

INSPECTION REPORT

UPLANDS INFANT SCHOOL

Melbourne Road, Leicester

LEA area: Leicester City

Unique reference number: 120036

Headteacher: Mr M L Stokes

Reporting inspector: Joan Walker
25461

Dates of inspection: 30th October to 02nd November 2000

Inspection number: 224460

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Melbourne Road Leicester
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Appropriate authority:	The Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Dr V Marrett
Date of previous inspection:	09 th December 1996

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Tony Comer	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students? How well does the school care for its pupils or students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well is the school led and managed?
John Moles	Team inspector	Science, Art, Design and Technology	The school's results and achievements.
Susan Metcalfe	Team inspector	English as an Additional Language, English, Music, Religious Education	
Paul Whittaker	Team inspector	Special Educational Needs, Mathematics, Information Technology, Physical Education	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Uplands Infant School is situated in the Highfields area of Leicester, about one mile from the city centre. The school was severely damaged by an arson attack in 1992 and was refurbished throughout. The site is split into three main areas:

- the main school, containing nine classrooms, teacher resources, library, hall, staffroom and administrative department,
- nursery accommodation, comprised of two buildings,
- two mobile classrooms and a Parents' room.

Uplands Junior School shares the site.

The total number of pupils on roll including the nurseries is 454. In the nurseries there are 32 children attending full-time and 136 children attending part-time. The total of pupils in the rest of the school is 286. The school is larger than other similar schools. It attracts a high percentage of children whose parents choose to send their children to the school from outside its catchment area.

The school has identified forty-three pupils on its register of special educational needs, which is above the national average. There are three pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs which is below the national average. Generally, around twenty three per cent of pupils have free schools meals, which is above the national average. Ninety eight per cent of pupils are from different ethnic backgrounds and it is the same percentage for pupils for whom English is an additional language.

The school's community is predominantly Muslim, who speak mainly Gujarati and Kutchi; a few pupils have Urdu or Bengali as their first language. The school stands in an area of social and economic disadvantage where unemployment rates are high, work is difficult to find and often poorly paid. The area consists of rented accommodation and a minority of homes are owner occupied.

The attainment of children when they enter the school is significantly below that expected for children of a similar age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with many very good features. Pupils' achieve standards that are in line with national expectations in all aspects of their education and they make good progress. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and pupils' attitudes are also good. The headteacher, staff and governors work well together to improve the school and raise standards. The strengths of the school greatly outweigh the weaknesses. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Teaching of the under fives is very good.
- Strategies for teaching literacy are very good.
- Pupils' achieve very high standards in their work.
- Provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good.
- Equality of opportunity for all pupils is very good.
- The school takes very good care of its pupils.
- Provision for social and cultural development is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The quality of leadership and management is very good.
- Parents think highly of the school.

What could be improved

- Insufficient attention is given to marking and this fails to inform pupils about how they can improve their learning and progress.
- Computers are insufficiently used to assist pupils' learning in all areas of curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in December 1996. The quality of teaching in the under-fives was judged to be good in the last inspection and is now very good. In Key Stage 1 teaching has also improved and is now good. Assessment of pupils' work is good overall. The school's 2000 results in national tests, when compared with similar schools, show an improvement in reading at Level 2 or above; at the higher level, Level 3, pupils are attaining results above average in all subjects. The leadership and management are now judged to be very good. The school has maintained the high standards of behaviour reported in the last inspection. Overall improvements since the last inspection are good, and capacity for further development is good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. Comparisons with the results of similar schools are made on the basis of the number of pupils taking free school meals. Pupils nationally are expected to achieve Level 2 at the age of seven.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English Reading	E	D	D	B
English Writing	E	C	D	C
Mathematics	C	B	C	B

Key

Well above average A

above average B

Average C

Below average D

Well below average E

Children enter school with attainment that is significantly below the national expectations in all areas of the Early Learning Goals (ELGs). The majority of children will not achieve these goals by the time they reach five years of age, but they do make good progress from their prior attainment. During the inspection, standards attained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in English, Mathematics and Science were in line with the national average. These judgements show an improvement in reading and writing from the National Test results. When compared with results from similar local authority schools all standards are above average. The trends for seven year olds from 1996-2000 show a steadily improving picture, particularly for pupils achieving the higher Level 3. Boys performance, which was below that of girls, has received targeted input, has risen to above that of girls, steadied and there is now close correlation in results. The attainment of pupils from different ethnic minority backgrounds is carefully monitored and no variation has been recorded. The school has set its own targets for improvement which have been fully met. Pupils make satisfactory progress and reach the standards expected in all other subjects. They attain standards in religious education that are above expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

Early Learning Goals includes personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy development, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school, are enthusiastic to learn and are encouraged to become independent.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils abide by the classroom rules very well. Their behaviour is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships across the whole school community are very good. Pupils work and play together very well.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. However, the school makes every effort to encourage regular attendance and parents are aware of the need to reduce extended absence to a minimum.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good

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

Teaching is at least satisfactory or better in one hundred per cent of all lessons, with forty four per cent being good, twenty five per cent very good, and 5 per cent excellent. The teaching of the National Literacy is very good and for Numeracy Strategy it is good. When teaching is very good or excellent, teachers are enthusiastic, planning is very good and teachers make learning objectives extremely clear to all pupils at the beginning of lessons and, at the end, discuss fully whether or not objectives have been met and what is needed to make further improvements. Tasks, to support these objectives, are challenging and ensure that pupils are well motivated and make good progress. Pupils learn very well in these lessons. The quality of teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language and for those with special educational needs is good overall and, occasionally very good. Teaching is less effective when the pace of lessons is slow, pupils are not managed well, planning is minimal and pupils fail to acquire sufficient new knowledge or skills. Although all work is marked, it frequently lacks targets to improve learning. The school ensures that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and that it is appropriate to their individual needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is generally broad and balanced. It satisfies the requirements of the National Curriculum in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, information communication technology and religious education and the current demands of the National Curriculum for all other subjects, provision for extra curricular activities are satisfactory.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good and pupils make good progress towards the individual targets set for them.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is very good. Pupils are given every opportunity to extend their knowledge and understanding of the English language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall provision is good. For social and cultural development it is very good and for spiritual and moral development it is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of pupils are very good. The parents' views of the school are very positive. The school provides a caring and safe environment for its pupils.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are successfully encouraged to support their children's learning and take part in the life of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher, chair of governors and senior staff give strong and positive leadership. The school's aims and values are reflected in its work. The headteacher and senior members of staff have monitored the quality of teaching, planning and the standards of pupils' work. This has contributed significantly to the school's recent improvements.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its statutory roles effectively, supporting and working well with the headteacher in shaping the educational direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a very good view of its work. Performance is well monitored and evaluated. Results of tests are analysed well for strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	The strategic use of resources, including grants and other funding is very good.

The school has an appropriate number of well-trained teachers and support staff to match the demands of the curriculum. The range and quality of resources is good overall and there are no significant weaknesses in any subject area. Accommodation is satisfactory, although there is limited grassed play area and the environment of the school site is difficult to manage.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

One hundred and ninety parents returned their questionnaires. At the Parents' Meeting seventeen parents attended and an interpreter was present who interpreted as appropriate.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A very large majority of parents say that their children like school.• The majority of parents feel very comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.• Most parents think that teaching is good.• Majority of parents believe the school expects their children to work hard.• All parents have a very positive view of the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A small minority of parents felt their children are not given the right amount of homework.

The inspectors support the very positive comments of the parents. Regarding the concern over homework, the team found the homework given to pupils was mainly in line with national recommendations and the Department for Education's document 'Homework: Guidelines for Primary Schools'.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children enter the school with significantly low levels of attainment. They have a good start to their education, and make good progress. When they enter the reception class, as under-fives, the results of baseline assessment show few children attain standards that are average. Whilst their attainment is still below that expected for pupils of this age it is higher than when they entered the nursery. They then receive a good start to their formal education, and make good progress in all areas of the Early Learning Goals, (ELGs). Children under five for whom English is an additional language make good progress because the acquisition and development of language skills, to aid learning, is good. Children who have special educational needs make good progress in their learning because of the good support they receive.

2. At the end of the Key Stage 1, results of the 2000 National Curriculum assessment tests and tasks in English, mathematics and science showed that the percentages of pupils attaining the expected level, Level 2, and the higher level, Level 3, at the end of Key Stage 1 were close to the national average in mathematics and science; but below average in writing and reading. When the results are compared with schools, who are in similar circumstances, the attainment of pupils at the higher Level 3 was above national averages in all subjects. When compared with similar local authority schools results, all standards are above the average. The trends for seven year olds from 1996-2000 show a steadily improving picture particularly for pupils achieving the higher Level 3. Boys' performance, which was below that of girls has received targeted input, has risen to above that of girls, steadied and there is now closer correlation in results. The attainment of pupils from different ethnic minority backgrounds is carefully monitored and no variation has been recorded.

3. The outcomes of inspection show pupils currently in the top age group for the school are achieving standards that are in line with those expected in English, mathematics and science. By the end of the key stage pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is satisfactory. In reading seven year olds reach the national expectations. In writing, pupils are well supported in lessons and the majority of pupils' attainment is in line with that expected for this age group. In numeracy pupils achieve standards that are in line with those expected for this age group, both in mental mathematical strategies and written calculations and recording.

4. Standards in all other subjects of the curriculum are in line with those expected for pupils of seven years of age; and for religious education are above expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

5. The school has at least maintained standards for the majority of pupils, in all subjects, since the previous inspection. Standards in writing have risen. The level of expectation for pupils who have higher prior attainment has increased and many of these pupils now achieve well.

6. The school has set targets for the current seven year olds which show high expectations of what pupils will achieve. School results from current tests for 2000, show pupils have, by and large, met these demanding targets. This demonstrates that the targets are both demanding and realistic. The majority of pupils enter education in the nursery with poor attainment and leave at age seven with attainment that is in line with that expected of pupils of this age. Achievement is consequently very good. The improvement of pupils'

attainment especially in the core subjects since the previous inspection have been achieved because the quality of teaching has improved and the schools' targets have, largely, been met.

7. Pupils with special educational needs and bilingual pupils, make good progress in their learning by the end of Key Stage 1. This finding is consistent with that at the time of the last inspection. Very efficient use is made of assessment data to set appropriately challenging targets for these pupils. They are supported consistently well by teachers and learning support staff and they achieve well.

8. All groups of pupils make good progress towards the specific targets set for them. The school is regularly analysing standards of attainment of groups of pupils. This information is used to set targets and improve performance. In the past, the school has taken effective action when needed. Following the recognition of boys' under-achievement in National Curriculum tests three years ago, a whole school exercise in teacher awareness of the management of and attitude towards boys was carried out. There is currently no significant difference in the achievement between boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. The school succeeds in its aim to promote an atmosphere of respect for others and to enable all its pupils to feel valued. An effective policy of social inclusion ensures equality of access and opportunity for all the pupils.

10. The personal and social development of the under-fives is good. Children's attitudes to their work are good. The teachers provide good opportunities for children to socialise with one another in role-play and structured play activities. Children are involved in the daily routines of their class.

11. Pupils from a range of ethnic, religious and cultural origins value and respect each other's different backgrounds. They play and work together well and share in celebrating each other's cultural and religious festivals. The school positively promotes the development of tolerance and respect for others. It aims to achieve a balance in the representation of different religions and cultures by carefully chosen themes for whole school assemblies, which give a clear message, e.g. 'everybody is special'.

12. In classrooms and around the school, boys and girls co-operate well with each other. There is no difference in participation in activities and discussions in lessons between boys and girls. They equally accept responsibility and show initiative for classroom and school activities; for example in using computers, keeping the playground tidy and putting back PE equipment after a lesson.

13. The pupils' attitudes to school are good. The children enjoy coming to school, they show a keen interest in lessons and are actively involved with the life of the school. The daily appointment of pupils as class helpers and the tasks that pupils are set in lessons and assemblies all encourage them to take responsibility and to become independent.

14. Parents are almost unanimous in their belief that the children are encouraged to work hard and do their best and that the school helps them to become mature and responsible. Parents also believe that behaviour is very good and that the school promotes good attitudes and values. All of these beliefs are strongly supported by the inspection evidence.

15. Pupils' behaviour is very good and there have been no exclusions during the last school year. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour. Pupils respect each other's

feelings and play happily together in the playground. They move around the school in a sensible and polite manner.

16. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are very good. There is a satisfactory range of educational visits and visitors that contributes to pupils' personal development. The school also sets individual targets focused on the personal development of pupils.

17. Overall, the attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils make a significant contribution to effective learning, standards having been generally maintained and even improved in some areas since the last inspection.

18. Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory because it is below the national average. However, the school makes every effort to encourage regular attendance and parents are aware of the need to reduce extended absence to a minimum. Attendance has improved in each of the last three years and this improvement is being continued so far this year. Most pupils arrive punctually and lessons start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The overall quality of teaching during the inspection was good. At Key Stage 1 it is good and, at times very good and occasionally excellent. The quality of teaching for the under-fives is very good. Overall teaching is at least satisfactory or better in all lessons, with forty four per cent good, twenty five per cent very good, and five per cent excellent. This is an improvement in both Key Stage 1 and the under five classes since the last inspection. Some excellent teaching was observed in English, mathematics and music lessons. These highly graded lessons were identified by thorough structured planning, clear objectives for learning shared with the pupils, very high teacher expectations and very effective intervention to promote greater understanding. In less effective lessons, although satisfactory, teachers' planning was less secure, marking was usually just ticks and rarely gave future learning targets and there were missed opportunities to discuss with pupils areas for improvement. The teaching of literacy is very good and the teaching of numeracy is good. Provision for pupils with special education needs (SEN) is very good. The quality of teaching for these pupils is good; planning ensures that work is well matched to their needs. Learning support assistants liaise well with the teachers and are well prepared to provide effective support. As a result the pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the targets set for them in their individual educational plans. This finding is in line with that at the time of the last inspection. The provision for pupils with English as a second language is very good and standards achieved are good. The quality of teaching of English as an additional language (EAL) is good. There is a high quality of liaison between the class teachers and the teachers of English as an additional language. They frequently share the teaching of the class lesson and this provides very good support for developing English for the bilingual pupils. This finding is in line with the previous inspection report. Learning support assistants, including those with responsibilities for special educational needs pupils, provide the right blend of support and challenge to the pupils and, with clearly defined targets, the pupils achieve well. The higher-attaining pupils are frequently set extension activities or more challenging tasks, but this does not occur consistently throughout all lessons.

20. In all classes, good teaching takes place. When teaching is very good there are very high expectations of work and behaviour and this makes a significant contribution to standards and progress. However, if teachers were to identify and share aspects of the excellent teaching seen in some English, mathematics and music lessons this would improve standards overall. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum are good and in the under-fives very good. All teachers have very good

understanding of the literacy strategy and, in numeracy it is good. Planning is sound overall, teachers plan work together carefully to ensure continuity and progression across the year groups. Assessment of pupils' progress in the under-fives is very good and is used for future planning. At Key Stage 1, assessment is satisfactory. However, marking is inconsistent and frequently gives too few comments for pupils to work on to improve their work. Also in lessons, teachers often missed opportunities to discuss areas for pupils' improvement.

21. The quality of teaching for the under-fives is very good. It is good or better in one hundred per cent of lessons. The teachers' planning of the areas of learning, to meet the national Early Learning Goals (ELGs), is good. Their knowledge and understanding of the ELGs are very good. The good teaching has a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress. Few children, by the time they reach five, will achieve the ELGs in all areas, because the baseline assessment indicates that, on entry to the school, children are significantly below average attainment, compared with other children of similar age in the county.

22. The overall quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good. It is at least satisfactory or better in a hundred per cent of all lessons, and in forty per cent it is good, twenty per cent very good, with five per cent being excellent. Generally, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and have good knowledge of the National Curriculum. They set appropriate activities to meet the needs of all pupils, and lessons move at a good pace. In the very best lessons the teachers' introduction and the learning objectives are very clear and shared with the pupils. The pace was brisk, time and resources were used to very good advantage and pupils were interested and well motivated to succeed in the set tasks. The excellent teaching had a very good impact on pupils' learning and progress. In good lessons the teachers' planning was very good, especially in English, organisation of groupwork and management of pupils was very good, correct vocabulary was used and pupils understood what they were supposed to be learning. The teaching in these lessons had a good impact on pupils' achievement and progress. Teaching is less effective, although satisfactory, when the pace of the lesson is slow, pupils are not managed well, planning is minimal and pupils fail to acquire sufficient new knowledge or skills. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are not disadvantaged by their language difference. During lessons and in whole school assemblies, teachers address the needs of all pupils. They ensure equal access to the range of activities and lesson content for pupils who are at the early stages of English acquisition by frequently adapting the pace of their presentation and by providing good linguistic role models. An example of this was observed in a whole school assembly when the story of the good shepherd was developed with the pupils active involvement and adapted to their pace of understanding. This support ensures that pupils learn well and that all groups of pupils have equal access to the range of activities planned during lessons.

23. Teachers' knowledge and understanding in Key Stage 1 is good and in the under-fives it is very good. Teachers' very good knowledge and understanding of specific subjects enables them to offer advice and support to their colleagues, particularly evident in English. The special needs co-ordinator demonstrates very good knowledge and understanding of each pupil's needs through carefully written education plans. Teachers of English as an additional language (EAL) have very good understanding of individual pupil's needs. There are a high proportion of support staff who speak in the pupils' home language and that greatly aids acquisition of the English language for these pupils.

24. Most teachers have high expectations of standards in work and behaviour and this is achieved through good organisation, good relationships and an emphasis of rewards rather than sanctions. Occasionally, teachers are less effective in the management of pupils when they allow them to disturb others and do not ensure pupils are kept on task.

25. There is evidence of good collaborative work in planning. This ensures consistency

of coverage across the year groups and equality of opportunity for all pupils. There is also evidence that some teachers use assessments and evaluation to help them plan their next lessons, especially so in the under-fives. Marking is always completed, but frequently lacks comments to move the pupils forward in their learning and teachers missed opportunities during lessons to tell pupils what was needed to improve their work.

26. Staff are well prepared and make good use of support staff and resources. Resources are good in the under-fives and children have the opportunity to use the outdoor play area. All class teachers have a comprehensive SEN file containing details of each pupil's particular needs, individual plans with targets to be worked on, and other relevant information.

27. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good; planning ensures that work is well matched to their needs. Learning support assistants liaise well with the teachers and are well prepared to provide effective support. As a result the pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the targets set for them in their individual educational plans.

28. Teachers are aware of the different educational needs within their classes. In their daily lesson plans, they take account of the pupils' various standards of attainment and individual language levels and adapt their teaching approaches to meet the needs of individual pupils and groups.

29. Teachers and specialist support teachers work together well to give effective support to pupils with special educational needs and to those pupils acquiring English as an additional language. This was seen in an English lesson in Y1, when the support assistant worked with a group of pupils having difficulties in identifying initial sounds of words.

30. Homework is given regularly to all pupils and is usually mathematics, reading and spellings.

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

31. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced. It satisfies the requirements of the National Curriculum in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, information communication technology and religious education and the current demands of the National Curriculum for the foundation subjects. The school has a determination from the SACRE; religious education and acts of worship comply with the local education authority's (LEA) Agreed Syllabus. The school plans appropriate coverage of the Early Learning Goals for children under five and provides a broad and balanced curriculum for them. There is no formal provision for sex education as a result of the policy agreed by the governing body. Health and drug education is part of the personal, social and health programme and is also addressed through other subjects of the curriculum. The curriculum is successful in implementing the aims of the school and is effective in promoting pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language, have equal access to the curriculum. The school has successfully implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The training of teachers in respect of those strategies has had a strong impact on raising the standard of pupils' learning, particularly in English. Considerable improvement has occurred since the last inspection in developing effective systems of ensuring curriculum delivery to improve the quality of teaching. However, information and communication technology is inadequately used to support and develop pupils' learning in all subjects. The school policy on homework is consistently applied. The support from parents has helped to improve

learning, attitudes and standards, especially in reading, spelling and numeracy.

32. The curriculum for the under-fives is very effective and follows the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) for learning. Children enter the school with significantly low levels of attainment and they make good progress however, most children will not achieve the ELGs by the time they reach five years of age. Provision for purposeful play, role-play and outdoor play is good. Procedures for assessment and review are very good and used to inform future planning.

33. The school had planned well for the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Training has been used to familiarise all staff with developments and devise manageable planning, building on the many effective strategies teachers already employ to achieve high standards. Time given to the teaching of these strategies is appropriate. The school has put considerable funds into establishing a good range of quality resources for pupils and staff.

34. There are schemes of work for all subjects. Most of these are based on nationally published material designed to develop pupils' skills and knowledge in accordance with the attainment targets of the National Curriculum. In their medium-term planning teachers produce work derived from the schemes. Overall short-term planning is sound but, at times, lacks effective procedures of assessment for pupils' immediate learning needs, especially in the foundation subjects.

35. The school ensures that pupils have equal access to the curriculum and that it is appropriate to their individual needs. It provides a very good range of worthwhile opportunities to meet the interests, aptitudes and identified requirements of pupils with special educational needs. Provision for these pupils is very good. Pupils are very well integrated in classes and organised appropriately with planned activities to meet their needs. They are given good support from staff in literacy and numeracy skills, in line with the current information and relevant targets in their individual educational plans. For pupils with statements, the provision in their statements is implemented and monitored very well. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. Throughout the school the work is generally appropriately challenging for high-attaining pupils and they make good progress. Recently, the co-ordinators have arranged teaching groups for higher-attaining pupils to provide opportunities for increased access to higher levels of numeracy and literacy for these pupils. The provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. Each class has the benefit of help and support from the teachers funded by the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMTAG). These teachers give invaluable support throughout the school, frequently teaching alongside the class teachers and ensuring all pupils understand the learning intentions. Pupils are not disadvantaged in their learning across the curriculum by their language difference, and opportunities to develop their knowledge of English in other subjects is used to good effect. This was observed in a whole class music lesson on controlling instruments, when the language support teacher helped these pupils to understand the meaning of the word 'silence' by using percussion instruments with them and the rest of the class.

36. The school provides a satisfactory range of activities outside the classroom given that the time available after school is limited by the social and cultural environment from which most pupils come. Educational visits, such as those to Twycross Zoo, Snibston Discovery Park and Rutland Water, as well as visitors to the school, all contribute to pupils' attainment and personal development.

37. The provision for personal, social and health education within the curriculum is

satisfactory, although there is not yet a formal policy for this specific area. Work has already started on the development of such a policy. Teachers take every opportunity to promote these skills and knowledge whenever appropriate, and the monitoring, recording and reporting of pupils' progress in these areas is very good.

38. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The daily act of worship meets requirements and provides good opportunities for developing spiritual awareness. The school plans for, and takes advantage of, opportunities for pupils to gain insight into the values and beliefs of others both through the curriculum and in assemblies. Pupils are aware of the solemnity of worship and enter the hall quietly and wait in silence; the way they sing also reflects this solemnity. Pupils know right from wrong and there are opportunities for pupils to discuss and understand moral issues. This aspect of provision is also good. There is a strong sense of community throughout the school. The potential for pupils to take responsibility and to develop independence has improved since the last inspection. Pupils play and work well together and are keen to share in each other's successes. The provision for their social development is very good. There has been an improvement in the provision for pupils' cultural development since the last inspection. This is now evident throughout much of the curriculum, particularly in music, art and English. Consequently, pupils appreciate their own and other cultures, through topics, discussion and through educational visits and visitors. Religious education provides pupils with opportunities to learn about their own religion and about tradition and beliefs of others. Overall, the provision for these aspects of the curriculum is good and this has a beneficial effect on learning and are consistent with the findings of the previous inspection.

39. The school has satisfactory links with the community that contribute to pupils' learning and personal development. Examples include links with the Highfields Community Centre and the Highfields Library, as well as the pupils' participation and success in art and dance activities at the Haymarket Theatre. Opportunities to enhance the curriculum through partnerships with the business community are limited. The 'Mums Group' and the ten-week 'Learning in Partnership' courses run at the school provide an excellent opportunity for parents to develop skills and confidence that enable them to support their children's learning more effectively.

40. Links with the Uplands Junior School are strong. There are also constructive relationships with other schools through the Highfields Development Group, chaired by the headteacher, and through other working parties in which he takes a prominent part.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school provides very good care for its pupils and has maintained the findings of the previous inspection. The school builds effectively on its assessment procedures when identifying pupils with special educational needs. The arrangements for placing pupils on the register of pupils with special educational needs are consistently applied and very effective.

42. The provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. The school also meets, very well, the provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs. Statements and reviews are up to date, access to additional staff is used effectively; overall, these pupils have their entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum.

43. The support and guidance which pupils receive, both formal and informal is very good and parents appreciate the openness and approachability of staff in dealing with questions and problems. The teaching and non-teaching staff know the pupils well and respond to their needs.

44. The school has developed an excellent programme of home school liaison. This includes induction into the nursery and home visits. It involves all outside agencies as appropriate and is overseen by a very professional and dedicated member of staff. Overall, the care that pupils receive is a strength of the school and has a beneficial effect on their progress and personal development.

45. Although the school does not currently have a cohesive personal, social and health education policy, the personal development and behaviour of pupils is carefully monitored, recorded and reported. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress over time are overall good. However, insufficient attention is given to marking and the day-to-day assessment that provides teachers with the information to effectively monitor progress in the short term and to plan lessons accordingly. The school has set targets for the current seven year olds which show high expectations of what pupils will achieve. School results, from tests for 2000, show pupils have, by and large, met these demanding targets. Pupils with special educational needs and for those pupils for whom English is an additional language receive very good support.

46. The school policies and procedures successfully promote discipline, good behaviour and health and safety. Fire drills and site assessments are carried out regularly. However, issues which still give staff and governors some cause for concern are the provision for staff parking, occasional vandalism out of school hours, traffic problems in Oxendon Street at the end of the school day, and the problems of effectively managing remote classrooms. Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are very good and meet all requirements. Procedures for recording and monitoring attendance are also very good. The school makes every effort to encourage regular attendance and parents are aware of the need to reduce extended absence to a minimum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Overall, the school's partnership with parents remains very good and parents believe that the school works closely with them and are consistent with the finding of the previous inspection. They are happy with the way the school is led and managed, and with what the school provides and achieves. They also believe that the children like coming to school and that the school encourages them to work hard, achieve their best and become mature and responsible. They agree that behaviour is good, and that questions and problems are welcomed and dealt with effectively. Parents' contribution to, and involvement with their children's learning at school and at home is good.

48. There is very effective communication between the school and parents, with information provided through regular newsletters, well attended parents' meetings and annual reports. School documents and newsletters are translated, into parents appropriate language, as and when required. Parents also know that they can discuss issues informally with staff. The annual reports give parents a clear indication of what pupils' know, understand and can do. However, the setting of specific targets and strategies for improvement is inconsistent.

49. The school makes successful efforts to encourage parental involvement in the life of the school, reinforced by the home school agreement, which has been endorsed by the majority of parents. A number of parents provide support in the classroom and with school trips. Although there is no formal parent teacher association, parents have a significant impact on the life of the school and are committed to enhancing its social and financial aspects.

50. Parents whose children have special educational needs are involved well. They are

invited to attend all review meetings and to discuss their children's progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher, senior staff and the chair of governors all provide strong and positive leadership that reflects the aims and values of the school. This is having a positive impact on the standards achieved and the quality of education that the school provides to an even greater extent than at the last inspection. Parents believe that the school is well led and managed and they have a high level of confidence in the school.

52. The headteacher, senior management team and governing body contribute effectively to the provision of equal opportunities within the school for both pupils and staff. Being aware of the diversity of race, religion and language among the pupils, the school aims to give languages other than English equal status and to introduce pupils to a range of literature from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. There is a selection of dual language books and literature from different cultures; for example the poetry anthology 'This Way – That Way', 'My Little Chickadee' by Fred Sedgwick, and 'The Julia Stories' by Ann Cameron. The school operates an effective equal opportunities policy for the employment and professional development of staff, regardless of gender, religion or ethnic origin, which is reflected in the composition of the teaching and support staff. It is an indication of the school's effective commitment to social, professional and educational inclusion.

53. The headteacher assumes the role of the co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs very well. He is well supported by all staff and the chair of the governing body and ensures the overall high quality of provision. All staff who work with pupils with special educational needs are appropriately qualified and experienced. They play an important part in the good support these pupils receive and have a positive impact on their learning.

54. The governing body has recently been newly formed as a result of splitting the governance of infant and junior schools. A number of governors are relatively inexperienced, but they are receiving good support from the headteacher and have attended induction courses. This continued development should enhance their longer-term effectiveness. The governing body works closely with the school and understands its strengths and weaknesses. Governors receive good information from the headteacher, bursar and subject co-ordinators to enable decisions to be made in an informed manner. This is exemplified by the papers produced to facilitate the discussion about the school structure for the year 1999/2000. All of the governors' statutory duties are fulfilled.

55. The Senior Management team and governors have a good range of monitoring and evaluating procedures for both teaching and learning that are effective in building up an informed picture of quality and standards. A regular programme of classroom observation by co-ordinators and the headteacher, together with rigorous analysis of the results of statutory and other assessment information, allows teaching methods to focus on specific areas of development by providing very good evaluative feedback. All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have clear job descriptions and are involved in the appraisal process. They have good opportunities for professional and personal development that are prioritised in line with the needs of the whole school, the needs of each area of the curriculum and the needs of the individual. Some staff have successfully gained additional professional qualifications as a result of these procedures. The headteacher holds daily staff briefings that aid effective communication, an aspect that is a priority within the development plan.

56. The school has recently achieved accreditation as an Investor in People, intended to enable it to achieve its goals through the development of its staff. The school believes that this has raised the quality of teaching as well as providing a model for both the school structure and for staff development.

57. The school development plan is an effective working document that is regularly monitored and evaluated by school managers and governors' sub-committees. Educational priorities as described in the school development plan are well supported through the school's financial planning and effective controls. The governing body is involved in the preparation of the school development plan and in the process of setting and monitoring the budget.

58. The school benefits from an experienced administrator. It receives support from the local authority to monitor and administer financial matters. The latest audit report was good and all issues have been dealt with. Effective use is made of information communication technology with appropriate controls in place. Financial administration is unobtrusive, responsive to need and effectively keeps the way clear for teachers to do their work.

59. The strategic use of resources, including grants and other funding is very good. The extent to which the principles of best value are applied in the management of resources is very good. The school has an appropriate number of well-trained teachers and support staff to match the demands of the curriculum. The range and quality of resources is good overall and there are no significant weaknesses in any subject area. Accommodation is satisfactory, although there is limited grassed play area and the environment of the school site is difficult to manage.

60. There is a very strong commitment to improvement throughout the school community and the school has the capacity to succeed.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To raise pupils' standards of attainment further the headteacher, governors and staff should:

(1) improve teachers' marking by:

(a) review the marking policy to ensure it is more specific and gives clear indication of precisely how teachers' should mark work to improve pupils' standards of attainment;

(b) ensure that all teachers mark pupils' work, giving specific guidance for future learning.

(paragraphs 20,25,45,76,87,95,113)

(2) ensure that full use is made of information and communication technology by:

extending the use of information and communication technology so that pupils' skills and knowledge are applied in all other subjects.

(paragraphs 31,86,95,110,115,123)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	25	44	26	-	-	-

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	100	286
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	8	66

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	43

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	449

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	7.44	School data	0.18
National comparative data	5.4	National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	61	46	107

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	52	48	54
	Girls	40	41	43
	Total	92	89	97
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (84)	84 (87)	91 (90)
	National	81 (79)	85 (83)	89 (86)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	52	54	53
	Girls	41	43	42
	Total	93	97	95
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (79)	91 (87)	89 (87)
	National	85 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	8
Black – other	2
Indian	161
Pakistani	24
Bangladeshi	10
Chinese	0
White	4
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.5
Average class size	28.3

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	376

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	50

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	196

Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.1
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	606427
Total expenditure	646392
Expenditure per pupil	1748
Balance brought forward from previous year	47174
Balance carried forward to next year	7209

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	338
Number of questionnaires returned	190

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	16	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	65	29	2	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	70	24	2	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	30	11	4	10
The teaching is good.	73	24	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	70	26	2	1	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	25	1	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	26	1	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	61	35	3	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	66	29	2	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	29	2	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	49	30	5	3	13

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

Parents have very positive views of the school.

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

61. Children enter the nursery on a part-time basis at the age of three and some older children attend full-time. Wherever possible children transfer to the reception classes at the beginning of the term in which they are five. At the time of the inspection 136 children attended part-time and 32 children attended full-time in the nurseries; 72 children attended full-time in the reception classes. On entry to the nursery, children's attainment is significantly below national expectations. Nursery staff maintain good links with parents and offer pre-admission visits and provide parents with good written documentation in the appropriate language. These practices all help to ease the transition between home and the nursery. Children and their parents become familiar with daily routines and parents are helped to understand what their children are doing whilst attending the nursery. Many parents attend the 'Mums Group' on Wednesday afternoons, usually led by the home school liaison officer. These meetings help mothers to become more confident and be involved in the work of the nursery. There are also opportunities for mothers and fathers to attend Parent/Toddlers group in both nurseries every week. A good foundation across all areas of learning is provided, particularly in language and literacy development. Children make good progress in the nursery and also later in the reception classes. By the time children come to the end of their reception year, the majority of them will not have achieved the Early Learning Goals (ELGS) although good progress has been made towards them.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. Children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. This is so for children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Positive relationships are established between the children, teachers and support staff in a very short time, and ensure complete trust. A secure foundation is laid down in the nursery and is developed still further by their experiences in the reception classes. Most children are confident and enjoy their work. Less confident children are given much encouragement and praise to improve their self-esteem. Most children settle very happily each day to their tasks. Staff plan structured activities, which provide many opportunities for the development of social skills. Children work well in groups or in pairs, taking turns and sharing toys and resources co-operatively. For instance, they work well in pairs when they use the computers, working side by side, taking turns and watching to see what their partner is doing. These day-to-day routines encourage the children as they play happily together, by showing concern for each other and helping each other, for instance when it is tidying-up time and during 'fruit and milk time'. The majority of children co-operate well, take turns and share equipment and materials, for example when children are playing in the sand and playing on the bicycles and scooter during an outside play session. Their behaviour is very good and they appreciate the difference between right and wrong. Most children have a sense of fairness and are sensitive to the feelings of others and show respect for their own and others cultures and beliefs. The balance of formal and structured play activities is good. Children are given appropriate opportunities to learn through structured play activities as well as through those directed by the staff. They sit quietly when appropriate and listen to their teachers very well. The quality of teaching in this area is very good. Although children start school with levels of social and personal skills well below average, and good progress is made, most children are not on track to achieve the ELG's by the time they are five.

Communication, language and literacy development

63. Children made good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills and in acquiring the skills they need to read and write. Children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language receive effective support to enable them to make good progress. In the nurseries and reception classes children are given many opportunities to speak, to offer their opinions and to question. However, many children lack the confidence to speak out and, a few in the nurseries, do not respond to the teacher when their name is called out during registration. However, in the reception classes children are gaining confidence and will talk about their work in group and class situations more readily. Most children respond well to learning and reciting action rhymes. They know that pictures and words have meaning and the older children associate sounds with words. Children recognise their own names and older children can write their names. All staff have good questioning skills which they use effectively to promote children's thinking and to provoke responses. Teaching and support staff work together well to provide a happy and encouraging ethos. There is very effective teaching of phonics and most children are beginning to know the initial sounds of words. Older more able children are making phonetically plausible attempts at writing words. Most children in reception classes can read simple words but few can read simple sentences. Most children hold a pencil correctly and can write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. The quality of teaching is very good, because the teachers make the tasks exciting and the children are well motivated to learn. Most children appear unlikely to achieve the ELG's by the time they are five. However, children make good progress from their prior attainment.

Mathematical development

64. Children make good progress in mathematical development in the nurseries and the reception classes. Staff plan activities which simulate interest and provide a thoroughly secure foundation for further development. There are daily activities to promote children's awareness of the word of number. In the nurseries children count, at registration time, the number of children present. Not all can do this activity as the number can reach 49. Many children know that a number gets bigger if you add to it and smaller when a number is taken away. Older children can add up single digits to five mentally and enjoy singing number rhymes. Social development is reinforced in sharing equipment and taking turns. The majority of children can talk about, recognise and recreate very simple patterns. More able children know the names of simple shapes such as squares, circles and triangles. The quality of teaching is very good because the management of children is good and there are clear learning objectives, which have a positive impact on children's learning and progress. The children are progressing on their learning of the ELG's and indications are that most of them will not achieve the ELG's by the time they reach five.

Knowledge and understanding of world

65. By the time they are five, children attain standards which are below those of other five-year-olds but they make good progress on their prior attainment. The higher-attaining children talk about where they live and their families. They are becoming curious and interested in the world around them. Children have looked at autumn leaves and know that the leaves are brown and red. They are beginning to be aware of the different seasons. They are developing skills of investigating when engaged in conversation with adults. For example, when discussing 'What makes a toy car move?'. By experimenting they know that toy cars with square wheels do not go very far. Through the use of computers they are

beginning to gain a knowledge and understanding of the use of technology, especially when closely supervised and supported by an adult. They can use the mouse to access programs. They are beginning to gain understanding of forces by experimenting with sand and water using wheels and paddles, and as they push the pedals on their large-wheeled toys. In the reception classes children have a sense of time and know when their 'fruit and milk' time is. Many know the sequence of the days of the week. They are sensitive to other children's culture and beliefs. The quality of teaching is good because staff plan exciting activities, management of pupils is good and the pupils make good progress.

Physical development

66. Progress is good in physical development. In the nurseries, children develop self-confidence as they experience a wide range of activities planned to exploit their physical skills. For instance, they have regular time to use large apparatus out of doors. Also within the classrooms are small climbing equipment which the children enjoy playing on. The children are developing their fine motor control skills in drawing and writing, painting and cutting, using the computer mouse and construction apparatus. In the reception classes children move with control and co-ordination. For example, in one lesson children were walking fast and slow to specific sounds made on the tambourine. They showed good spatial awareness moving into spaces to avoid bumping into one another. Later in the lesson they worked in pairs running and walking together to the instruction from the teacher making sounds on the tambourine. Scissors, glue, paint and pencils are used with developing skill. The quality of teaching is very good because the teachers join in the lessons, pupils are learning by observation of good practice of others and teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is very good. The children make good progress but are unlikely to achieve the ELG's by the time they are five.

Creative development

67. Children are making good progress in creative development in the nurseries and in the reception classes. They have developed very good work routines, for example when they put aprons on without being reminded when engaged in these activities. Children show their increasing dexterity when using dough when modelling by rolling, pulling and squeezing. They enjoy using paint and glue and draw readily. Opportunities for drama and imaginative play are provided for children in the home corner for instance, as they pretend to be on the bus. The under-fives explore sound, colour, texture and respond to their senses well. Most children recognise primary colours. Children enjoy singing together and can repeat simple patterns of sounds. They understand that different instruments make different sounds. For some children music does not play a part in their culture and consequently impedes their progress. Teaching is very good because children are extending their knowledge of instruments and using the correct names for them, they listen very well and react well to the teachers' directives. Planning is very good, children are managed very well and the teachers value the opinions and the ideas of the children. The children are unlikely to achieve the ELG's by the time they are five.

68. Accommodation and resources for the foundation stage are very good. Both the nurseries and the reception classes are kept very well and provide a stimulating environment for the children. However, the nurseries are a considerable distance from the main school and reception classes. The staff are aware of this problem and spend time and energy in overcoming this arrangement.

69. The quality of teaching overall is very good. Planning is detailed and there are appropriate systems in place, including a useful baseline assessment, to assess children's progress. All the support staff give much help and assistance to the teachers and children.

All staff are very conscientious and hard working. The children are eager and happy to come to school.

ENGLISH

70. At the time of the last inspection, by the end of Key Stage 1 standards were generally in line with national averages for speaking and listening and reading but below in writing. The majority of pupils with English as an additional language entered school with very limited experiences of English and made very good progress in speaking and listening and reading. Throughout Key Stage 1 progress in writing was unsatisfactory with particularly higher-attaining pupils insufficiently challenged.

71. Standards during this inspection, in lessons seen and in samples of pupils' work, are average overall at the end of Key Stage 1, with the majority of pupils making good progress in their learning. These findings show an improvement in reading and writing from the results of the National Assessment Tests in 2000 where both aspects were below the national average. In comparison with the national average at Level 3 and above, pupils were below in reading but in line with the national average in writing. In comparison with similar schools pupils attained overall above average standards in reading and writing. As pupils for whom English is an additional language make up the majority of the school, the standards reached by these pupils are the same as the overall standards of the school. Standards are improving and since 1997 there has been steady improvement. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards in line with their statements and individual educational plans and they make good progress in line with the targets set for them.

72. Although most pupils enter the school with very low speaking and listening skills they are well supported and make good progress. They listen carefully, watch and copy and quickly develop the ability to make themselves understood. The use of their home language in the early stages of English acquisition is particularly valuable in developing their fluency in English. Throughout the school they are provided with good linguistic role models by all staff and have the opportunity to develop their listening skills in formal and informal situations. They listen to instructions, take part in role-play and sing. In class discussions they have the opportunity to add to their general vocabulary and acquire subject specific technical language to develop their speaking skills further. Most children in the reception classes read most commonly used words but only a few can read simple sentences. Most children held a pencil correctly and can write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. However, few children can write their ideas and stories without a great deal of support. Older pupils speak with confidence about the things that they have done and describe their observations. The inspection took place immediately after the half term in which Diwali was celebrated and the majority of pupils were able to discuss what they had done during the holiday period. They were able to use a varied and wide range of vocabulary about their holiday. Pupils were able to use the language associated with Diwali celebrations including Rangoli patterns, the Rama and Sita story, new clothes and presents. They became animated when listening to and talking of the family parties that took place and the food they had eaten.

73. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils are able to read simple texts independently, with higher-attaining pupils, especially, reading well with accuracy, fluency, understanding and confidence. Pupils use a range of early reading skills; most making good use of taught phonic skills and basic sight vocabulary from the high frequency words of the national literacy project. Older and more able pupils use contextual and graphical knowledge

to support their reading and writing. In guided reading group work, younger pupils predict words within a text using picture clues. They read text and use inference to predict missing words. They demonstrate sound understanding of how books in general and text in particular work and know familiar stories such as the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff' and the 'Little Red Hen'. They alter parts of a story to give an alternative ending, playing with the vocabulary and structure. Pupils identify features of a book such as author and illustrator, and use them in their own writing. Pupils choose reading materials from a range of books, including dual language texts and the school now uses a wide range of materials including non-fiction books, poetry and plays. In lessons, although each group usually undertakes all the activities over the week from the national literacy project, there is planning evidence of teachers adapting activities within their lessons to match the specific abilities required for each task with extension activities planned as necessary. Pupils' skills of literacy are used well.

74. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' writing skills are being developed well. They know the names, sounds and order of the alphabet and are building up an accurately spelt, common vocabulary. They are acquiring knowledge of sentence structure; for instance that sentences start with a capital letter and that a full stop goes at the end. Older pupils know that sentences need to make sense. They know that their writing must convey meaning and expression but, that for it to do so, certain conventions must be observed, that words must have spaces between them when written and that letters must be formed correctly. Pupils are able to copy handwriting patterns, make accurate joins and are preparing well for a flowing cursive script. By the end of the key stage pupils are able to write simple sentences, recording for instance what they did during the holiday using a wide range of phrases and vocabulary, spelling common words correctly and using initial letters and sounds to form unknown words. The majority of younger pupils are aware of the relationship between reading and writing and read their written work to supporting adults. The development of writing skills of both average and higher-attaining pupils is less restricted than at the time of the previous inspection, with most pupils learning the skills needed for sustained independent writing.

75. Pupils respond well to the work planned for them. They listen attentively, speak confidently and are not afraid to make mistakes. Pupils are generally lively and exuberant, responding well to all they are asked to do. Relationships are good both with each other and with their teachers. In the majority of lessons pupils are able to concentrate, persevere, work hard and behave well. Pupils in general are keen to demonstrate their knowledge and skills and want to please their teachers by completing the work set for them. In plenary sessions for example, they bubble with ideas and are eager to take turns demonstrating what they have learned. Pupils are able to co-operate over resources and collaborate over spellings. All but a small minority are confident and wish to have a go, trying hard with their learning.

76. The overall quality of teaching is good, with over half of lessons seen being good, very good or excellent. Strategies for teaching literacy are very good. In the best lessons teachers plan lessons very carefully to meet the needs of all the pupils within their classes and pupils make good progress. Teachers make pupils aware of the aims of the lessons, building on previous work and provide opportunities for pupils to use the skills being taught, learning being appropriate and relevant to prior attainment. As a result most pupils achieve the learning objectives set for them in lessons, especially in group work which is generally well structured for them. Teachers' good lesson preparation is matched by them providing good role models, especially for handwriting and vocabulary development and for developing questioning skills. Teachers make very good use of questioning skills, especially in the correct use of technical language. However, insufficient attention is given to the quality of marking and this fails to inform pupils about how they can improve their learning. Reinforcement of the school behaviour code with a reminder about putting up hands, listening and the good use of praise and encouragement develops learning further. Teachers'

classroom management skills are good. They encourage pupils to work independently, at a good pace and remind pupils of how much time is left and how much has to be done before the end of session. Good use is made of classroom assistants who support the learning of pupils for whom English is an additional language and for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers put a lot of effort into preparing resources, especially selecting textual resources, big books and worksheets, matched appropriately to pupils' needs and abilities. Teachers make good use of plenary sessions to review the work of each pupil and convey the feeling of their work being valued. Literacy is linked well with other subjects i.e. science, history, design and technology and geography.

77. In weaker lessons there is often no specific focus for the lesson, the pace is often slow and pupils therefore are not challenged to learn. Some teachers spend too long a time with pupils sitting on the carpet or explaining group tasks and therefore have some difficulty with class management and control. They build up enthusiasm but then let pace slip, concentration goes and teachers have to start again to rebuild the session.

78. Parents are seen by the school as playing an important part in the development of children's English skills and those of reading in particular. When pupils take books home to read with parents there is a positive contribution to pupils' progress. Parents have the opportunity to develop their support skills further as a result of the work of the bilingual support worker who actively links the school and parents together to benefit pupils fully.

79. The co-ordinator for English has worked hard to develop a scheme of work and policy for the subject in consultation with other members of staff, successfully implementing the National Literacy project in helping to raise standards. Extra time has also been allocated to English in line with the needs of high numbers of pupils' for whom English as an additional language. This has enabled specifically focused work on spelling, reading and writing to be developed to extend pupils' learning beyond the literacy strategy. This is having a positive impact on standards. The co-ordinator has ensured that all staff are trained in delivery of the literacy strategy and the use of the new resources to support learning. The English curriculum meets the statutory requirements.

MATHEMATICS

80. Currently pupils in Year 2 attain the standards expected for their age in mathematics. This finding is in line with that reported at the time of the last inspection.

81. Results of the National Curriculum assessments in 2000 show that the percentages of pupils attaining the expected level, Level 2, and the higher level, Level 3, are in line with the national average. However, when the results are compared with schools in similar circumstances, although the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 or above is in line with the national average, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 is above. Standards are improving and, since 1997, there has been a steady increase in the proportion of seven year olds reaching or exceeding the national average. The school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy since 1999 and this is having a sound effect across Years 1 and 2, particularly with the pupils' work in number. There are no marked differences in the performances of girls and boys.

82. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language learn well and make good progress.

83. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of place value to 100 and the higher-attaining pupils extend this to 1000. They count to 100 (and back) in ones, twos, fives and tens and apply the four rules of number to simple calculations.

Pupils recognise that when adding two numbers together they can start with either and that it is usually easier to start with the larger. They apply their knowledge of number to work with money, such as in giving change when shopping. Pupils know halves and quarters and link this to telling the time and to identifying fractions of two-dimensional shapes. They also know something of the properties of two-dimensional shapes, like sides and corners of a triangle, and they recognise which shapes will tessellate. Pupils understand how work in numeracy may help them in other subjects, such as when they draw graphs to show their favourite topics, such as learning about senses in science.

84. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good; it ranges from satisfactory to excellent. All lessons are well planned and prepared. The structure to lessons has been influenced by the National Numeracy Strategy and includes a mental/oral starter, a main activity and a plenary. Teachers make good use of mathematical words and this gives pupils the relevant vocabulary with which to explain the work they that they are doing. As a result, the standard attained by pupils in mental and oral work is good, particularly where teachers give them the confidence to have a go at answers and then encourage them to share how they arrived at their answers with the rest of the class. This practice also helps the pupils to develop their skills of speaking and listening. There are effective links with numeracy in other subjects i.e. history, science and geography.

85. In the best lessons, the learning objectives, such as “to investigate addition bonds to 10” are written on the board at the start and shared with the pupils. The objectives are then looked at again in the plenary session to help the pupils understand what they have learnt. Pupils achieve well in lessons where a brisk pace is sustained and effective use is made of learning resources. For example, in a very well taught lesson in Year 2, the teacher explained very clearly the idea of halving and demonstrated this effectively by cutting fruit and vegetables into halves. This captured the pupils’ interests well before they applied their understanding to a range of activities, from colouring and cutting shapes to playing a board game, according to their abilities. In the plenary session pupils showed the others the work they had done and this effectively consolidated their understanding. Where additional adult support is available it is deployed well, especially to support lower-attaining pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils new to the school whose spoken English is less secure. Pupils enjoy mathematics and, notably, where lessons are better resourced and work is well matched to their abilities, the pupils sustain concentration and behave very well.

86. All classrooms have number lines, hundred squares and appropriate mathematical words clearly displayed. Teachers make effective use of these resources in lessons to support pupils’ learning. Mathematics is celebrated well in most classrooms with attractive displays which combine pupils’ work with teachers’ questions, that encourage the pupils to think further about their work well. However, the pupils’ ability to use information and communication technology to develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding is poorly developed. This is because teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities.

87. The quality of pupils’ written work in mathematics varies according to the expectations of the teachers. Where the teachers insist on a high standard, the work is well presented and numerals are well formed. However, generally insufficient attention is given to the quality of marking and this fails to inform the pupils of their progress as learners adequately. Similarly, the teachers’ recording of the pupils’ coverage of work, and their levels of understanding, is not done systematically or consistently across the classes. These shortcomings do not provide the teachers with the necessary detail to inform the planning and organisation of subsequent work adequately.

88. Links with the parents, to help their children in mathematics, are good. The school

has held sessions with parents to assist them to understand how mathematics is taught and learnt. Booklets entitled 'Maths Targets' are produced for parents to help their children with mathematics. Homework tasks are given to the pupils on a regular basis and the parents are pleased to assist their children.

89. The mathematics co-ordinator has been instrumental in ensuring all teachers are prepared and resourced to teach mathematics according to the National Numeracy Strategy. However, opportunities to share the existing very good quality mathematics teaching with all teachers need to be more effectively developed to raise further the standards of attainment. The mathematics curriculum meets the statutory requirements and the capacity for further improvement is good.

SCIENCE

90. The pupils currently in the top age group for the school are achieving standards that are in line with expectations.

91. In 2000, the subject judged the number of pupils attaining Level 2 or above at the end of the key stage, to be in line with the national average and in line when compared with benchmarks for similar schools. The number of pupils reaching Level 3 was in line when compared with the national average, and above when compared with similar schools. The inspection found that the attainment of the pupils at age seven, the end of the key stage, is currently in line with those expected for pupils of this age. The school has improved its results standards since the previous inspection, in particular the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 3. There is no significant difference of performances between boys and girls. Pupils for whom English is an additional language learn well and make good progress. By the time they leave the school their attainment is equal to that of other pupils of their age group. Pupils with special educational needs learn well and make good progress.

92. Younger pupils know that there are differences between human beings. They describe clearly physical differences between themselves and their class mates. They begin to measure statistical differences, for example, foot size and record these as a chart. Older pupils undertake investigations into how some materials may be altered by squashing, bending, twisting and stretching and that some will not. They make appropriate records of their findings. Approximately one quarter of the pupils are sorting the materials by discrete properties such as whether all the above apply or only some of the actions affect the shape and recovery of the materials being tested, and give reasons why this occurs. This is above expectation for pupils of this age. Pupils also investigate the relationship between health and growth and the need for exercise in order to stay healthy. They grow different seeds and study which conditions are best for healthy growth.

93. The teaching of science is good. Teachers are confident and have a good knowledge of scientific concepts and this helps pupils to learn new scientific knowledge well and aids their understanding of the new work. Pupils are encouraged to use their previous knowledge to aid new scientific learning and understanding, often from other subjects. For example, several teachers used work in a previous physical education lesson on bending, twisting and stretching to appreciate how materials may be changed by these forces. This enabled pupils to observe carefully the results of their tests on materials and to look carefully for changes occurring in the materials during the tests. In one lesson, where teaching was very good, the teacher had the pupils try the actions out themselves, in the classroom and then devise appropriate symbols to record the action. Learning in this lesson was very good and the pupils' attainment was high. The structure of lessons has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers make good use of time and manage the pupils well and this results in maximum learning occurring in each lesson.

94. Pupils' attitudes to science are good. They listen carefully to their teacher, respond well to questions, want to contribute, work hard and gain new knowledge as a result. Pupils are confident in carrying out investigations. Behaviour is very good. These good attitudes and very sensible behaviour contribute significantly to the rate and quality of learning.

95. The science curriculum meets the statutory requirements. It contributes well to personal social and health education and there is an appropriate programme of drugs education. Good links are made with literacy work through for example, the use of 'Big Books' on such subjects as materials and plants. The policy is clear, well written and up to date and ensures all teachers are well aware of the many aspects of teaching science. There are useful end of unit assessment sheets which by simple oral questioning, establish pupils' degree of understanding of concepts taught. The subject makes a good contribution to spiritual, moral and social education through the awe and wonder expressed by pupils at the complexity of the natural world and the moral and social responsibilities we all have in respect of it. Insufficient use is made of marking, to check progress in areas for improvement, in the next unit. The co-ordinator is well qualified, has been well supported by the school in obtaining recent qualifications, is enthusiastic and has a positive impact on pupils' learning through her monitoring and consultation role within the school. The use of information and communication technology for pupils to write reports, construct tables and display findings in graphical form is underdeveloped. The opportunities to use science to practise writing and numeracy skills are appropriate. There is a good range and quantity of practical resources and a good range of well labelled books to support research in the library. The school makes good use of the school environment and local study centres, for example, for pond and plant studies. The capacity for further improvement in science is good.

ART

96. Pupils' currently in the top age group for the school are achieving standards that are in line with those expected for this age group and are consistent with the finding of the last inspection.

97. Younger pupils produce recognisable portraits of themselves. They work from photographs and include significant features such as spectacles. They study the self portrait work of Van Gogh and Rembrandt and this adds to their understanding of different ways artists represent themselves. Older pupils draw full length portraits of their mothers paying particular attention to representing costume accurately. The school has maintained its standards since the last inspection.

98. Throughout the school, pupils learn and apply new skills successfully. They use a wide range of media, including chalk, oil, pastels and dry powder paint to work in the style of Monet. They make three dimensional shapes in clay and print in a variety of ways. The use of computer programs, to draw and illustrate is being developed but is not established as a medium for art and design work in the same way that more traditional techniques are.

99. Teaching overall is judged to be good. From lessons observed and from a scrutiny of teachers' planning, class teachers plan lessons with clear objectives. They identify the skill to be taught and set out an appropriate structure to enable pupils to build on each element sequentially. In one lesson observed, where teaching was judged to be very good, the teacher introduced the lesson with a clear explanation of the work to be covered. She caught the pupils imagination by explaining that they were going to create magical objects. She very successfully used techniques from the National Literacy Strategy to extend the pupils' skills of speaking and listening. Pupils were able to work freely on their drawings, extending their use of imagination to explore ideas of how ordinary everyday objects may appear magical.

All pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress as they move through the school. Pupils for whom English is an additional language learn well and make good progress and attain standards in line with those expected for pupils of their age.

100. Pupils' attitudes towards art are good. In what are often exciting lessons pupils work sensibly. Such mature attitudes enable the teachers to spend time discussing work with individual pupils and so enhance their understanding of the techniques they are learning.

101. The art curriculum meets statutory requirements. The subject contributes well to the spiritual, social and cultural development of pupils. They appreciate the wonder of nature by drawing natural objects, gain an understanding of their own and other's talents, work well together and study how art is used in some cultures to celebrate certain events. The school is sensitive to religious interpretations of art. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans and supports them appropriately through her consultancy role. The school has yet to set in place effective assessment procedures; this is identified by the co-ordinator as a priority for development. There is an appropriate range of resources that are readily available, including good quality prints and original sculptures and textile panels in a wide range of materials. These aid pupils' understanding of the value of art work in every day life. This is extended through the careful display of their own work in classrooms and corridors of the school, clearly demonstrating that it is valued. Such respect makes a substantial contribution to the overall ethos of the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. The pupils currently in the top age group for the school are achieving standards that are in line with those expected for this age group and are consistent with the finding of the last inspection.

103. Pupils' learning is satisfactory. They make increasingly complex models and undertake more demanding activities as they move through school and they appropriately build on previous experiences and skills. The use of the design process is satisfactory and they record in increasing detail their ideas for, and evaluations of, design and technology activities undertaken.

104. In food technology younger pupils select items to make a healthy meal. They draw up designs to make such meals look appetising. They make appropriate use of computer programs to illustrate a healthy menu. They draw well on their work in science, on healthy eating, to decide which fruit and vegetables should be grouped together. Older pupils design and make and evaluate pizzas, selecting and arranging the toppings in attractive ways and ensuring a good range of textures and flavours. They make detailed studies of puppets and design and make their own. They are competent in the use of construction kits and, when interviewed, older pupils are articulate about the design, make and evaluate process.

105. All pupils are learning a satisfactory range of skills and beginning to understand the design process and its conflicting demands at an appropriate rate. Pupils for whom English is an additional language learn and progress well. They achieve work, including written and appropriately detailed evaluations, that is in line with that expected of their age group by the time they leave the school. Pupils with special educational needs learn and progress well.

106. The observation of lessons and the quality of the work seen, including artefacts and design and evaluation work, indicate that pupils have good attitudes, take care and try hard to produce work of at least a satisfactory standard. They behave very well. This means that teachers can confidently offer a full range of activities, including the use of sharp tools. This aids pupils' learning well.

107. The quality of teaching throughout the school is judged to be satisfactory overall, it is at times, good. Teachers' plans take into account many aspects of designing and making and pupils are given appropriate opportunities to develop an increasingly wide range of skills as they move through the school. Observation of lessons and scrutiny of teachers' plans indicate that the health and safety aspects of the subject are secure, for example, in food technology, where hygiene and the correct handling of knives and other kitchen equipment is taught appropriately. Teachers take every possible opportunity to develop vocabulary and reading skills, insist that writing is properly formed and legible and use design and technology lessons well to practice the counting of components or the dividing of items into fractional parts. Such awareness contributes well to pupils' literacy skills and understanding of the practical application of mathematics.

108. The subject fulfils statutory requirements. It contributes well to social development, through the need to work together, and considers the conflicting needs people might have for an item being designed. Resources are adequate, including food technology and they are used well. There is a knowledgeable co-ordinator who has a significant impact on the subject through a monitoring role. The school raises the profile of design and technology through an annual technology challenge. For example, a recent challenge was to transport an egg across a space between two desks and involved innovative solutions such as rolled paper bridges, cranes and catapults.

GEOGRAPHY

109. Due to timetable commitments only three lessons in geography were observed, all in Year 1 classes. Judgements are made additionally from discussions with pupils and staff, and scrutiny of pupils' past and present work, displays and teachers' planning. These suggest pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and is consistent with the finding at the time of the last inspection. Progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, is good.

110. Pupils in Year 1 use basic geographical terms, such as those associated with direction like "forwards' and 'to the left or right'. Pupils are building on previous knowledge of the school. Good use was made of photographs of the school to support their ideas of the way to the office. Pupils are extending their knowledge and understanding of place names within the school. For instance, resource area, library and kitchen. They are beginning to understand the concept of a map and appreciate how this may be completed to show, for instance, a simple journey from one part of the school to another. There are links with other subjects such as history, literacy and numeracy. However, there was little evidence of computers being used to support pupils' learning.

111. Pupils enjoy geography and respond well, particularly when lessons are lively and well paced. Most pupils work well together in groups or in pairs. In class discussions they ask questions to reinforce their ideas or gain new knowledge. They use the equipment with care and share resources sensibly. Pupils behave very well, which aids the development of their social and moral skills.

112. The overall quality of teaching is good and activities are well planned and matched to perceived needs, with a tight focus on clearly intended outcomes. Skilful use is made of questioning, to extend learning and make effective interventions to increase understanding and provoke thinking. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding and plan work, which meets the appropriate attainment targets. They give a good emphasis on pupils developing and using literacy skills in geography and on encouraging the use of geographical

vocabulary. The teachers with responsibility for pupils for whom English is an additional language, give very good support to the class teachers and ensure the pupils have complete understanding of new vocabulary for example, corridors, routes and symbols.

113. There is an appropriate scheme of work and a policy statement, which helps teachers in the planning of their lessons. Teachers across the year groups plan together to ensure continuity and progression for all pupils. The co-ordinator monitors the curriculum by classroom observations and looking at planning grids. For Years 1 and 2 assessments are made at the end of the topic. However, occasionally assessment on a day-to-day basis does not help, pupils' immediate learning needs. Marking is always completed but rarely gives future learning targets. Resources are good but may need some updating to fit in with the new guidelines. The subject fulfils statutory requirements.

HISTORY

114. Due to timetable commitments only three lessons in history were observed, all in Year 2 classes. Judgements are made additionally from discussions with pupils and staff, and a scrutiny of pupils' past and present work, displays and teachers' planning. Standards attained by the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national expectations and this is consistent with the findings at the time of the last inspection. Progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, is good.

115. Pupils in Year 2 have a sound knowledge of 'Why people did things, and why events happened'. For example, Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot. In the best lesson the teacher created a very good class discussion so that pupils increased their knowledge and understanding of the reason why Guy Fawkes wanted to blow up the Houses of Parliament. Pupils had the opportunity to role-play the story. They retold the story in writing at the end of the lesson. There are good links with literacy and numeracy within this subject. However, there was little evidence of computers being used to support pupils' learning.

116. Pupils' attitudes are generally positive towards history. They enjoy their discussions. They become animated and enthusiastic when discussing how they would feel if they were not allowed to pray in the place of their choice. They express their views and opinions with sensitivity and tolerance. Most pupils work well co-operatively and collaboratively. They treat equipment with care and share resources sensibly. Pupils generally behave very well which aids the development of their social, cultural and moral skills.

117. The quality of teaching is sound with some very good features. For instance, the teacher used imaginative methods in which to capture pupils' interest and secure their understanding of terms such as 'treason' and 'plot'. Teachers plan work carefully and pitch their teaching to the range of abilities within their class. Teachers make good use of time and resources and teach pupils to use the resources carefully. The teachers with responsibility for pupils for whom English is an additional language, give very good support to the class teachers and ensure these pupils have complete understanding of the words being used. There is usually a good balance between whole-class and group teaching. The plenary session frequently reinforces what has been learnt and targets are set for future improvement.

118. There is an appropriate scheme of work and a policy statement, which assists teachers in the planning of their lessons. Teachers across the year groups plan together to ensure continuity and progression. The co-ordinator is involved with the staff before and during the planning stage. She also observes lessons and gives feedback to the teachers on their strengths and areas for improvement. Assessment procedures are sound but occasionally lack day-to-day assessment for pupils' immediate learning needs.

Accommodation and resources are adequate to support the teaching of this subject. The subject fulfils statutory requirements.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

119. Standards attained by the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national expectations and this is consistent with the finding at the time of the last inspection. Overall, the pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs, and for those pupils for whom English is an additional language; there is no difference in the attainment of girls and boys.

120. The previous report noted that a programme of installation of computers was being undertaken, the quality of teaching was variable and the pupils understood a narrow range of work in control technology. However, the provision for information and communication technology and the quality of teaching have improved appreciably and are now good. This is because of the installation of networked computers in all classes, the recent development by the co-ordinator of a subject policy, the implementation of the scheme of work, proposed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, and the training for all staff, funded by the National Grid for Learning.

121. In Key Stage 1, the pupils learn to control computers using the mouse and keyboard and they acquire appropriate confidence and skills for their age. Pupils are familiar with the hardware and software. They are developing an understanding of a limited range of applications through links with other subjects. For instance, the pupils in Year 1 apply their knowledge, skills and understanding of word processing, using different sizes of text and font, when writing about themselves. In mathematics they generate simple block graphs, such as of favourite foods.

122. Teachers' planning for information and communication technology (ICT) generally identifies, firstly, the areas of knowledge and skills to be taught in ICT lessons and, secondly, their use and application in other subjects. For instance, in a short but well taught lesson in Year 2, the pupils learnt "to use the ENTER key to insert line breaks". The teacher effectively demonstrated the new skill; the management of the pupils was good with only one the machine to explain the practical task to a whole class. The lesson concluded with the pupils having a clear understanding of how this skill would be applied in arranging a list of items of food in a later science lesson. Similarly, pupils in a very good Year 1 lesson learnt which keys and icons to deploy, and the skills necessary, to paint a program to create a representation of a scenario - a plate of healthy food. Again, the pupils were clear about how this newly acquired skill would be applied and developed later.

123. The quality of teaching overall is good. When teaching is very good the teacher is confident in the challenge to the pupils and there is the expectation of a high level of response. It is also effective and the pupils learn well where the teacher explains well, using pupils to demonstrate, and good use is made of questioning to ensure that they understand. In the subsequent subject lessons, such as English and science, when the pupils apply their ICT knowledge and skills, the teachers organise the pupils appropriately in pairs and maintain an effective overview of their work, intervening when appropriate. With the help of learning support assistants in these lessons, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. However, the pupils' appreciation of the contribution of ICT to subjects across the curriculum is underdeveloped. This is because of the limited opportunities provided and the failure in planning to explore where and how ICT may be incorporated more fully into the whole school curriculum.

124. Pupils enjoy working on the computers and support each other well, taking turns to use the mouse and keyboard while talking about what they are doing. When other pupils demonstrate on the computers, they are attentive and behave very well.

125. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for less than a year. However, despite the recent significant developments that have taken place in the subject, she recognises that further improvements have to be made. These are rightly identified in the subject development plan, which links appropriately to the school's improvement plan. In particular, a valid priority for improvement is for all staff to achieve higher standards of teaching ICT through training. However, this training should incorporate the development of teachers' knowledge and understanding of the fuller application of ICT to support pupils' learning across the curriculum.

126. The role of the technician is presently assumed by an undergraduate student on an extended work placement. His services effectively allow for teachers to have time to focus on their teaching, but, a more long term arrangement for a technician needs to be established.

127. The status of information and communication technology is high within the school. The school has its own website and valuable use is made of a digital camera to record on a CD-ROM a "photograph album" of many aspects of the work of the school. The subject has the potential for improvement and for standards to rise.

MUSIC

128. At the time of the previous inspection standards were judged to be in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1, with pupils making good progress. Pupils were seen to be able to sing well, knowing the words to a wide range of songs. They sang enthusiastically and at a good pace. The findings of this inspection confirm the above. Attainment is in line with that expected for pupils' ages and prior abilities by the age of seven. Pupils are able to hear the difference between high and low notes, singing a low note then a high note without getting louder. They concentrate and follow a conductor, building up a good repertoire of songs from memory. Pupils identify a range of simple percussive instruments and know that sounds are made by tapping, banging and rattling, and that many are played by using a range of brushes, beaters and sticks. Pupils have the ability to control a percussion instrument by using sufficient beats to fit into a song and suggest different ways of using percussion instruments in class to accompany stories. Pupils wait their turn to play, starting and finishing using teachers' cues to do so. Most importantly they identify the need for silence when listening to music.

129. At the last inspection pupils' response to their lessons was good, with pupils given a range of opportunities to perform in front of a variety of audiences from rest of school to parent and community groups. Pupils were proud of their skills and valued the opportunity for learning to play an instrument and join the steel band at the local community centre. During this inspection pupils give a positive response to their music work. They concentrate, persevere, listen carefully, behave well, exhibit very good self-control, especially when using percussion instruments, take turns, enjoy work and are responsive to their teachers. Being eager to please and enthusiastic they rise to the challenge of lessons and are disappointed when lessons end.

130. At the time of the last inspection teaching was judged to be appropriately planned to meet the requirements of national curriculum. Teaching overall during this inspection is at least good with half of lessons judged to be very good or excellent. Teachers are developing pupils' skills; the skills of watching a conductor, listening to instructions, listening to other's performance and playing instruments correctly to achieve the effects required. In the best lessons teachers use a games format to catch pupils' attention. Their clear instructions

result in good progress in learning. Many teachers have a personal enthusiasm for the subject and provide well-planned sessions with music and skills highlighted. Teachers make good use of resources to support learning, especially appropriately chosen percussion and plan progression through their lessons. Pupils are eager to share their knowledge as result of teachers giving them the opportunity to experiment and develop their ear for sounds. By focusing on developing listening skills teachers gradually built up a group into an 'orchestra', and by challenging learning, making good use of praise and encouragement, they help pupils to develop their own learning. Teachers ensure that supporting adults are well briefed and effectively support pupils' learning. The class assistant, who is a pianist, is particularly effectively used to accompany singing. Teachers make good use of a plenary at the end of a lesson to review learning. When teaching is weaker there is a lack of use of silence when controlling an instrument. Teachers do not fully establish the physical cues for playing and stopping. In these sessions learning is slowed by weak control, confusing language and a drop in pace through the lesson.

131. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for about five years. Her main responsibilities include supporting and encouraging staff, monitoring and reviewing pupils' progress in learning, keeping up to date in developments in music teaching and ensuring that the policy and scheme of work for music are appropriate and matched to the resources available, and spending the budget appropriately. The scheme of work is drawn from a nationally published scheme that ensures full coverage of the national curriculum programmes of study. The new arrangements for year group singing have been developed from the use of this scheme and staff training has been drawn from these changes. The co-ordinator sees teachers medium and short term plans from within year group planning meetings checking that pupils have a full and challenging curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

132. Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and the findings of the last inspection. Previously pupils were found to make sound progress but now their progress is determined as good. There is no difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress with tasks appropriately adjusted to meet their circumstances and with the sensitive help of learning support assistants. The school has responded to the previous report by identifying dance as an area for improvement through the in-service training of the teachers.

133. In both years the pupils work enthusiastically in games and gymnastics. They build their self confidence and improve their agility in response to carefully structured activities provided by the teachers. The younger pupils copy, repeat and develop their skills in controlling a ball with a bat - dribbling it in different directions, making good use of space, careful to avoid each other and cones, and stopping the ball when told. They describe what they do and work well to improve their performance. In games they understand the need to take turns and recognise fair play. They encourage and show appreciation for the work of others.

134. Pupils in Year 2 recognise changes that happen to their bodies when they exercise and use correct vocabulary to describe them. In gymnastics they practise a variety of ways of travelling on the floor and on the apparatus, such as the climbing frame, and explore ways of balancing, like in a star shape, and landing.

135. The quality of teaching is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to very good. Lessons are adequately planned and prepared; they effectively provide opportunities for the progressive improvement and refinement of the pupils' knowledge and skills. For instance, in gymnastics, the pupils gain in the skills and confidence, firstly, to set up and put away the

apparatus and then to use it in increasingly imaginative ways. The structure to lessons is good with warm up and cool down sessions which acknowledge well the health and safety of the pupils. The better lessons make full use of the available time, and the teachers successfully motivate the pupils with demonstrations and praise to sustain working for the full duration.

136. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are very good. They dress appropriately, enjoy the lessons and behave very well. The subject makes a positive contribution to the pupils' personal development with opportunities to work as part of a group or a team.

137. Physical education is satisfactorily resourced. The indoor equipment and apparatus are well maintained and readily accessible to both pupils and teachers. There is a sufficiently large hard outdoor area but the school lacks a suitable grassed surface for summer activities. The co-ordinator has recently revised the school policy for physical education and adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work. These moves have the potential to raise standards further but the school should also look to sharing the examples of best practice with all teachers.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

138. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in religious education by the time pupils were aged seven, were above the expectations contained in the Locally Agreed Syllabus and progress was good. During this inspection it was only possible to see a limited number of lessons, but judgements from these, along with samples of work, displays and after discussions with teachers, confirm that standards have been maintained and pupils' progress in their learning is good overall. The standards and progress of pupils for whom English is an additional language is good as is the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils study the three key faiths of Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. Not only do they have factual information about each faith, but also they are learning from these faiths. Pupils know that the Christian holy book is the Bible and contains stories about Jesus as well as those told by him such as the story of the Good Samaritan. They recall the stories and apply the morals to life such as caring for others. From the life of Joseph they think of the effects of feelings such as jealousy. Likewise pupils know that the Muslim sacred text is the Qur'an, given to the prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Pupils know that each faith has its different ways of worshipping and that a religious belief affects how people live, that they celebrate special events and festivals in different ways. The inspection came at the end of Diwali, the Hindu Festival of Light. Pupils know the Rama and Sita story, how Hindu's worship, the special foods and events that mark the Hindu New Year. They are looking forward to Eid-ul-Fitr and Christmas in the same way. Religious education makes a significant contribution to the spiritual and moral development of pupils. Pupils appreciate and respect the diversity of beliefs and cultures in the school.

139. Pupils respond positively to their work. At the time of the last inspection they responded well, listened attentively, readily shared knowledge, behaved well and sustained their interest in set tasks. Pupils were able to work effectively on their own and co-operated with each other. During this inspection pupils' response is good likewise. Pupils are keen to learn. They eagerly settle to work, listen, are not shy about contributing to a discussion even if their vocabulary is limited and enjoy being able to add to knowledge by contributing with details of how they and their families celebrate their own festivals.

140. During the previous inspection the quality of teaching was judged to be satisfactory. Teachers were seen as teaching sensitively with good cross-curricular links made as religious education was taught as part of topic work. Teachers' planning was good, being based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Lessons were well resourced, and resources

supported learning when telling stories. Teaching during this inspection is good overall. Teachers share learning objectives with the class and often use a plenary session at the end of the lesson to see if these have been attained. Although the school has a good range of resources teachers are careful not to use so many that drama, dressing up, or cooking take over from the meaning and belief within the lesson. Teachers use a range of teaching styles to reinforce learning. Pupils act out parts of stories, for instance the story of the Good Samaritan, to reinforce learning. To celebrate Diwali, and consider that festivals involve special food, the pupils cook Burfi and discuss food used to celebrate Eid and Christmas. Throughout teachers use a range of rich, full and descriptive language to encourage pupils with weaker language skills to listen and develop their skills fully. Teachers used the residual knowledge within the class, especially the Hindu and Muslim pupils to support other's learning. They reinforce the school behaviour policy, for instance when making Burfi pupils took turns and shared tasks. Teachers use questions well, not only displaying their subject knowledge but providing the opportunity for pupils to contribute to their own and other's learning.

141. The school has a policy for religious education that has been recently reviewed. The aims and objectives for teaching give a special focus on the range of backgrounds, ethnicity and religions of the pupils within the school. The scheme of work comes from the Locally Agreed Syllabus and is planned in year groups through a combination of thematic activity days and a systematic approach of independent units. Teachers' assessment of pupils' progress is mainly by general conclusions drawn from observations and discussions. The co-ordinator has been in post for about four years. During this time she has provided staff with the resources, information and training to ensure that religious education is taught well throughout the school. She is planning a series of visits for staff to places of worship in the local area. Members of the school staff are from different cultural and religious backgrounds and are encouraged to share information to support the work within the school. Members of the local community are also involved in supporting the school. The curriculum fulfils the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.