

INSPECTION REPORT

CRESWICK JMI AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Welwyn Garden City

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117229

Headteacher: Mrs A Cookson

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Penfold
12443

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 6th October 2000

Inspection number: 224424

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Howlands Welwyn Garden City Hertfordshire AL7 4HU
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Hegarty
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
J Penfold 12443	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music Religious education Foundation Stage English as an additional language	The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
M Davie 11096	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
G Beardsley 24675	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art and design Geography History	
P Lewis 12652	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Creswick JMI and Nursery School serves its local community, which is mainly an area of local authority and housing association homes. It is an average sized school that has 188 pupils who attend full time. There is a nursery which almost all children attend on a part-time basis before they start in the reception class. There are two intakes to the reception class, one in September and one in January. When children start school many have below average language, number and social skills. Ten pupils speak English as an additional language. The main languages spoken by these pupils are Shona, Arabic, Urdu and Hindi. Over a third of pupils are on the school's register of special educational need, which is higher than the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is now a good school which provides effectively for its pupils. Pupils achieve very well in English, mathematics and science because the quality of education is good. The school achieves these high standards through hard work by all, good teaching, very purposeful leadership and management and a shared commitment to improve. The school's performance is checked and reviewed rigorously and it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. They are above average in science and history throughout the school and in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1.
- The teaching is good, and often very good.
- The headteacher provides excellent leadership and sets high standards for the work of the school.
- The school helps pupils to acquire good attitudes to their learning so that they work very hard and make good progress.
- The headteacher, staff and governors check and evaluate the school's work thoroughly and quickly take the actions needed to help it improve.
- The school supports pupils' personal development very well.

What could be improved

- Standards in information technology at Key Stage 2. Standards in music at Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Opportunities for pupils to decide how to approach their work and choose for themselves the methods and resources they will use.
- Aspects of the school's accommodation; in particular the very small library, lack of space for group teaching and layout of classrooms.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan and have already been identified in the school's development plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1998. It had serious weaknesses in aspects of its work. Since then it has made rapid improvement in many respects, and is now an effective school. The teachers use a wider range of methods to help the pupils learn and they do well as a result. Performance in tests has improved significantly in English, mathematics and science. Standards in geography, religious education and art are now as expected but standards in music remain below average. Weaknesses in the teaching of the youngest pupils have been overcome. Subject leaders now have a good picture of the strengths and weaknesses of their subject, and all teaching staff have been appraised. Recently the school has been concentrating on improving standards in writing, and inspection evidence indicates

that this has been highly successful. These improvements have ensured that the school no longer has serious weaknesses and now meets its aims fully.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	E	B	A
mathematics	C	E	A	A
science	D	E	C	D

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

These results relate to the pupils who took National Curriculum tests last year. Standards have improved further since then, and results are now better when compared with results nationally. Inspection findings show that standards in English, mathematics and science are above average by Year 2 (the end of Key Stage 1). They are well above average in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, and above average in science. Standards in history are above average throughout the school. Whilst most pupils reach the expected standards in information and communication technology (ICT) at Key Stage 1, standards are lower than those expected for pupils' age at Key Stage 2. Standards in music are below average at both key stages. The school has already exceeded the targets it had set itself for the oldest pupils in 2000 and 2001. Pupils in Year 6 are well on track to sustain these standards. They achieve well.

By five years of age most children achieve as expected for their age group in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative development. Their attainment in mathematics is below what is expected at five. Their physical, personal, social and emotional development is better than expected for this age group.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to do their best. They enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils understand the school's expectations for good behaviour well and conform to them sensibly in class and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The quality of relationships between pupils and teachers is a strong feature. Pupils get on well with each other.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

The purposeful atmosphere in the school is a strength that has a real impact upon pupils' attitudes to their work and on their behaviour. Pupils are well behaved at playtimes. They make good progress in their personal development.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	good	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 in English and mathematics is good overall and often very good. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well. Teaching is good overall. It was at least satisfactory in 96 per cent of lessons seen and very good in 25 per cent. The least effective teaching was in some physical education lessons. The teaching was most effective for pupils in Years 2 and 6 and pupils make very good progress in these classes because of this. The school meets the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language well. As a result pupils learn effectively and achieve well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall and very good in the nursery. Planning is now good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision in class and in withdrawal groups helps these pupils to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good provision in class by teachers and a bilingual teaching assistant. Pupils make good progress and achieve well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall with sound provision for cultural and spiritual development. There is a strong moral code throughout the school and careful tracking of pupils' personal development. Provision for pupils' social development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A high degree of care is shown for pupils. Teachers respond well to pupils' needs.

There are good links with parents. Assessment helps teachers to know their pupils well and plan suitable work to meet their needs. More attention needs to be paid to health and safety around the school. The school puts on a good range of activities for pupils to do out of lessons.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher's excellent leadership has provided clear direction for the school's improvement. A strong professional team has been forged, able to co-ordinate and monitor subjects successfully.

How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors support the school well. They are knowledgeable about its strengths and weaknesses. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities effectively through organised committees which meet regularly.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. There is close monitoring of the performance of pupils. The teaching is monitored very well.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its resources and uses its finances well to support educational initiatives such as implementing the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies.

The school has sufficient teachers who are well qualified. Administrative and learning support staff are very efficient. The accommodation has limitations, and the school is awaiting a move to a new building. Resources are adequate. The school applies the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school. • Their children make good progress. • The school expects their children to work hard. • The quality of the teaching. • The good behaviour of children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities for children to do outside lessons.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views held by parents. Parents at the meeting held before the inspection were critical of the use of computer-generated statements on their children's reports, saying that they were impersonal and that some children's are very similar. The inspection team agrees. The school had already identified this as an area for improvement and it forms part of the school development plan. Inspection findings show that the range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school is good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection, when they were a serious weakness. The results of national tests in 1999 indicate that the performance of the pupils by the age of 11 in their last term at school was below average in science and well above average in English and mathematics. Further improvements have been made this year. Eighty-four per cent of pupils achieved the expected levels for their age in English overall, compared with 75 per cent nationally. Eighty per cent achieved the expected level in mathematics, compared with a national average of 72 per cent. One hundred per cent achieved the expected level in science, compared with a national average of 85 per cent. Inspection evidence confirms this positive picture.
2. The picture over the last few years shows that this rate of improvement in standards has been faster than the national trend. Taking into account the attainment of pupils when they begin Key Stage 2 they achieve well and make good progress overall. Pupils at the school do well by the age of 11 in comparison with pupils at similar schools. The results in the 1999 national tests at age 11 were above the average for such schools. Pupils capable of achieving higher levels are doing so. Results at the higher Level 5 in the national tests were close to the national average in English, and well above average in mathematics and science.
3. The results of this year's national tests mean that the school has already exceeded the targets set for attainment in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 for both 2000 and 2001.
4. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress from their earliest days in school and achieve similar standards in national tests and in lessons to those of other pupils at the end of the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and do well.
5. The good quality of teaching has a positive impact upon pupils' literacy and numeracy skills which are very good by the end of Key Stage 2. In English, pupils adapt their talk for different purposes. They read and write very well. Their writing is fluent and neat, and they use grammar and punctuation correctly when writing for a range of different purposes. In mathematics pupils have a very good command of mathematical terminology which they use well when explaining their work. Their understanding of the number system is advanced for their age. In science pupils have a good knowledge of how to plan experiments and to make them fair. They can describe different changes, their causes and whether or not they are reversible. They have a good understanding of the different states of matter.
6. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards are below average in ICT and music, above average in history and as expected for the pupils' age in all other subjects. Standards are lower in music because of a lack of expertise. The school has recently employed a specialist music teacher to visit the school once a week and this initiative is already beginning to show positive results in pupils' singing. There is a weakness in attainment in ICT at Key Stage 2 because the school has, until recently, lacked the resources to enable the subject to be taught as required and teachers have been unable to develop the necessary skills. Standards in religious education are as expected by the locally agreed syllabus for Hertfordshire.

7. The performance of pupils aged seven (at the end of Key Stage 1) in 1999 was below the national average in reading and mathematics. It was well below the national average in writing. Few children achieved the higher levels. Inspection evidence confirms the view of the school that these low results were due to the large number of boys with special educational needs in the Year 2 cohort that took these tests.
8. Pupils now make good progress at Key Stage 1 taking into account the levels they have reached at the age of five. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the present Year 2 pupils is above average in English, mathematics and science. Results in the national tests have been lower recently at Key Stage 1 than at Key Stage 2 due to previous weaknesses in teaching which have now been remedied. The school's thorough implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are having a positive effect upon pupils' achievements at Key Stage 1. The improvements in the overall quality of teaching mean that higher attaining pupils have appropriate demands made on them. These pupils are achieving as well as they should be.
9. By the end of Key Stage 1, inspection evidence shows that in English, pupils' reading and writing skills are above average. They quickly recognise the sound of letters and groups of letters which they use successfully to help read unfamiliar words. They use dictionaries to help them in their written work and their spelling and grammar across a range of written work is good. Pupils listen carefully to each other and adults and make suitable responses. They are gradually increasing their vocabulary through imaginative role play, paired discussion and effective questioning by their teachers. In mathematics, pupils' numeracy skills are good. They tackle simple mental calculations confidently and have a quick recall of number facts to help them. They have a good understanding of time and can tell and record the time on digital and analogue clocks. In science pupils have a good understanding of heat as a mechanism for change. They can describe clearly different methods by which they have recorded their work in science. Their understanding of the characteristics of living things, and of the conditions in which plants will grow best is good.
10. Standards in history are above average by the end of Key Stage 1. Standards in other subjects are as expected by the age of seven except in music where they have remained below average since the last inspection but are now improving. Standards in religious education are as expected by the locally agreed syllabus for Hertfordshire.
11. Children join the school in the nursery with attainment that is below average overall. They make good progress. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of the Foundation Stage their achievement is what is expected in communication, language and literacy, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. In mathematics children's attainment remains below what is expected. Children are on target to exceed the goals in their personal, social and emotional development and physical development. Pupils enjoy books, handle them carefully and use the pictures to help them tell the story. Their attempts to write their names are recognisable and they know some letter sounds. They are currently learning about numbers to six. They are interested in the world around them and paint colourful and well-proportioned pictures. At play and in more formal physical education (PE) lessons they show good control of their bodies. They form positive relationships, are keen to learn and enjoy working independently.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes to the school are good and have a positive impact on their learning. This represents an improvement since the time of the last inspection particularly for children in

- Years 1 to 6 and makes a significant contribution to how well they now achieve. Pupils listen to their teachers carefully and behave well. Many work very hard to succeed and co-operate well with each other and the adults in the classroom. The new children in the nursery have settled in very well partly because many of them are familiar with the room and routines from their time at playgroup, but also because of the good support they receive.
13. Children in the Foundation Stage, which runs from the time they enter the nursery until the end of their reception year, are quickly becoming familiar with school routines. They enter their classrooms happily in the morning and are keen to get on with their busy days. They sit quietly during discussions and listen well. They are interested in all activities and very motivated to learn. They have a growing sense of belonging to the school community, happily talking to visitors about which class they are in and where they play. Nursery children listen to their teacher's instructions very carefully and are sensible about taking turns on the apparatus in PE sessions. They waste little time in becoming fully involved in the lesson, delighting in wiggling their hands, feet and even their noses to warm up.
 14. The older pupils also show a high level of interest in school life. They respond confidently to teachers' questions and work hard to succeed. As a result of high expectation and excellent classroom control during a Year 2 mathematics lesson pupils were excited about their learning and made excellent progress when practising doubling. Pupils in Year 1 showed obvious enjoyment during story time because the teacher's lively reading kept them totally enthralled. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson about decimals pupils worked very hard and made excellent use of their time, again because of the teacher's high expectations. This resulted in a high level of achievement in this lesson.
 15. Inspection findings endorse parents' views that behaviour is good and that children respect each other. Parents are especially impressed by the good behaviour of pupils on trips and visits, and a parent who accompanied children to the Dome last year said they were "a joy to take". Children are kind and courteous, remembering to say 'please' and 'thank you' when asking for things, and show concern if others are hurt or upset. When one of the girls bumped her head in the infant playground her friends quickly helped her to get attention, and then sat with her on the bench and held her hand until she felt better. All of the pupils speak to visitors politely and with confidence and the very good behaviour of the youngest children makes a strong contribution to their learning.
 16. Pupils occasionally become restless in a small number of lessons, often because the pace of their learning is too slow or when explanations are too long. However, they usually respond well to teachers' strategies to gain their attention and focus on their tasks again quickly. There are just a very small number of pupils whose behaviour sometimes disrupts lessons, but school strategies are positively addressing the difficulties of this small minority. There were no exclusions during the last school year, but there have been two fixed term exclusions this year as a result of unacceptable behaviour.
 17. Relationships are strong and all pupils work and play together well. In the infant playground boys happily play imaginary 'action man' games with each other, boys and girls skip while reciting the alphabet, and an imaginary cat owner takes delight in leading a group of imaginary strays around the playground. In the junior playground there is less imaginary play, but girls and boys do play football together, stand and chat or just run around to let off steam. Most pupils are keen to work collaboratively and are supportive of each other while completing assigned tasks. Relationships between pupils and adults are very constructive, teachers rarely miss opportunities to praise and encourage and these make significant contributions to pupils' self esteem. Because of the good support they receive, pupils with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language take part in all aspects of school life.

18. Attendance rates are satisfactory, but slightly below the national average. This is the same as at the time of the last inspection. A significant number of children are taken out of school for family holidays and the headteacher and governing body are giving consideration to how this can be reduced. As a result of consistent follow up of all absences by the school there is very little unauthorised absence. Most pupils are punctual in the morning, but a small minority arrives a few minutes late on a regular basis.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching is good overall and is promoting good achievement for pupils and standards that are above average overall. The teaching in 61 per cent of lessons was good or better, with 25 per cent of lessons having very good teaching. Of the rest of the lessons, 35 per cent were satisfactorily taught and four per cent (two lessons) were unsatisfactory.
20. The school has been successful in improving the teaching significantly since the last inspection when a quarter of the teaching was unsatisfactory. The last inspection raised three issues concerning teaching. The quality of teaching for children in the reception class has improved and this is now always at least satisfactory and sometimes good. The planning of lessons to meet the needs of lower and higher attaining pupils is now good. Teachers now use a sufficiently wide range of methods to cater for pupils' different learning needs. There is still work to be done to improve the involvement of pupils in deciding how to approach their work and make choices independently about the methods and resources they need.
21. The teaching of children up to the age of five in the Foundation Stage is good overall. Teaching in a fifth of lessons is very good. The teaching in the nursery is always good or very good. The teamwork of all adults is a significant strength. In the most successful lessons, activities are very well planned and meet the children's needs well. In a lesson in which children worked on the theme of 'families' through the story of 'The Three Bears' staff actively encouraged the children to plan their own work and to describe what they were doing, even though some found this very challenging. Staff were careful to reinforce the language they wanted the children to use. Children benefit from a rich set of resources in lessons in the nursery. In another lesson in the nursery where the teaching was very good all staff encouraged exploration, problem solving and discussion very well when children were involved in an outdoor session in which they built walls with large bricks, planned and built a boat using large blocks and role-played families in the well-equipped 'home'. Adults harnessed the children's learning by providing activities that were imaginative and enjoyable to the children and they learned well because of this. The teaching of physical development is good in the reception class. In apparatus lessons children are taught carefully the need for safety, there is good management of the children and staff make useful observations as children work which help them do better as they climb and move around the hall. The teacher is very clear about what she wants the children to achieve and how children should behave. As a result the children behave very well, listen carefully, work hard and do well. In outdoor sessions children are given a good amount of time in which to explore the equipment they use. In lessons when the teaching is less successful it is because the pace of teaching and learning is too slow.
22. At Key Stage 1 the teaching is good overall. Teaching in about a third of lessons is very good. Only one lesson was judged to have unsatisfactory teaching. Very good teaching was observed in English, mathematics, science, PE and religious education. A strength of the teaching at this key stage lies in the skilful questioning techniques which help the teachers to explore the pupils' understanding of the ideas being taught. For example, in a mathematics lesson in which pupils were practising doubling numbers, the teacher asked "What is important about doubling?" The answers she received helped her to judge what she should do next to

help the pupils learn, but also helped the pupils to explain their explanations. The pace of work in lessons at this stage is often very lively and there is much encouragement to help pupils do better. In the one PE lesson where teaching was unsatisfactory it was because the teacher spent too long talking to the class, pupils made unsatisfactory progress and there was little feedback to help them do better so they were marking time.

23. The teaching at Key Stage 2 is good overall. Teaching in a quarter of lessons is very good. Only one lesson was judged to have unsatisfactory teaching. Very good teaching was observed in English and mathematics and all the teaching of science was very good. The quality of teaching is having a positive impact upon standards in the core subjects by the end of Key Stage 2, where results have risen considerably over the last two years. Teaching was unsatisfactory in one PE lesson. This was because the level of challenge was too low, the pace of the lesson was slow because pupils spent too much time listening to the teacher, and pupils did not engage in enough physical activity. In the lessons where teaching is most successful there is detailed planning, teachers use pupils' contributions well when explaining key ideas, and the tasks that pupils do are well chosen to help them achieve the objectives for the lesson. In a science lesson for Year 4 pupils, the teacher had planned a good balance between activity and discussion with pupils and probing questions helped the pupils to learn about the way in which the heart pumps blood around the body. Pupils made clear gains in their learning as a result of the teacher's interventions. In a mathematics lesson for Year 6 in which pupils made very good progress the teacher noticed when pupils were making mistakes in their written work on decimals and stopped the class to clear up misunderstandings; she used the final part of the lesson very effectively to help the pupils to reflect on her main teaching points. In an English lesson for Year 5 the teacher used her good knowledge of what pupils could already do by referring back to their previous suggestions. This had the effect of improving their contributions.
24. Where the teaching is best there are good opportunities for pupils to work independently by deciding how they will approach their work. However there are generally too few opportunities for pupils to make decisions and carry out research because the lessons are at times very structured. Homework is used suitably to build upon the pupils' learning in lessons. All teachers make good use of what the pupils already know to plan activities that meet their needs. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress as a result of the careful attention paid to their needs in lessons. Whilst teachers make good quality assessments to gauge pupils' understanding and often give useful pointers in lessons to help them improve, the use of marking as part of this process is still inconsistent. Where the marking is good, teachers' comments indicate ways in which pupils can make progress but some comments are too general to be helpful. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils. Teaching assistants are used well to support pupils' learning. They are well briefed and make useful assessment of pupils which feed into the teachers' planning of activities to meet pupils' needs. The good quality management and consistently high expectations are contributing extensively to the pupils' pace of working, as pupils understand the importance of being attentive and concentrating on their tasks.

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

25. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for its pupils within a broad and balanced curriculum. The statutory requirements of the National Curriculum for all subjects, including religious education, are fully met. Deficiencies in curriculum planning, identified in the last inspection, have been met in full, and the school now ensures appropriate planning for

pupils with different learning needs. The planning and curriculum for the children in the nursery are particularly effective. The new national Foundation Stage is giving the school the opportunity to build upon this strength and extend the rich curriculum into the reception class.

26. Teachers undertook a comprehensive curriculum audit following the last inspection and policies, planning and schemes of work have been updated more recently to take account of other changes in curricular requirements at both key stages. The school has been particularly successful in maintaining breadth within its curriculum. The national programmes of literacy and numeracy have been implemented well. The school has identified the need to provide opportunities for extended writing and this is well planned for in English lessons, as well as in the good attention given to different styles of writing that pupils can develop in subjects such as science and ICT. A broad range of mathematical skills is applied well in mathematics and in subjects such as science and design and technology. Cross-curricular links between subjects are a noticeable strength of the school and they serve the pupils well in learning how to apply the skills and knowledge acquired in the context of one subject to another.
27. The school is making effective use of the guidance provided by the publication of national schemes of work, combined with guidance from the local authority and within commercially published schemes. Good attention is given to medium and to short-term planning, and this results in continuity and clear progression within and across the key stages. In the majority of lessons, teachers are using the guidance well to ensure that learning objectives for each lesson are clearly defined, although there are weaknesses in some lessons in ICT, music and PE, where there are inconsistencies in the level of teachers' subject knowledge. Regular monitoring of teachers' planning is helping the school to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and ensure that it is coherent across the school. This evaluation has enabled the school to identify the need to improve the opportunities for pupils to use a range of skills and knowledge in becoming more independent in their work. This is beginning to have a positive impact on teachers' planning but there remain few opportunities for extended investigation, particularly in mathematics and science. The needs of pupils of different attainment in the mixed-ability classes are well provided for through clearly differentiated tasks by teachers in most subjects, although the opportunities for differentiation are not always made explicit in their lesson plans, for example in ICT.
28. The school's provision for personal, social, and health education includes a strong emphasis on a healthy lifestyle and drug misuse. The governing body has agreed that sex education should be taught, and this is planned within the science curriculum and appropriately extended in sessions that are led by the school nurse for Year 6 pupils.
29. The school is working to extend the statutory curriculum through a developing programme of personal and social education at both key stages. A good range of planned opportunities to enhance pupils' behaviour and self-esteem is being put in place through the development of circle time, and opportunities to participate in discussions and decisions of the school council. Pupils are involved in setting and reviewing their own personal and academic targets. Through these activities, the school makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development and understanding of citizenship. The curriculum is enriched by the provision of a good number of day and residential visits and by lunch-time and after-school activities. The school takes part in tournaments in, for example, cricket and chess, against other local schools with some success. Visits to places of interest, and to museums and archaeological sites are well linked to the curriculum and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning, for example in history where a display drawn from a visit by museum staff reflected Year 1 pupils' knowledge of toys in history.

30. Pupils at both key stages, including those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language have equal access to all areas of the curriculum. The school makes good use of baseline information available from the nursery, and through both key stages in identifying pupils with special educational needs. Good quality individual education plans are written for these pupils, are reviewed on a regular basis involving parents in discussion and target-setting, and are used well by teachers and learning support staff in planning tasks that are appropriately challenging. As a result of these features, the school's provision for its pupils with special educational needs is good and they make good progress.
31. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. There is an appropriate range of opportunities for pupils to reflect on their place in the world and to explore the values and beliefs of others through religious education. Opportunities for effective spiritual development are also evident through other subjects of the curriculum, such as art and science. A good example of this is the enthusiasm shown by Year 2 pupils in describing their fascination at observing and recording the growth of beans from seeds into plants. Acts of collective worship make a sound contribution to pupils' spiritual development but one observed did not meet the legal requirements.
32. Moral and social development are strongly supported by the ethos of the school, and both are good. There is an expectation of respect for one another, and for pupils to be well mannered and courteous. Planned themes in assemblies often focus on moral issues and pupils are encouraged to think about relationships and caring for others. Teachers and other adults within the school are particularly influential in providing positive role models, demonstrating respect and care and a strong commitment to their work. Pupils are given a clear sense of right and wrong. Pupils' social development is supported well by the school. Class and individual targets are well understood and help pupils to develop a good sense of corporate and individual responsibility and this is enhanced through the well-developed system of class and whole-school rewards. At both key stages, pupils undertake a range of classroom duties, and their understanding of social responsibility is further extended through the activities of the school council, which has representatives from each year group throughout the school. Participation in a range of sporting and competitive activities helps pupils to develop a sense of teamwork, while the residential visits that take place for pupils in Years 5 and 6 are effective in raising pupils' self esteem and in helping them to recognise and value the contributions of others.
33. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development through the curriculum. Visits to, and visitors from museums give pupils an appropriate understanding of the features of their own and other cultures and this is extended effectively through the study of a different locality in geography. Religious education provides a good range of opportunities for pupils' to develop a secure understanding of the range of beliefs held by people of different faiths, while work in art is effective in developing pupils' understanding of the styles employed by a range of artists from Britain and elsewhere. Pupils are exposed to a variety of music in assemblies, but there is little emphasis placed on the good range that is played as pupils enter and leave.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. Support for pupils' welfare makes a good contribution to improving the educational standards they achieve, but there is insufficient attention to matters of health and safety. Each child is individually known and the good relationships between teachers and support staff ensure that their needs are fully met. Parents feel that teachers make every effort to instil good values and that by her strong leadership the headteacher has brought about an atmosphere of mutual

respect between pupils and adults. Support for pupils with special educational needs and for those still learning English is good because they are quickly identified and given the extra help they need. Good relationships with outside agencies ensure that when additional support is needed it is quickly to hand. The local behaviour support team is currently working with a small number of pupils in school.

35. There are good procedures for encouraging discipline and good behaviour. Pupils are very aware of what is expected of them because there is a consistent approach to behaviour management in all aspects of school life. This is reinforced in lessons, as well as by the prominent display of rules and by the good example set by all adults who work in the school. Parents are particularly pleased with the headteacher's approach to all matters concerning discipline. Children are proud of the stickers they get to acknowledge good achievement in all areas of school life, and enjoy being keepers of the teddies, which are awarded for good behaviour during lunch times. Meal supervisors manage the lunch-time very efficiently and reinforce the school's friendly atmosphere by involving themselves with children's playground games.
36. A range of strategies is in place for dealing with the very few pupils whose behaviour is occasionally disruptive. These include the setting of personal targets as well as behaviour contracts, which are assessed and reviewed regularly. There is very little bullying or harassment and any incidents which occur, are taken seriously.
37. Procedures for monitoring and tracking pupils' personal development are good. Each class teacher keeps formal, detailed records, which are reviewed on a regular basis and used to help set targets for improvement.
38. Teachers know their pupils well. The school has worked hard since the last inspection to develop good systems for assessment and recording and there is now a good set of procedures which make clear the links between planning, teaching and assessing pupils' learning. As part of their weekly planning, particularly in English, mathematics, and science, teachers review the outcomes of teaching and learning, identifying points that need further development, where pupils have achieved well, or need additional support. The school makes significant use of its systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' personal and social development in planning work that is appropriate to their needs.
39. Baseline assessments of pupils' skills are made when they enter the school and the results are used well to identify those pupils who would benefit from additional learning support. The school has developed a comprehensive series of procedures to collect data on its pupils' performance and to use this well in ensuring that teachers are able to plan and track pupils' learning effectively. Particularly good use is made of data in predicting pupils' future attainment and in setting challenging targets.
40. At the time of the last inspection there was no health and safety policy in place, and although this has been rectified, a list of concerns about the care, safety and protection of pupils has been given to the headteacher. These include the state of repair of some of the furniture, carpeting and resources especially for PE.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. Parents' views about the school are positive and they are happy with the standards their children achieve. They feel that the vast majority of their children like school and rightly feel

that the teaching is good and there is a happy atmosphere. Parents praise the headteacher's responsiveness to suggestions and concerns. They feel that she has transformed the atmosphere so that more parents are now willing to become involved in the life of the school.

42. Most parents feel that the amount of time their children are required to spend on homework is about right and that the school gives them clear guidelines. Concerns expressed about the range of activities provided outside lessons are not justified as there is a good variety of well attended lunch-time and after-school clubs such as dance, recorder and football and netball clubs which parents help to run.
43. The school's induction program ensures that both children and their parents become familiar with the school, routines and staff. Many of the children starting in the nursery have already spent time in their classroom at playgroup sessions, which are held in the same room during four afternoons a week. The confidence this gives both children and their parents is evident in how well they manage the day-to-day conventions of school life. The children are taking the new demands of nursery education in their stride.
44. The quality of information for parents is good overall, although there are some weaknesses. Information is translated whenever possible and newsletters are frequent and informative. Parents new to the school are well informed by the school's Prospectus and meetings. Annual written reports on pupils' progress are detailed and give parents a clear view of how well their children are doing and what they need to do to improve. The school has however, rightly identified their quality as an area needing development as parents feel that the choice of language used makes them seem impersonal.
45. Parents appreciate the school's open door policy, and are happy with the three consultations they are offered to discuss their children's achievements. The school makes every effort to ensure that someone who can interpret is on hand to help parents who need assistance. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are regularly invited to formal reviews as is required. The vast majority of parents feel well informed about their children's work, they are excited about the development of the ICT suite. The school is already making full use of this new facility and parents are pleased about the new learning opportunities it gives their children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The overall leadership and management of the school has improved since the last inspection. The school is led by a very committed headteacher who provides excellent leadership. This gives very clear direction for the school's improvement which is understood by all. She is well supported by an able deputy headteacher and effective staff team. The school's aims are now successfully reflected in the day-to-day life of the school.
47. All permanent teachers have subject manager roles which they fulfil well. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when co-ordinators lacked a coherent overview of their subjects. Their hard work has had a significant impact upon the improvement in standards in English, mathematics and science over the last two years. All subject managers provide annual reviews which build into the school development plan. Teaching, and pupils' learning are regularly monitored by senior managers; the performance management process is now embedded and ensures that all teachers have been appraised. The headteacher and governors are clearly aware of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. As a result changes are frequently made which improve the quality of education offered to pupils. For example, the school has recently invested in a computer suite so that ICT skills can be taught regularly

to whole classes. The decision to employ a visiting music teacher because class teachers lack confidence in the subject is having a positive impact upon attainment in the subject.

48. The school has already achieved its targets for English and mathematics for 2001. The headteacher and her deputy undertake detailed analysis of pupils' achievements in the variety of tests taken annually, so that the school can deal with weaknesses in teaching and learning as a result. The attainment of different groups of pupils is also monitored carefully. For example, in 1999 the performance of boys in National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 was significantly lower than that of girls, and the school is keeping a careful check on their progress as they move through Key Stage 2. Useful analysis is made of the attainment of pupils who have English as an additional language.
49. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well. It is led by a supportive and knowledgeable chair, who has a good relationship with the headteacher. Parent governors are very supportive and involved with the school. The committee structure is well organised. Specific governors have links with subjects and each governor is linked to a class. Most governors visit the school regularly during the school day. However there is not yet a clear system for the focus of this visiting, which is limiting its usefulness as a monitoring tool. Governors have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The governing body has been involved closely in drawing up the action plan following the school's last inspection and is beginning to ask searching questions of the school in order to shape its long-term development.
50. The management of special educational needs is good. Since the last inspection good provision in classrooms and small groups has enabled special educational needs pupils to make good progress at both key stages. The school has effective practices for the support of special educational needs pupils through both inclusion and withdrawal groups with a learning support teacher. Inclusion is well supported by the SENCO (special educational needs co-ordinator) who has worked with class teachers to provide useful individual education plans and target sheets for each class. Targets are reviewed each half term. This allows teachers to get to know their pupils at the beginning of the year before reconsidering the targets set. The regular review of provision for individual pupils is being carefully monitored by the SENCO who has suitable plans to use some of her administrative time for classroom observations.
51. The school has effective procedures to produce an annual school development plan. The school's self-evaluation now informs the plan and the governing body consider an early draft. The senior management team is closely involved in its development. The plan is a comprehensive and very useful document, identifying developments in detail over a year, but with a useful overview of longer-term plans. Initiatives are carefully costed, with timescales outlined and clear indicators of how progress will be judged.
52. Teachers are well qualified. They are a committed and hard-working team who work well together and share a common purpose. Subject managers are well matched to their expertise. There has been a high turnover of teachers since the last inspection but the staffing situation has now stabilised. One teacher left suddenly at the end of the previous term and the school is actively looking for a replacement. At the moment the class is taught by the school's learning support teacher and a supply teacher. The school is ensuring that there is sound provision for these pupils. Good use has been made of training to address the weaknesses identified in the last inspection report. Suitable procedures for the induction of newly qualified and new staff are in place and a staff handbook is planned. There are also sufficient opportunities for staff to further their professional development through attending courses and school based INSET. As part of the performance management within the school, subject managers have received specific training to enable them to carry out observations and monitoring in their subject areas.

Teaching assistants, including one for pupils with English as an additional language, make a significant contribution to pupils' learning because they are committed, experienced and well deployed.

53. The school has been informed by the local education authority, that it is to move to a new building on a different site in September 2002. The standard of the current accommodation is unsatisfactory and the building is becoming shabby. Whilst the classrooms are of an adequate size, there are no areas in which small groups can work with teaching assistants or visiting teachers. Individual support often has to take place in the school's dining room and sometimes a store room, which is unsuitable for such work. Some classrooms can only be reached by going through other classrooms, which means there is an element of disturbance, even though pupils are well managed by their teachers. Pupils in the Year 2 class housed in a mobile hut must go outside and into the main school to use the toilet. Reception children do not have direct access to an outdoor play area with equipment on which they can climb and play but the staff make good provision through supervised play sessions in which they use wheeled vehicles and toys. A gate has been put in the fence to enable the children to use the nursery's climbing equipment. The new ICT suite is rather cramped for a full class and has no ventilation. The only place that the school could position it was in part of the school hall which means that this is now rather small for the older pupils to use for gymnastic and games activities. There is a good-sized field. Some of the furniture in the reception and Year 1 classes is unsteady due to its age. The library area is unsatisfactory. It is too small and is situated in a corridor close to two external doors. There is only space for one bench on which pupils can sit to look at books. These deficiencies mean that library use is not contributing as it should to pupils' progress in reading and research skills. These conditions limit the range and quality of the work teachers and pupils can do.
54. Resources are adequate overall. Improvements are being made to resources in music and religious education which mean that these should shortly be satisfactory. The school is aware that geography resources need improving urgently as they are limited to two sets of atlases and has set aside funds to do so. Some of the small equipment used for PE is shabby, for example balls do not bounce because there are holes through which the sponge pokes out, and mats are rapidly approaching the end of their life. Resources for ICT have improved significantly since the last inspection with the acquisition of 15 PCs which are situated in the computer suite. Resources for the nursery are good. The governing body has improved the outdoor areas significantly with climbing apparatus, many wheeled vehicles of good quality and huts used for role play.
55. Educational priorities are supported well through the school's financial planning. The school applies the principles of best value well. The governing body compares its standards with other schools both locally and nationally and the finance committee ensures that services are bought at the right price. The systems for financial administration are excellent and were praised in the most recent audit report. All grants the school receives are being spent for the pupils' benefit. For example, funding for pupils with special educational needs is used well. The finance committee scrutinises the school's spending carefully. The school carried forward a sum equivalent to seven per cent of its budget this year as governors are saving for resources at the new building.
56. The school is very well led and managed and now provides a good quality of education for its pupils who achieve well as a result. Standards in English and mathematics are well above average by the end of Key Stage 2, and they are above average in science and history but below in music and ICT. The funding for pupils is in line with the average nationally. Taking these factors into account the school now gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve the quality of education and raise standards further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Raise standards in ICT* at Key Stage 2 (see paragraphs 108-111) and in music (paragraphs 112-114) by:
 - improving teachers' knowledge and understanding in both subjects by arranging training to match identified needs;
 - ensuring that pupils use and develop their ICT skills whilst working in other subjects across the curriculum;
 - carrying out plans to make sure that all pupils experience the full range of the music curriculum.
- (2) improve teaching further by providing more opportunities for pupils to decide how to approach their work and choose for themselves the methods and resources they will use; (see paragraphs 20, 86, 90, 94, 118, 121)
- (3) continue to work to ensure that improvements are made to the accommodation as planned. ** (see paragraph 53)

* The school, in its own self-evaluation has already identified the need to improve in this area and plans for improvement are already in place.

** The school is expecting to move to a new building by September 2002.

Other issues which should be considered by the school are to:

- attend to the health and safety matters identified to the headteacher during the inspection; (see paragraph 40)
- improve the resources for the teaching of geography and PE*; (see paragraphs 54, 103, 116)
- make sure that the statutory requirements are fully met in terms of the daily act of collective worship. (see paragraph 31)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	25	36	35	4	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 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	10	188
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	38

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	72

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	10

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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	13	15	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	7
	Girls	15	13	15
	Total	21	19	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (74)	68 (74)	79 (77)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	21	21	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (74)	75 (84)	75 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	15	10	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	13
	Girls	9	7	8
	Total	20	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (37)	80 (40)	84 (47)
	National	70 (65)	68 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	12	12
	Girls	9	7	7
	Total	19	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (53)	76 (63)	76 (67)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	3

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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.8
Average class size	25.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	93

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	34

Number of pupils per FTE adult	4
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	405,094
Total expenditure	399,880
Expenditure per pupil	1,778
Balance brought forward from previous year	26,508
Balance carried forward to next year	31,722

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	202
Number of questionnaires returned	44

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	36	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	41	5	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	52	2	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	52	9	0	14
The teaching is good.	43	52	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	48	14	0	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	25	9	0	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	36	5	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	32	45	16	2	5
The school is well led and managed	36	7	2	5	50
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	34	52	5	2	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	9	43	23	9	16

Other issues raised by parents

The inspection team agrees with the positive views held by parents. Parents at the meeting held before the inspection were critical of the use of computer-generated statements on their children's reports, saying that they were impersonal. The school had already identified this as an area for improvement and it forms part of the school development plan.

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

57. The results of the baseline tests indicate that the children enter the nursery class at the beginning of the Foundation Stage with attainment that is generally below average. During their time in the Foundation Stage they make sound progress in their mathematical development. They make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They make good progress in communication, language and literacy, creative development, physical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Inspection evidence, including scrutiny of the work of last year's reception class, indicates that most children are likely to achieve the goals for their age by the time they reach the age of five in communication, language and literacy, creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. In mathematics their attainment remains below what is expected. Children are on target to exceed the goals for their age in personal, social and emotional development and physical development.

Personal and social development

58. Good relationships are established between the children, their families and staff. In the nursery the clear rules and routines mean that children develop a good understanding of the school community and quickly develop their independence. They ably deliver messages to the other adults in the room and reception children are starting to venture further afield by confidently delivering messages to the office. They cope with changing for PE lessons well because teachers organise them into small manageable groups of six or seven who can be given very focused help. They know how important it is to walk to the hall quietly so as not to disturb the other children at their work, and wait patiently while the equipment for their lesson is being set up. During their session outside children in the reception class played together beautifully using the large wheeled toys. Some of them drew a road onto the pavement with chalk for the others to drive along, who showed that they were thinking of others by kindly giving them lifts. At the end of the session most of them organised themselves into a line sensibly, and encouraged others to do so as well.

Communication, language and literacy

59. The school places a high priority on developing young children's literacy skills, which are below those commonly found nationally when they start in the nursery. Provision for this area of children's learning is good. Children's speaking and listening skills are developed carefully. For example, when reading a story to the reception children the teacher gave many opportunities for the children to talk about what was making the characters happy or angry. By summarising the story the teacher helped the children to remember what had happened. During play in the 'three bears' role-play area nursery children learn to listen to one another in an informal setting. Children in the nursery are able to experiment with mark making to form letters in the writing area and some are attempting to write their own names. They look at books on their own and with adults and are beginning to understand that stories have beginnings, middles and ends.
60. Children in the reception class are currently beginning to be able to link sounds and letters. They browse through catalogues to find items beginning with the letter 'g' and cut them out and stick them in simple books. Children recognise rhyme and most can say a word that

rhymes with 'hot', for example, 'cot'. They tackle activities such as making letters out of play dough with relish; the high quality support given by the teaching assistant to groups helps the children to make good progress. Most children are already able to write recognisable versions of their names. All children in the reception class can write their names using a computer, some with adult support. When sharing books all children hold them carefully the right way. They make good use of picture clues when attempting to retell stories.

Mathematics

61. Children extend their mathematical language through small group work and in larger class sessions. Displays in the nursery of the numbers one to six help the children to learn the order in which numbers are said. Children are taught to count objects without touching them. Most four year olds can point out the number that says their age, some can say the number that comes before. Good quality displays help children to learn to compare the size of their hands. Staff in the nursery capitalise on the mathematical potential of children's self-chosen activities well. For example, during an outdoor session children were encouraged to stack large blocks of the same size on top of one another. This helped them to learn about the properties of three-dimensional shapes as well as their size. Carefully planned activities with familiar resources support the learning well. In one session the nursery children developed their understanding of big, medium-sized and little by comparing the size of bears.
62. Children in the reception class are learning to count and recognise numbers to ten. They can put the numbers one to five in order using a magnet board. Counting games with the class consolidate children's counting skills and their mathematical language. Children are developing a sound understanding of the language of measures such as 'long' 'longer', 'short' and 'shorter' through appropriate practical activities such as making long and short caterpillars. The teacher made good use of ICT to use computers to play a game in which they make longer and shorter objects using blocks.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. The teachers in the Foundation Stage prepare the children well for their National Curriculum studies in science, geography, history, design and technology and ICT. A very good feature of the work in both the nursery and the reception classes is the way that the children's knowledge and understanding of the world are developed through themes such as 'families', 'toys' and 'gardens'. Teachers plan an interesting range of activities to develop the children's awareness of time and place. The children are learning a sense of time by looking at photographs of people in the past, linked to their work on families and by growing bulbs. Children in the nursery develop an appropriate awareness of place by exploring the outdoor area close to the school and searching for natural materials. They take care of an area for growing seeds and plants. Displays encourage them to have a go at making items such as kites, puppets, musical instruments and binoculars using 'junk' materials. During outdoor sessions they tackle with relish tasks such as the building of a boat with large blocks and record their designs on paper attached to clipboards. They listen to stories and experience food from a range of cultures.
64. Reception children are interested in the world around them. They discuss where they live. They are able to identify features of the kind of houses in which they live and show empathy for the teacher when she explains that she cannot keep a pet because she lives in a flat. Their sense of the past is not as well developed as their understanding of their immediate environment. They select materials from a range of straws, cotton wool, paper and wool to make animal masks. They make good use of ICT to support their learning under the direction

of adults and are able to operate a tape recorder independently to listen to a story. They learn that copies of their work are made using the school photocopier in the staff room and enjoy accompanying a teaching assistant to do this.

Creative development

65. The children have many opportunities to take part in imaginative play. In the nursery they use a very well resourced 'baby clinic' with a waiting area, leaflets, a doctor's bag and a table on which 'babies' can be weighed and measured. The staff plan good opportunities for children to learn about colour, texture and shape and to use their imagination through making models and painting. They use their senses to explore texture, for example, on a display which has a good range of materials which are rough, smooth, soft and hard. They join in confidently with songs and love to use the role-play areas. A very good feature of the provision for children's creative development lies in the way that children are encouraged to act out stories and situations when playing outside.
66. By the time they reach the reception class, children are able to paint well-proportioned pictures of people using colour boldly. Drawings of their favourite animals show some detail such as the stripes on a tiger. They can hear and clap back a simple rhythm. They play productively, learning to listen to one another in the very well-resourced 'Noah's Ark' role-play area. During imaginative play in the house on the Key Stage 1 playground they make tea and toast for a visitor, watching carefully to see that all is eaten and drunk, and then washing up afterwards.

Physical development

67. There are many rich opportunities for nursery children's physical development. The outdoor area is used very well to harness children's learning with a change of focus each day, for example, construction play, small PE apparatus or wheeled toys. During the more formal weekly hall session children show good levels of physical development. They can create movements to the sound of musical instruments.
68. Children in the reception class make good use of the playground when taken out by adults to use the wheeled vehicles. Very good physical skills are evident in the way that they pedal and push. They balance securely on wooden blocks. Their awareness of space is sound and there are few collisions as they drive along their chalked 'roads'. A boy was observed solving the problem of fitting himself into a car with a roof. He realised that the policeman's helmet which he was wearing was creating a problem so removed it and put it in the car's 'boot', carefully replacing it when he got out. In PE lessons nearly all children move over the apparatus with confidence. Adults encourage them to vary their movements well and help them to do better with clear guidance that does not limit their independence.

ENGLISH

69. The results of the 1999 national tests for pupils aged 11 were above average when compared with all schools and well above average when compared with those in schools with pupils from a similar background. Results in the 1999 national tests taken by Year 2 pupils were below average in reading and writing due to the large number of pupils with special educational needs in the Year 2 class which took the tests. In the national tests taken by Year 6 pupils in 2000, 84 per cent of pupils achieved Level 4 or above in the national tests, compared with about 75 per cent nationally. This shows that the school is sustaining the good improvement it has made.

70. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment in English is above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and well above average by the end of Key Stage 2. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
71. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' speaking and listening skills are above national expectations and well above by the end of Key Stage 2. Although pupils' communication skills are below what is expected on entry to the nursery, the good teaching pupils receive through the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 enables them to develop their listening and speaking skills effectively. During Key Stage 1, pupils develop confidence in their use of spoken language, experimenting with imaginative language in role-play areas such as a 'Post Office'. Pupils are encouraged to articulate questions and answers correctly and listen carefully to one another. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils working in pairs, responded to questions such as "Do crows fight?" by giving a number of reasons such as "They might fight over food". They are also able to raise questions for one another and give reasoned responses. In other lessons pictures were used to encourage pupils to give logical explanations. For example, how clothes worn at the seaside in the past were different to the present day and why. Pupils were also encouraged to extend their vocabulary by incorporating detail in their responses such as when describing an old oil lamp as part of a history lesson using artefacts.
72. At Key Stage 2 pupils continue to develop their speaking and listening skills through discussions on pattern and rhyming in poetry such as limericks. In a Year 3 class pupils experiment with dramatic effects through groups reading specific characters in the story 'Clever Polly and the Stupid Wolf' They also use their spoken language effectively in a science lessons when making judgements about changes in bread when it is toasted. By Year 6 pupils are commenting constructively and positively when working together in pairs or larger groups, for example, when finding out the meanings of technical terms in script writing or when using a variety of sources for researching a Victorian classroom. Pupils at both key stages listen and respond with interest and empathy to the content of stories and to one another when working in pairs for writing, art, science or history and in assemblies.
73. Standards in reading are above average at Key Stage 1 and well above average at Key Stage 2. At both key stages pupils meet a range of texts through books presented in the literacy hour as part of their extra daily guided reading sessions and from chosen library books. By Year 2, the higher attaining and average pupils read accurately, fluently and with expression. They enjoy their reading and are happy to talk about the plot as well as giving detailed descriptions of characters. Lower attaining pupils are also confident in attempting new words by using their phonic knowledge and making good use of pictures and contextual clues.
74. By Year 6, the higher attaining and average pupils read fluently and with a very good level of understanding in subject areas such as science and history. Pupils read a wide range of books with confidence, fluency and enthusiasm. The higher attaining and average pupils make use of all their reading knowledge and skills to interpret books with words difficult to pronounce such as in the 'Harry Potter' books. They are able to talk competently about the books they read and give a lively synopsis of a plot. They show understanding and empathy for characters in their books and enjoy different genres by authors such as JK Rowling and C Voight. Lower attaining pupils read fluently but with little expression and make use of phonic knowledge as required. All are able to use the available library resources effectively to find information and are keen to complete a school reading challenge through reading and recording information on ten library books.
75. Pupils' standards in writing are above average at Key Stage 1 and well above average by the end of Key Stage 2. This reflects the hard work of all staff in providing opportunities for

pupils to develop their writing skills through a range of writing tasks across curriculum areas. Good progress is made during Key Stage 1 when higher attaining and average pupils make use of simple dictionaries to find words and attempt unaided writing supported by alphabet lists. They are learning to use capital letters and full stops and letter combinations such as 'ou' 'ow' By the end of the key stage they are able to write in a range of subject areas and forms including reviews using correct or phonetically justifiable spellings. The lower attaining pupils are well motivated to write throughout the key stage by attempting early writing in their role-play settings and developing letter formation when copying and writing sentences.

76. During Key Stage 2, pupils' progress in lessons is often very good and they build on their skills and knowledge of different kinds of writing. They appreciate the rhythm in poems and attempt to write their own limericks using both rhyme and humour. Pupils also experiment successfully with different styles in story writing such as in the style of Dickens or the Just So Stories by Rudyard Kipling. By the end of the key stage, pupils are extending their knowledge of more sophisticated punctuation and sentence forms through the use of colons, semi colons and parenthesis. In extended writing lessons they develop their knowledge of different writing formats and are effectively challenged by writing a television script for a favourite story.
77. Pupils with English as an additional language and special educational needs make good progress in English throughout the school. The very good support given enables them to participate well in whole-class sessions with the rest of their class. Additional support for pupils through withdrawal groups provides them with additional knowledge and skills for classroom use. Valuable additional literacy support is also available as part of the literacy strategy for lower attaining pupils in Year 3 and 4. This is starting to prove effective in raising standards of attainment for lower attaining pupils.
78. The quality of teaching in English is good overall and sometimes very good at both key stages. It is good or very good in all lessons at Key Stage 1, which is reflected in the good progress made by pupils. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is very good in half the lessons and satisfactory in the other half. In the lessons where the teaching is best there is detailed planning based on good subject knowledge. Teachers make effective use of introductions to model different writing formats and this is having a positive effect on standards in writing throughout the school. In introductions and the final parts of lessons teachers use probing questions which lead to lively discussions and support the learning of all pupils. In a few lessons the introductions were overlong so that there was not enough time for pupils to develop their work fully during the group activities. In most lessons activities were well matched to pupils' needs. Marking is satisfactory overall. It is particularly helpful in Key Stage 1 where teachers often make comments to encourage pupils. Where it is good in Key Stage 2, teachers give positive suggestions to help the pupils improve their writing.
79. The English subject manager is developing a suitable policy for writing to help raise standards further and has plans to monitor all areas of English including extra time for guided reading to ensure progression across the key stages. Although the school library has an adequate range of fact and fiction books, it is too small in size and this limits the opportunities for pupils to work independently when researching their own topics.

MATHEMATICS

80. Attainment in mathematics has improved significantly since the last inspection. The picture shown by test results over the last four years makes it clear that the rate of improvement in mathematics has been better than the national rate. The key issue raised in the last inspection

report has been addressed satisfactorily: pupils have more opportunities to develop their problem-solving skills and these have improved as a result. The co-ordinator is keen to ensure that further progress is made in this area.

81. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests were below average at Key Stage 1 and above average at Key Stage 2. Low standards at Key Stage 1 in 1999 were due to the effect of a large group of boys with special educational needs in the cohort. Attainment in the tests taken by pupils in 2000 is higher, with the best improvement at Key Stage 2. Test results indicate that, by the time pupils leave school standards are well above average in comparison with those achieved by pupils in similar schools. Inspection evidence confirms this picture at Key Stage 2 and points to an improvement at Key Stage 1. This is because recent improvements in the teaching of mathematics due to the school's good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy are now showing their effects in the work of pupils.
82. Pupils achieve well throughout the school. They make good progress at Key Stage 1 and through most of Key Stage 2. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 make very good progress and achieve very well.
83. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well; their attainment in mathematics is similar to that of other pupils. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels in the annual National Curriculum tests was average at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999. It was well above the national average at Key Stage 2.
84. By the end of Key Stage 1, there are strengths in the Year 2 pupils' quick recall of number facts and in their ability to explain the mathematics they have learned. For example, at the end of one lesson a Year 2 pupil explained that an analogue clock is one "When you can see the clock face". Year 1 pupils can add and subtract one from numbers up to ten, and add on to find the number needed to make ten. Higher attaining pupils can add several numbers to make 20 and draw objects that are shorter or taller than themselves.
85. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have a very good knowledge of the structure of the number system. They can count aloud in steps of 0.1 and 0.2. Most can multiply a three-digit number by a two-digit number and find fractions of numbers. Pupils with special educational needs can put fractions in order and convert mixed numbers to improper fractions. Higher attaining pupils can partition numbers to three decimal places to show that 7.639 is equivalent to "Seven whole ones, six tenths, three hundredths and nine thousandths" with confidence.
86. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. It is very good in a third of lessons and satisfactory in half. Teachers have implemented the requirements of the 'daily mathematics lesson' well and have a good knowledge of the approaches outlined in the National Numeracy Strategy. In the best lessons, the pupils are told what they are to learn, there is very good teaching of mathematical vocabulary and the pace of learning is fast with constant checking to see that pupils are all understanding. Lessons are planned in detail. The 'plenary' part of the lessons makes a good contribution to pupils' progress because teachers use it to assess pupils' understanding and reinforce key teaching points. Questioning is skilful and relates well to what the teacher wants the pupils to learn. For example pupils in Year 6 were asked "Can anyone prove to us that $\frac{10}{100} = \frac{1}{10}$?" In a few lessons the teacher does not use her time to best effect by working with a group during the main teaching activity or explanations to the whole class are too long. This means that some pupils become restless and lose interest for a time. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that use of worksheets at lower Key Stage 2 limits pupils' ability to work independently and develop their own methods of recording. The quality of marking is sound overall. It is best at Key Stage 1 where teachers show clearly what pupils

have achieved and give pointers to help the pupils improve. Where it is weaker, comments, whilst encouraging, are too general and most feedback is about the standards of presentation.

87. The well-informed subject manager is aware of the need to give pupils more opportunities to develop their investigative skills and to improve the use of ICT to support pupils' learning in mathematics.

SCIENCE

88. Attainment in science has improved significantly since the last inspection. In 1999 on the basis of teachers' assessments, attainment in science at the end of Key Stage 1 was very low in comparison with the standards achieved by pupils nationally and when compare with similar schools. Inspection findings now indicate that standards in science at Key Stage 1 are above average overall. The results of the Key Stage 2 national tests in 1999 were above the national average although below average in comparison with similar schools. The test results for 2000 have continued to improve. All the pupils achieved the expected level for their age. The school has also improved the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5.
89. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to describe the differences between living and non-living things and to identify some of the requirements for life. For example, they talk knowledgeably about the need for light and water, and describe some of the effects on plants when light is taken away. They plan experiments within a set framework and record their observations well. Pupils describe accurately changes in materials and many can suggest that some changes are not reversible. Higher attaining pupils, involved in an experiment to investigate changes in bread when it is toasted, suggest that some changes are caused by heat. Pupils are beginning to approach problems scientifically and some are developing an understanding of what constitutes a fair test. As a result of the emphasis placed upon the developing use of accurate scientific vocabulary, pupils by the end of the key stage have made good progress in the subject.
90. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils record their findings in a variety of ways, following the school's guidelines for presentation. They are less confident in designing their own experiments as this aspect is underemphasised in teachers' planning. They can make predictions and suggest why and how these might be tested appropriately. Pupils are aware that fair testing involves changing one variable and measuring its effect. In an experiment designed to test the solubility of different materials, for example, pupils were able to suggest that changing the rate of stirring could change the rate at which materials dissolve. Pupils use accurate vocabulary in investigating the changes that take place in the body following exercise. Their above average understanding of the function of the heart and lungs is apparent in their descriptions of the need for more oxygen following exercise. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and speaking English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well.
91. The quality of teaching is consistently very good. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and ensure that pupils know what is to be learned. Lesson planning ensures that there are appropriate challenges for all pupils. Expectations of presentation, behaviour and effort are consistently high. Teachers are now planning consistently for pupils to be involved in experimental science and this is having a positive impact upon their attainment and progress throughout the school. Similarly, key scientific vocabulary is well planned and taught in a progressive way. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the teaching when working with pupils with special educational needs. The subject managers are aware that there is now a need to allow pupils to plan, undertake and record their own investigations in a more independent way.

ART

92. Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is as expected for their age. At Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in recording by direct observation and develop their

illustrations through the use of line drawings and by using pastels and chalks. They are able to make patterns through printing with fruit, vegetables and objects of different shapes. Satisfactory progress has been made. At the time of the last inspection standards were below average at Key Stage 1.

93. Pupils at both key stages make sound progress in developing precise and focused work through pattern and line to produce aspects of portraits such as details of different parts of the face. Pupils share their ideas and are keen to discuss differences in one another's work in order to improve their own. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils carefully observed and improved on their drawings of eyes by talking with one another. In Year 6, pupils experimented with symbols to create an abstract representation of a favourite place. This was part of a series of lessons on symbolism in art through an examination of the work of Klee and Picasso. Pupils are able to explore ideas and compare patterns showing a good appreciation of the process. They also make use of colour mixing to produce different elements of pictures in the style of Van Gogh and Rousseau.
94. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Lessons are appropriately planned and sound use is made of resources to support teaching. Teachers make satisfactory use of questioning in introductions to encourage pupils to explore their ideas and appreciate the details that might be included in their drawings. In all lessons pupils' work is discussed during the session and their different skills are praised. This motivates pupils and has a positive effect upon their progress. At both key stages the pupils work was focused upon particular skills and there was clear direction in what was being taught. In the most effective lessons pupils were able to relate their work to the artists they had been studying to show the similarities involved. However there are not yet enough opportunities for pupils to develop their independence in art by selecting their materials or experimenting with different approaches to make their pictures.
95. The school has a clear action plan for art, and since the last inspection the subject manager has produced constructive guidelines to support the art curriculum showing progression through both key stages. This is to encourage the development of drawing and painting skills through different themes and to encourage the use of a variety of media. Although this has improved the ideas available to pupils, it has not yet made an impact on the use of fabrics or two-dimensional and three-dimensional techniques.
96. Across the school, pupils have a positive attitude towards art and make use of it in other subject areas such as in line drawings of illustrations for a history project on the Tudors. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to choose the materials and processes they will use, based on their own skills and knowledge of art, craft and design.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

97. No lessons in design and technology were observed during the inspection, but evidence from teachers' planning, samples of previous work and of work on display indicate that standards at both key stages are in line with those expected nationally and that pupils make satisfactory progress.
98. At Key Stage 1, pupils have an appropriate range of opportunities to cut and stick a variety of materials. They use scissors with care and make simple drawings to illustrate the designs of their models. The moving elephant puppets made by pupils in the reception class showed care in cutting and decoration. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have experienced an appropriate range of opportunities that include generating ideas, applying appropriate skills in making

objects that are well finished and identifying particular features that work and what could be done to improve them. The slippers designed and made by pupils in Year 6 show considerable attention to detail in, for example, the material used in the soles to increase friction, the quality of the stitching and the care taken in designing and applying individual decorations. Effective links are made with work undertaken in other subjects, for example work in Year 1 on healthy eating.

99. Teachers' planning indicates the progressive development of an appropriate range of knowledge and skills in design and technology. Care has been taken to enable pupils to make use of the work undertaken in other subjects of the curriculum, for example, in the models of growing flowers made by Year 1 pupils that effectively built upon work in science. Assessment in the subject is undertaken using the local authority's guidelines, and is effectively supported through the school's own assessment and recording systems.

GEOGRAPHY

100. No lessons were observed during the inspection because the school is currently piloting the teaching of history and geography in blocks of a term for each.
101. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' work shows that they are making sound progress in developing their understanding of their own and other localities through the theme of 'Travels with Barney Bear'. This is linked to a map of the world with postcards received from other countries. In a Year 1 class pupils are learning to compare their own and other localities through a well-planned Post Office project in which they are invited to write letters and receive replies from pupils at another school.
102. In Key Stage 2 pupils learn to interpret landscapes in pictures and find out more about the world in which they live through a project on newspapers. In discussion, pupils make sensible judgements about climate, altitude and different hemispheres when discussing another country such as Australia.
103. Resources are currently unsatisfactory. They are limited to atlases. The co-ordinator's action plan includes identifying resource needs to support the requirements of the new National Curriculum.

HISTORY

104. Pupils' attainment at both key stages is above average and they make good progress. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards were average at Key Stage 1 and below average at Key Stage 2.
105. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are developing a good understanding of past and present through identifying artefacts that are old or older than the present day and providing logical reasons for why this is. For example in a Year 1 class pupils identified an object as a carpet beater for getting rid of dust and were able to describe a vacuum cleaner as the modern equivalent. They are able to identify changes in the way people live through the interpretation of pictures to understand differences and similarities between seaside holidays in the 1940s and now.

106. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a sound understanding of the vocabulary of history through studies of the Tudors and have a good appreciation of the differences in lifestyle of rich and poor people of the time. They have a good understanding of how to use documentary evidence from a variety of sources. In studies of the Victorians, pupils are able to make good use of interpretive skills when examining the details of a Victorian classroom. There is also evidence of empathy in pupils' historical narrative when writing about famous people such as Lord Shaftesbury. Pupils in Year 5 are able to compare electronic and wooden toys and develop their own inventories of household items including attempts to write in a Tudor style, for example they write 'bedde'. Pupils make effective use of their literacy and numeracy skills when writing historical reports and descriptions.
107. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and identify clearly what pupils will learn. Introductions maintain a good pace and are often lively and dramatic. For example, in a lesson for Year 1 pupils were invited to open a box of artefacts and guess what they might be. In all lessons pupils were presented with interesting and well-resource tasks which helped them to think about life in different times and to develop their historical vocabulary. Challenging activities meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs as well as other pupils. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills through history by writing about pictures or assembling inventories. At both key stages there are good opportunities for higher attaining pupils to develop their knowledge through using a variety of primary and secondary sources and raising their own questions for researching evidence.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

108. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with those expected nationally, while standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are below. The standards attained by pupils with special educational needs are similar to those of other pupils at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, pupils write simple sentences using the computer and can use the mouse and keyboard effectively to select objects and move them around the screen. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are confident in opening and saving programs and in entering, selecting and modifying text and clip-art pictures. They plan sequences of movements and are able to convert these into a set of instructions to control the movements of a programmable floor toy. Their abilities in data handling and interrogation, and in using the computer as a communications device are below the standards expected.
109. Where teachers have sufficient subject knowledge in the aspects of the subject that they are teaching, tasks are planned clearly and pupils' learning advances well. The school has given careful consideration to the way in which it might best develop pupils' skills and understanding of the use of ICT and is placing considerable emphasis initially on aspects of word processing and data handling. In these areas, and particularly that of word processing, pupils are making good progress. They are beginning to understand the advantages of the computer for drafting and editing of their writing and how their writing can be made interesting and its dramatic effect, changed by the use of different fonts and styles of layout. Pupils' knowledge has developed through Key Stage 2 so that, by age 11, they have a sound understanding of the ways in which computer programs can be used to present data in a variety of forms, although their experience of using this to support work across the curriculum is limited.
110. In the lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory overall, but there are weaknesses in teachers' knowledge and confidence in some aspects of the subject which were not taught during the inspection. As a result, the school has developed a good range of plans to address this issue.

A new ICT room containing powerful, networked computers and a comprehensive range of software was brought into use for the first time during the week of the inspection. This replaced the school's original resources which comprised separate and out-dated computers. Teachers' planning now clearly identifies the way in which the computer room is to be used to develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in a coherent and consistent way. The school has also begun to identify specific training needs for its teachers, and plans to use new opportunities fund money to begin this training later this term. As a result of these initiatives, the school is well placed to secure improvements.

MUSIC

111. The previous inspection identified weaknesses in the provision for music which meant that attainment was below the nationally expected standards at the end of both key stages. Pupils are now making sound progress in their learning. Changes have been made which are having a positive effect, but due to previous weaknesses, attainment, whilst improving, is still currently below average at the end of both key stages.
112. No work with instruments was observed during the inspection. Pupils' singing remains weak at the end of both key stages, although they now enjoy music lessons. Singing in assemblies is similarly weak. Pupils find it difficult to sing in tune and are not yet confident enough to sing loudly when asked. There is little variation in the dynamics of their singing. Their sense of rhythm is better and they can generally learn the words and rhythm of a new song reasonably quickly. Pupils in Year 5 are beginning to use symbols to show how they will use instruments to represent animals such as tigers and elephants as part of their work on composition. They show that they can record simple rhythmic phrases on paper. Work on listening and appraising is beginning to give pupils an insight into the fact that music reflects time and place. For example pupils in Year 6 listen to the music of Saint Saens, Vivaldi and Rimsky Korsakov. The music played in assemblies is not identified to pupils.
113. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and teachers' subject knowledge is now better than it was, although some weaknesses still remain. The school has wisely invested in the services of a specialist music teacher who teaches all classes on a fortnightly basis to compensate for teachers' lack of confidence in teaching the subject. She provides a good model for teachers and pupils to follow, and her visits are already having an impact on the quality of singing. Although some older boys are embarrassed during lessons and find it hard to join in, pupils love their fortnightly lessons with the visiting teacher and this is having a positive effect upon their progress.
114. The co-ordinator has a good picture of the current position of the subject. She has worked hard to put in place a programme of work designed to help pupils improve and to cover all the required elements of the music curriculum. A suitable amount of money is being spent on rectifying the weaknesses in the quality, quantity and range of musical instruments.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

115. Standards in PE are in line with those expected at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
116. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of the need to warm up and the ways in which it should be undertaken. They understand the need to be watchful of their own health and safety and that of others in, for example, the ways in which they move around the hall. They use space well, and control their movements effectively in a variety of speeds and directions. In dance, older pupils respond well to music, matching their movements well to changes of pace and rhythm. Pupils make progress in this key stage that, overall is good. Teachers often make sure that there are sufficient opportunities in lessons for pupils to practise and refine the skills that have been taught and pupils use these skills well in subsequent work. Their progress is sometimes hindered by the condition of the small equipment that they work with.
117. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can pass a ball with accuracy using hands and feet. They work well with partners and in small groups. Their catching skills are appropriately developed.

In gymnastics, pupils make good use of space, but frequently use a limited range of different movements in their work. They show a good level of imagination and appropriate skill in balancing although they are less skilful in creating sequences of different balances. Progress at Key Stage 2, overall, is satisfactory although progress increases when teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils to observe others and to use these observations in improving their own work.

118. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory, although examples of good, very good and a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching were observed. In the most effective lessons, teachers identify key learning objectives and the methods by which these are to be taught. This level of planning ensures that the activities that are undertaken are appropriate to pupils' attainment, and are well supported by clearly focused intervention. In these lessons, there is a good balance between activity and instruction, and good use is made of pupils to exemplify key points within the lessons. In those lessons where teaching is satisfactory, the range of activities in lessons is appropriate to pupils' needs and time is used well so that the lesson proceeds at an effective pace. There are occasions, however, when planning lacks detail in relation to what pupils are expected to learn. In a small proportion of lessons, teachers place too much emphasis on instruction which slows the pace of the lesson and provides too few opportunities for pupils to work independently to practise and refine their skills
119. Physical education is effectively supported by a range of planned opportunities in sport, through the curriculum and in out of school activities. Year 6 pupils have a six-week course at Stanborough Lakes during the summer term each year. Outdoor activities are promoted through aspects of the residential field trip for pupils in Years 5 and 6. The school ensures its statutory responsibility by arranging swimming sessions for pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

120. The last inspection report identified weaknesses in teaching and attainment at Key Stage 2. The school has rectified these weaknesses and attainment is now in line with that expected by Hertfordshire's locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils at the end of both key stages now have a secure knowledge of the key Christian symbols and their origins. Year 2 pupils are able to write sentences to explain the meaning of Christian symbols, for example that the cross reminds Christians of the resurrection and 'new life'. Pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge of the differences between Christian and Hindu religious art, they explain that Hindu art is more colourful and that Christian art does not show God. Pupils in Year 4 understand that memories can be evoked by physical objects and are able to explain why certain objects are special to them. Pupils' knowledge of the major world faiths has improved well since the last inspection when it was described as insecure and confused.
121. The quality of teaching is good. It ranges from very good to satisfactory. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. The most effective teaching is characterised by excellent use of religious artefacts to enrich the understanding of pupils and to enliven teaching, there are secure subject knowledge and skilful questioning. This helps the pupils to stay on task and produce a good amount of work. Pupils are asked challenging questions such as 'why does Ramadan happen at a different time each year?' There is some good provision for pupils to learn independently, for example when they contemplate and write about how it would feel to fast. In some lessons there are not enough opportunities for pupils to take part in discussion. The copying of pictures and writing from the board and use of worksheets means that pupils do not always decide how to tackle tasks for themselves. Useful links are made with acts of collective worship to help pupils develop their knowledge of bible stories

122. Resources are now satisfactory, but the co-ordinator is aware that the opportunities to explore different religions through visitors to the school are underdeveloped. The co-ordinator is aware that the length of some lessons is rather short. For example in Year 2, pupils have two short religious education lessons in a week. This means that pupils' learning is affected adversely because too much of the second lesson in a week has to be spent reviewing the point at which the previous lesson was broken off. In a lesson for Year 4, pupils wanted to spend longer discussing items that had special significance to them, but the pressure of time in the lesson meant that this opportunity had to be cut short so that pupils could move on to the main part of their lesson. The school has recently adopted the Hertfordshire scheme of work to help teachers plan suitable lessons and meet the pupils' needs. Helpful training has now clarified how it can best be used.