are studying and compare it to their own experience. Unsatisfactory standards are found when pupils are not given enough guidance about how they might approach the task.

107. Overall the teaching is good. It was, however, unsatisfactory only in the Year 1/2 class. This is because the lesson was not well planned and the tasks not well matched to the needs of the pupils. Lessons contain a good balance of the teacher giving ideas and developing skills and opportunities for pupils to use their imagination. There is no procedure for formal assessment of what children can do in art, although clearly teachers are aware of the quality of work from the displays around the school.

108. The leadership of the subject is good and, whilst the co-ordinator does not have the opportunity to formally support teachers, she does provide help and ideas to those who ask her. She is currently adapting a new scheme of work for the school and has led some in-service training on changes to the curriculum. The school has a good range of resources which allow for the teaching of the whole art curriculum and these are available to all staff.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

109. Only two Year 2 design and technology (D&T) lessons were seen during the inspection as the programme for D&T in Year 1 takes place after half term. Consequently additional evidence is taken from photographs of previous work, from discussions with teachers and pupils and from plans and records. At the end of Key Stage 1 the quality of the pupils' design and technology is generally in line with national expectations. The school

provides a well-balanced range of experience for pupils and is introducing a new scheme of work to address the new National Curriculum requirements which began this term.

110. Pupils design and make products in a wide range of materials. The pupils' ability to handle materials and tools and make their ideas is sound. However, their ability to design is less well developed and in some instances is below expectations. Pupils in Year 2 have a good vocabulary and recognise the common characteristics of vehicles well in discussion and when labelling observational drawings. Their ability to draw ideas is good, but drawings often lack the detail to show how the pupils will develop ideas. Insufficient emphasis is placed on helping children to develop and record their own ideas.

111. The quality of teaching is always sound and sometimes good. The lessons have clear objectives which were explained well to the children. They respond well to the use of toys to explain common features of vehicles and are keen to share their knowledge and understanding with the rest of the class. Features of the good teaching include the teacher's enthusiasm for the task and her explanation of why observational drawing and labelling are important skills to develop before designing a vehicle. Also good use is made of opportunities to share the good features of pupils' work, which raises expectations and provides examples of good practice which others could follow. However, the teachers lack the confidence to demonstrate drawing techniques at the beginning of the sessions. Most of the pupils concentrate well on their work and work hard to improve the similarity between their drawings and the vehicle they have chosen to draw. Some children are withdrawn from the lesson to be taught drawing skills on the computer but this is not linked with the work back in the classroom.

112. Spacious classrooms, a small food area and ample storage facilities provide good accommodation for design and technology. Resources are generally appropriate and made accessible to the children, although the range of textiles available and components for building and making things are limited. Teachers are generally confident when working with tools and materials, yet need training in order to improve the children's capability to draw their ideas.

GEOGRAPHY

113. By the time the pupils leave the school standards are similar to those expected for pupils of their age. The achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, is satisfactory across the range of skills, themes and places studied.

114. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are beginning to understand that places differ from their own home environment. In Year 2 they understand the concept of an island and can describe some of the features of a Scottish island and how they differ from their own area. The school grounds are used effectively to encourage Year 1 pupils to observe features of their own environment and how they change over time. They visit a farm and a local environmental study centre and gain a sound understanding of farming and the features of woodland. They make sound use of maps and globes to locate parts of Britain and towns. Photographs are used effectively to train pupils to observe and analyse the locality. The pupils undertake a useful traffic survey which strengthens geographical skills and effectively supports work in mathematics. However, the work in geography does little to enhance the use of information and communications technology to research about places or gather data. The Year 1 classes study the "seaside" and can describe some of the geographical features of a coastline. They can describe and draw simple routes and recognise different types of houses. They develop an understanding of the role of water in the environment.

115. The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory, with some very good teaching. The strengths in teaching are: the detailed planning and preparation; the good management

and organisation of pupils; the clear recall and reinforcement of earlier learning; the use of searching questions to prompt and guide further enquiry; and the good support provided by classroom assistants and other adults. In one very good Year 2 lesson a wide range of teaching strategies were employed, including whole-class discussion and group work, which was well differentiated to meet needs and effectively focused on looking at differences between the island of Struay in Scotland and Aylesbury. The pupils were then expected to study a range of different artefacts and photographs and decide whether they were from Struay or from Aylesbury. The session made a sound contribution to speaking and listening skills as pupils justified their decision about where the items came from. Opportunities for the use and development of literacy are, however, neglected, as too often the pupils merely complete brief answers in a work sheet. The subject makes little contribution to pupils' progress in information and communications technology. Field trips and the study of more distant places effectively support the pupils' social, cultural and personal development.

116. The subject is effectively managed by the co-ordinator. The quality of planning is regularly overseen to check curriculum coverage. A useful portfolio of pupils' work is being developed. The quality and standards in geography have been maintained since the previous inspection report.

HISTORY

117. Overall, standards are close to national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. Although no teaching of history was observed during the inspection, from the pupils' work and the teachers' planning it is clear that the curriculum is adequately covered. However, the pupils' factual knowledge is better developed than their ability to interpret, select, organise and record evidence independently. The development of the skills of enquiry and interpretation through the key stage is impeded by the overuse of completing worksheets and illustrating. The overuse of commercially produced worksheets to support some topics inhibits the pupils' own use of their literacy skills. This was a weakness noted in the last inspection.

118. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils, including those with special needs, develop a secure understanding of chronology by sequencing events, pictures and manufactured articles in past to present order. They study pictures taken of themselves and family over time and observe the changes. They study history within broad topics such as homes, toys and the seaside. They show an increasing ability to derive historical information from the evidence of artefacts such as household equipment such as items used in kitchens. They make an effective study of famous people from the past and build a good knowledge of the life of Grace Darling. A visit to a museum of historical buildings gives the pupils a good understanding of life in the Iron Age or what it was like to live in a "pre-fab" in the 1940s. They develop good drawing skills as they record their impressions of these buildings. Their written accounts of the visits successfully promote skills in literacy.

119. The overall quality of teaching is sound. The study of historical topics is soundly planned in clear detail and a structured programme and adequately resourced units of study effectively promote learning. The planned visits to local museums are particularly successful in promoting an understanding of life in the past.

120. The enthusiastic co-ordinator effectively monitors planning. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection, when the subject co-ordinator had too many other responsibilities. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to promote literacy skills through the subject and to make greater use of information and communications technology programmes to support the development of historical study skills, word processing and keyboard skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

121. Standards in information and communications technology (ICT) are below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. There are instances where individual pupils meet expectations in particular aspects of the subject, particularly where they have access to a computer at home, or where a particular teacher has provided opportunities. However, insufficient opportunities to use computers in lessons and inconsistent provision throughout the school have limited the progress of pupils of all abilities.

122. Standards in using electronic means to gather and store information are generally low as pupils using computers rarely save and retrieve their own work, or use the computer for researching information. Pupils in Year 1 reach national expectations in aspects of generating and amending their ideas by producing pictures on the screen and assembling pictures and text, such as when they assemble a human body from parts and label them. They also use computers to produce simple text, such as a sentence explaining when they feel happy as part of their programme of religious education. However, in Year 2, pupils have had only limited opportunities to develop these skills to higher levels or to communicate ideas through drawing a table or a chart. Some pupils achieve national expectations for Key Stage 1 by confidently programming a route into a computer-controlled vehicle. However, not all pupils have yet had this experience.

123. The school has recognised the shortcomings in its provision for ICT. This term it has wisely introduced a scheme of work based on national guidance to address inconsistencies between classes and low expectations in Year 2. In addition it has supplemented the modern computer in each classroom with an additional cluster of seven computers located in the former dining room. A member of staff has recently been employed in the afternoons to provide specialist teaching of ICT using these computers with small groups of pupils. Further plans include the conversion of the kitchen into an ICT suite with 16 computers where whole classes can be taught.

124. In the specialist ICT lessons seen, the standard of teaching was generally sound and pupils were beginning to develop appropriate skills for their age. The lessons were well prepared with very clear objectives, which were shared with the children. The teacher provided good clear instructions and individual support, which enhanced the pupils' confidence. The pupils enjoyed their work. They were keen to succeed and most pupils made sound progress during lessons. However, there was insufficient flexibility in the tasks set. This did not cater for pupils with varying levels of expertise or previous experience. Consequently not all pupils were fully challenged or were reaching their full potential.

125. Despite the introduction of specialist ICT lessons, the teaching of ICT remains unsatisfactory overall. The pupils continue to have only limited opportunities to use ICT to support learning in other subjects. They make little use of ICT to help them present their work in the classroom.

126. The school has made some progress since the last inspection, yet it is insufficient to enable pupils to reach appropriate standards in the subject. Staff expertise has risen as a result of some basic training but overall staff still lack confidence and knowledge to teach the full curriculum in ICT. There is also insufficient software to support learning in all curriculum areas.

MUSIC

127. By the time the pupils reach the end of Key Stage 1 standards in music are in line with expectations. Four music lessons and lots of singing activities were observed in Key Stage 1 during the inspection. Pupils sing songs about the weather and songs to welcome

each other to school. Singing continues to be well taught. These standards are similar to those found during the last inspection.

128. The Year 1 pupils are taught to sing with expression, using loud and soft voices. They are able to sing tunefully up and down a scale of notes following the teacher's hand signals. Introduction to a new song with actions is done line by line and repeated, so that all the pupils can practise and remember it. Pupils with English as a second language watch the teacher, who mouths the words. This is very supportive. Children in Year 2 are taught to listen to and repeat a rhythmic pattern using voices and a range of instruments. They are encouraged to start and stop on the teacher's signal, which requires great concentration. Some children find this difficult. Children create musical patterns of three repeating vocal sounds which they perform with enthusiasm.

129. The teaching is generally satisfactory. There are, however, examples of excellence. In a Year 2 lesson the teacher sets very challenging tasks where children have to listen to and repeat a musical pattern that the teacher shows them. They use untuned percussion instruments with care and respect and are thrilled when they count the beats and respond together.

130. Pupils enjoy music and the fun of singing. Generally they concentrate well. When necessary, teachers manage poor behaviour well. Pupils achieve best when the pace of the lesson is brisk and the activity challenging.

131. The subject is satisfactorily managed. The co-ordinator has little opportunity to provide formal support for teachers' planning, although she is currently adapting a new scheme of work for the school. There are no formal procedures for the assessment of what pupils can do in music. Consequently teachers do not always know what pupils can do and are unable to build lessons on prior learning. Music has a central role in the life of the school. Children make music for special assemblies and presentations to parents, as at Christmas. Children in Year 2 have the opportunity to take part in the Aylesbury Infant Schools' Music Festival each year, for which they learn new songs and play tuned and un-tuned percussion instruments. Some resources are old, but they are well cared for and there is a good range, particularly of instruments from other cultures. They are stored centrally and are easily accessible.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

132. By the time the children leave the school, standards are in line with those expected for children at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The school recognises the importance of providing enough time for children to develop their physical skills, so each class has two lessons of physical education each week. During the year they are taught gymnastics, dance and games. It was not possible to observe any games during the inspection. From the reception onwards children learn the importance of warming up before exercise and relaxing muscles afterwards. They learn how exercise affects the body and how it contributes to good health. Following a demonstration the school has introduced circus skills into the physical education curriculum to improve balance and control. All the children in Key Stage 1 have the opportunity to develop these skills. The resources have been much improved since the last inspection.

133. The children in Year 1 are able to work with increasing control in dance lessons. They copy the teacher and then practise movements for a clown dance to improve them. They remember a sequence of movements including travels and shapes and share them with the class. They respond to words such as "heavy", "light", "floppy" and "stiff" and move accordingly. In gymnastics lessons the children in Year 2 show spatial awareness appropriate to their age. They can move in a range of ways, running, hopping and skipping, showing increasing control and awareness of others. They can stop and start on a signal.

The children in the Year1/2 class are achieving below expectations and are unsure about how to improve their skills as they are given no time to practise.

134. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage, very good or excellent in Year 1 and satisfactory in Year 2. In an excellent Year 1 dance lesson the teacher built up the sequence of the clown dance systematically, giving children a framework which they could adapt, practise and show to the class. The pace of the gymnastics lesson for children in Year 2 is brisk and lively, with children working well, linking travelling movements together and starting and stopping on a signal. The teaching of the Year 1/2 class is unsatisfactory when children are not shown or told how to improve the quality of their movement when they are travelling around the space, or when they are inappropriately challenged.

135. The children enjoy the lessons, sustain high levels of concentration and are eager to share what they have been doing. The lessons are unsatisfactory when the structure is disjointed and a group of children become boisterous. The planning of lessons is generally good, but there is no system currently in place for assessing children's learning. The leadership of the subject is enthusiastic, but there is little opportunity for the co-ordinator to provide formal support for teachers' planning, although she is currently adapting an appropriate new scheme of work for physical education for use throughout the school. The outdoor and indoor facilities are good and there has been an improvement in the quality and number of resources since the last inspection. Storage is good and the resources are easily accessible.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

136. The standards achieved by the time the children leave the school are in line with expectations. The pupils show an understanding of Christianity and other major world faiths. The Locally Agreed Syllabus is in place and links are made with other subjects. For example, in science, when looking at the natural world, children look at God's creation. In personal and social education the Family Links project gives pupils opportunities to explore feelings and relationships. At Christmas pupils present a multi-faith celebration of Christingle, Divali and Hannukah through drama and music. Links are also established with art and technology, where pupils prepare an Eid meal and produce detailed Eid designs on textiles and paper. Visitors representing different faiths, effectively reflecting the multi-cultural nature of the school, enrich the curriculum.

137. At the time of the last inspection, standards in religious education were seen as meeting or exceeding expectations. The teachers kept limited record about what the pupils have learned. This is still the case. There has been little improvement since the last inspection.

138. The quality of learning is sound. In the few lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory, and in one lesson it was good. Stories are told which relate to the children's own experience, increasing their knowledge and understanding. Lessons often relate to themes explored during acts of collective worship; for example, helping others and friendship. In a good lesson the teacher relates the theme of Jesus choosing his disciples to the children's own friendships. Skilful questioning encourages children to give thoughtful answers and to express their own opinions. In other lessons opportunities for pupils to explore issues and give their own thoughts are not exploited. There is little recorded work evident; pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to write about religious issues.

139. The religious education co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans, which are based on the Agreed Syllabus. There are adequate resources and good use is made of the local community. No assessment procedures are in place. The RE policy, written in 1995, is due to be revised in 2001 following the publication of the new Agreed Syllabus. The management of the subject is satisfactory.

