

# INSPECTION REPORT

## SEFTON PARK INFANT SCHOOL

Ashley Down, Bristol

LEA area: Bristol

Unique reference number: 108960

Headteacher: Ms Jan Lonsdale

Reporting inspector: John Heap  
18824

Dates of inspection: 6<sup>th</sup>- 9<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 224859

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 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ashley Down Road Ashley Down Bristol
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Mackintosh
Date of previous inspection:	16 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> September 1996

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Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
John Heap 18824	Registered inspector	English Art Geography Music English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed? How well are pupils taught? The schools results and achievement.
Brian Sampson 10329	Lay inspector		Pupils attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Angela Coyle 20603	Team inspector	Foundation stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Frances Thornton 5714	Team inspector	Science Information technology Design and technology Equal opportunities Special educational needs	
Valerie Howells 31786	Team inspector	Mathematics History Physical education Religious education	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is an infant school that caters for pupils aged three to seven years. It is situated in the district of Ashley Down, on the outskirts of Bristol. There are 208 pupils on roll: this is average for a primary school in England. The number on roll has decreased since the last inspection. There is also a 52-place nursery that is fully subscribed with children attending on a part-time basis. The children are admitted to the nursery in the September following their third birthday. Attainment on entry is broadly average, but a significant number of children have below average writing and social skills. There are 24.2 per cent of pupils on the register of special educational needs; this is above the national average. The number of pupils on stages 3 to 5 of the register is six. Two pupils (1.1 per cent) have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. This proportion is close to the national average. In recent times there has been a low level of pupil mobility. However, there have been more leaving than arriving.

The vast majority of pupils come from the local area. The census statistics and more up-to-date analysis of trends show that the area has lower levels of deprivation than the national average. The majority of pupils are white, and a significant minority come from a range of ethnic heritages. Eleven pupils (6 per cent) have a first language other than English; this is high. Ten per cent of pupils are entitled to a free school meal; this is below the national average.

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

Overall, this is a good school. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when areas of the schools' work were judged to be seriously weak. Pupils are cared for well, the teaching and pupils' progress is good and the school enables them to achieve above average results in national tests. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and the behaviour is of a high standard. The strengths of the school far outweigh the areas for development and this is due in large measure to the good leadership and management. Given that the expenditure on pupils is high, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in mathematics are well above average and above average in reading.
- Teaching is good and 28 per cent of lessons are very good or better. Pupils make good progress.
- Pupils are very well behaved, they display very good attitudes to school and work and relate very well to each other and adults.
- Most aspects of leadership and management are good and much of the impetus for the good improvements has come from the very good headteacher.
- Provision for moral and social development is very good and provision for spiritual development is good.
- The school has good links with the parents and the community.

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

- Standards in handwriting and creative writing are average.
- Achievement in design and technology and information and communication technology is unsatisfactory, particularly for higher attainers.

*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 September 1996. The quality of teaching is much improved: at the time of the last inspection 35 per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. Standards have improved, particularly in reading, mathematics and science. The quality of the curriculum is much improved, particularly in terms of the policy-making and guidance in schemes of work. As a result of these improvements in provision, pupils are making better progress than they were at the time of the last inspection.

Other areas of improvement are:

- standards in history, geography, information technology, physical education and religious education;
- provision for spiritual, moral and social development, with moral and social developments being particularly strong;
- judging pupils' levels of attainment and how to use the information as current procedures need further refinement to ensure consistency and provide details about pupils which can be understood.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	A	B	A	A
Writing	B	C	C	C
Mathematics	A	A	A*	A*

Key	
Very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Children enter the reception year with broadly average attainment, but a significant proportion of them have below average writing and social skills. Children make good progress generally, and by the time they enter Year 1, the majority are likely to exceed the standards expected in language, communication, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

Results in national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 were very high (top five per cent of schools in the country) in mathematics, well above the national average in reading and close to the national average in writing. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was very high in reading and mathematics and close to the national average in writing. When comparing these results with schools that have similar intakes, mathematics results are very high, reading results are well above average and writing results are close to average. Taking the level of pupils achievements over the last four years, reading and writing results are above average and mathematical results are well above average. There are no significant differences in the levels of attainment of boys and girls.

On the basis of work seen during the inspection, standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. Particular strengths include reading, speaking, listening and mathematics. The school sets challenging and appropriate targets and is meeting them.

Standards of attainment reach national expectations in art, geography and music. Standards in history and physical education are above expectations and there was insufficient evidence provided by the school to make a secure judgement in design and technology.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils have high levels of interest and involvement in their activities. Concentration and enthusiasm are very favourable.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils treat each other, visitors and their surroundings with respect and tolerance. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are highly aware of the impact of their actions on others. They use their initiative and thinking skills successfully, for the benefit of all in the school community. Pupils take on responsibility very well.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Broadly in line with the national average. Unauthorised absences are below the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1
Lessons seen overall	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.*

In the Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching varies from excellent to unsatisfactory. The main strengths are:

- teachers' knowledge and understanding;
- development of basic skills;
- teachers' expectations.

At Key Stage 1, the strengths are:

- clear instructions;
- brisk pace;
- the teaching of basic skills.

The teaching of English is satisfactory.

Literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented satisfactorily.

Throughout the school, pupils learn well.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and they achieve well.

In 98 per cent of lessons the teaching was satisfactory or better. In 28 per cent it was very good or better and in 2 per cent it was unsatisfactory.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good. Provision focuses well on the areas where children have limitations, for example writing and social skills. The curriculum in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. It is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Particularly good provision is made for personal, social, health, moral and emotional education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Overall, provision is managed well by the new co-ordinator. Pupils are generally well supported in the classroom and they are making good progress. Targets set for pupils in their individual education plan are clear and focus on all the learning objectives in the statement of special educational needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Overall, provision is satisfactory, but the management ought to be separated from special educational needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for moral and social development is very good; spiritual development is good and cultural development is satisfactory. Lessons in personal, social and health education make a good contribution to provision. However, the emphasis on the diversity and richness of other cultures is unsatisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. Policies and procedures dealing with behaviour are good and satisfactory for all aspects of attendance. Assessment procedures are extensive and are in need of simplifying to ensure that they have maximum impact on pupil's attainment and progress.
Relationships with parents and carers	The majority of parent's views about the school are positive. This is because the quality of information they receive is good; the school is open to them and staff are approachable. The contribution of parents is a strength of the school.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads and manages the school very well. She is well supported by senior staff who are hard working and capable professionals. Approaches to improving provision have been rigorous and well managed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are highly supportive of the school, bring significant strengths to their deliberations and fulfil the vast majority of their statutory obligations. They have a clear view of the strategic development of the school and are responsive to the community.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Classroom monitoring is regular, supportive and highly focused on improving provision. The school development plan is a very useful document that identifies appropriate priorities and has sufficient measures to continue the school's improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Educational priorities are budgeted for and grants are appropriately used. The school has very successful practices that enable it to measure itself against other schools and use its resources effectively. However, the space for the library leaves little room for development.

The level of staffing and resources is adequate. The accommodation is adequate, but there is no quiet setting for the library.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like going to school.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable approaching the school.</li> <li>• The high expectations on children to work hard.</li> <li>• The way the school is helping their children to become more mature.</li> <li>• The behaviour of the pupils.</li> <li>• The quality of the teaching.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of information about their children.</li> <li>• The provision of homework.</li> <li>• The quality of leadership and management.</li> <li>• The activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with the positive comments above. In relation to the areas for improvement, the quality of information provided by the school is good. The present provision of homework is satisfactory. Overall, the leadership and management in the school are good and, significantly, they are pursuing further improvement through effective development planning. The activities provided outside lessons are similar to those found in most infant schools and are satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Initial assessments of children entering the reception class in the Foundation Stage indicate that the majority have average levels of attainment. However, there is a significant proportion of children who have limited writing and social skills. Pupils make good progress, generally, and as a consequence the majority are likely to exceed the expected standards by the time they start in Year 1. This is true in language, communication, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.
2. By the age of seven, results in the 2000 national tests show that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 is well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing when compared with all schools. When compared with schools that have similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals, results in mathematics were very high (top five per cent of schools), well above average in reading and close to the average in writing. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was very high in reading and mathematics and close to average in writing when compared with schools nationally.
3. Over the last three years, pupils, results in national tests at the age of seven have been above the national average in reading and mathematics and close to the national average in writing. Improvement in mathematics results has been most noticeable, closely followed by reading. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
4. Targets set by the school are ambitious and realistic, for example 98 per cent in mathematics for 2001.
5. At, or near, the age of seven, standards of work seen during the inspection are above expectations in reading and mathematics and in line with expectations in writing, science and information and communication technology. The standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
6. By the age of seven, standards in speaking and listening are above expectations. Pupils have a wide vocabulary. They discuss the issues and respond accurately to questions. The standards in reading are well above the expected level. Pupils have good basic skills, particularly in their use of letter sounds. Their knowledge of plot and characterisation is good. Most pupils have satisfactory library skills. The standards in writing are below the other aspects because pupils are not sufficiently motivated to write; the match of task to individual is not as accurate as it should be and not enough time is spent on writing.
7. Handwriting, spelling and grammar are generally accurate. However, many pupils do not see the purpose in writing and consequently standards are lower than they are in reading, speaking and listening. This is particularly the case with the higher attainers.

8. In mathematics, standards of attainment by the age of seven are well above expectations and this is a good improvement on the position at the last inspection. Pupils are good at explaining their thinking, selecting appropriate ways of working and using a good range of mathematical vocabulary. They have good standards in mental calculations and this helps them to do well in problem-solving that includes using their knowledge, skills and understanding in everyday situations, such as time and money.
9. By the age of seven, standards in science are well above average, which is in line with the teacher assessments in 2000. This marks an improvement since the last inspection. The majority of pupils attain standards that are above national expectations. Higher attainers can devise a fair test, identify similarities and differences in a range of materials and know that changes can be made by heating and cooling. Overall, pupils' achievements are at least in line with expectations in all areas of study, including their knowledge, skills and understanding in scientific inquiry.
10. In information and communication technology, standards are in line with expectations at the age of seven. Skills in word processing, using paint programs and in guiding a roamer meet expected levels. The use of computers in other subjects is variable, with particular strengths in art and science. Overall, pupils with low skills and experience achieve well, but those who are already competent make unsatisfactory gains. This is mainly because the quality of assessment is not good enough to provide the teacher with sufficient knowledge of the pupils, present level of attainment.
11. In religious education, standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils are aware that people hold different beliefs and that they worship in a variety of settings. Their knowledge and understanding of religious faiths have been deepened by looking at the similarities and differences in the religions of Christianity and Islam.
12. Standards of attainment reach national expectations in art, geography and music. Standards in history and physical education are above expectations and there was insufficient evidence provided by the school to make a secure judgement in design and technology.

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

13. Overall, the attitudes, values and personal development of pupils are strengths of the school and contribute significantly to pupils' learning.
14. In the Foundation Stage, many children enter the nursery at the age of three with below average personal and social skills. Particular shortcomings are:
  - limited powers of concentration;
  - lack of independence when choosing activities;
  - a tendency to play alone.Once the children become used to the daily routines of school and classroom they quickly establish good relationships with adults and classmates. Their independence develops rapidly as can be seen with their undressing and dressing for physical activities. In the reception classes, children know what is expected of them and they behave well. Staff act as good role models and the children are interested and responsive and take part in all the activities with enjoyment.
15. The attitude of the pupils to their school is very good and a strength of the school. This compares well with the previous inspection when attitudes were described as a

basic strength of the school. The majority of pupils are confident in their classroom work and at play-time and show a well above average interest and involvement in their activities. This was particularly evident during a reception class, personal, social, health and creativity lesson. A particular group of five children were enacting a typical family scenario. One little girl, as the mother, made the inspector a plastic meal and an imaginary cup of tea. She asked him to sit down and consume them before they got cold and also requested that he look after the baby, whilst she did the remainder of the housework! The pupils' concentration and enthusiasm in general, throughout the school, is very favourable and, when teaching is good, a large proportion of them remain very well on task. Overall, this promotes good standards and quality of learning.

16. The pupils' behaviour is also very good and another strength of the school. This has improved upon the already good judgement of the previous inspection. In lessons, at lunch and also during playtimes most pupils treat each other with great respect. The relationship, between pupils and between pupils and adults in the school are very good. Boys, girls, children of different ethnicity and those with special educational needs all work, sit, eat and play together. During one playtime a small boy on a walking frame was seen trying to chase a football along with other boys. The others, every so often, stepped back to allow him an attempted kick. They all had a great time laughing and joking.
17. During the inspection there was no evidence of bullying, sexism or racism. This is yet another very good aspect of the school and consequently another of its many strengths. The school has not needed to exclude any pupil over the past five years. The pupils have a very good sense of justice amongst themselves. They are very tolerant of each other and realise very well that the impact of their actions on others can be quite profound and cause a great deal of suffering.
18. The pupils are very proud of their school and look after it. They also look after each other well. There is no evidence of vandalism or graffiti around the school. The children know that not all pupils possess the same feelings, values and beliefs as they have themselves. Great respect is shown by the children for their teachers. Various parents of different ethnic heritages often come into school and talk to the children about their own upbringing in another country. On other occasions, parents who have been away on holidays abroad, bring back artefacts and talk to the children about their origins. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
19. From the nursery onwards the pupils are encouraged to make very good use of their initiative and take responsibility for their own actions. In addition to acting as class monitors or making up their own class 'rules of behaviour', the pupils are very industrious in, for example, helping to tidy up classrooms and the dining hall after use at lunch-time or looking after the school library. Others take out boxes of toys and distribute them at play-time or deliver register, dinner money and messages to the school secretary. A typical example of their confidence during the inspection was when a group of reception children warned the teacher that something had been left out at the end of a lesson!
20. Attendance at the school, for the most recent reporting year, is satisfactory and is in line with the national average for this type of school. Figures compare well with the judgement made at the previous inspection. However, unauthorised absences are above the national average, due in the main to the school's high percentage of pupils taking holidays during term-time. The majority of pupils come to school and into

classes on time and most lessons commence promptly. The school has no unexplained absence trends.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and this promotes good learning. In 98 per cent of lessons the standard of teaching was satisfactory or better, and 28 per cent of lessons were very good or better. In 2 per cent of lessons the teaching was unsatisfactory. This is a very significant improvement on the last inspection when 35 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory and described as a serious weakness. There is also a major increase in the higher quality lessons: at the last inspection 28 per cent of lessons were judged to be good and this time 70 per cent are good or better. Particular areas of improvement are:
- good knowledge and understanding of subjects;
  - higher expectations of pupils' performance and pace of lessons;
  - good management of pupils and the positive learning environment. The quality of planning has also improved and teacher' efforts in this are supported by subject policies and schemes of work in most subjects. However, there are still improvements to be made in planning and the school recognises this.
22. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is good. The quality ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory, with the vast majority of lessons good or better, and the very occasional unsatisfactory lesson. In the best lessons the strengths are:
- the very good climate for learning fosters good attitudes in the receptive children;
  - the good knowledge of the early learning goals and the needs of young people leads to children learning quickly in mathematics; very good questioning promotes children's language and encourages them to think carefully about the way the five senses are important to everyday life. Throughout this stage of learning the pace of teaching is brisk and planning is conscientiously carried out. Relationships between adults and children are very good and staff show enormous respect for their needs. Those with special educational needs are well catered for and fully integrated into the class activities. This good provision is amply supported by the planning which includes targets for achievement.
23. In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is good. In 21 per cent of lessons the teaching was very good, 45 per cent was good and 34 per cent was satisfactory. In the very good lessons, instructions are clear, the pace is brisk and appropriate resources are used. Consequently, pupils are highly motivated as was seen in a Year 2 numeracy lesson where pupils were adding 11 to two-digit numbers. All pupils were fully stretched and they were able to explain the strategies they follow. Expectations were equally high in a Year 2 history lesson, where the teacher expected pupils to frame research questions about Isambard Kingdom Brunel, the famous engineer. This approach led to pupils improving their research skills and improving their approach to using a range of sources, such as photographs, books and newspaper articles. Overall, teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and the pupils they teach and as a consequence the pupils learn basic skills well, particularly in reading. However, in writing the expectations, although satisfactory, are not as high. An example of this occurred in a Year 1 literacy lesson, where higher-attainers made sound progress with their handwriting and spelling. Lower-attaining pupils in the same lesson lost interest towards the end of the session. Assessment is used adequately to support pupils and future lesson planning. Pupils with special education needs are generally well supported, most particularly in their learning of reading skills.

24. The quality of teaching is good in mathematics, science, history and physical education. It is satisfactory in English and information and communication technology. There is insufficient evidence in art, design and technology, geography, music and religious education to make secure judgements. The quality of teaching in personal, social and health education is good.
25. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory overall. The basic skills of reading are taught well, for example the teaching of letter sounds. The teaching of writing is satisfactory, but expectations of handwriting and spelling need to be greater, most particularly for the higher-attainers. The use of literacy in other subjects is good, for instance in science, religious education, history, information and communication technology and geography. A good example is the production of a simple book, about the life-cycle of a bird, which contained a contents page. Early library skills are taught well, but the library itself needs developing.
26. The teaching of numeracy is good. The schools numeracy strategy is impacting very well on the overall quality of teaching and standards achieved. Teachers' understanding of the strategy is good. Sufficient opportunities are found to use numeracy skills, knowledge and understanding in other subjects. Good examples are: in Year 1 science, counting notes played on a guitar; in art, symmetrical patterns; in science; measuring distances in experiments, often with a metre stick.
27. Marking is generally sound. There is a tendency to be more positive than analytical. However, the effect of marking and the target setting is having a good effect on attainment, particularly in mathematics and science.
28. Children in the Foundation Stage learn well. They acquire skills, knowledge and understanding because staff are vigilant in ensuring that each child is stretched as an individual and that their time in school is full and varied. The good and better teaching effectively promotes;
- good working habits and enthusiasm;
  - good relationships;
  - confidence and independence.
- Writing skills are not developed at the same rate as others because teachers miss opportunities in their planning to identify specific learning intentions.
29. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn well. The good teaching ensures that skills, knowledge and understanding gained in the foundation stage are securely built upon. In the majority of subjects, pupils are learning well and produce a good amount of work. However, there are shortcomings in design and technology and writing. Expectations in aspects such as handwriting and spelling are not as high as they are in, say, reading and pupils do not always see the need or purpose to write. Furthermore, the amount of time spent in discussion overshadows the time available for writing. There is a need to balance this more equitably. This can be seen in the following examples:
- in religious education, no written work was done in a Year 2 lesson;
  - in personal, social and health education lessons, few examples of written work;
  - in a very good Year 2 history lesson, where the pupils learned a lot about Isambard Kingdom Brunel, there was no writing about him.
30. Pupils learning English as an additional language are progressing well. They are occasionally held back by not working with the average and higher-attainers who would provide them with more appropriate role models and challenges. This is particularly the case in the Foundation Stage.

31. The effective teaching contributes well to the successful learning of pupils with special educational needs, particularly in Key Stage 1. Teachers use a good combination of strategies to help pupils learn. For example, in literacy lessons on writing and a science lesson on sound, the teachers involved pupils in the class discussion and the learning support assistants provided individual support. As a result, pupils with statements made good progress. In most of the lessons observed the teachers and the learning support assistants were sensitive in the way they provided help. In general, teachers and assistants work well together and provide good support for pupils. However, on a few occasions the assistant tended to do too much of the work for the pupil, consequently the lower-attainers did less work than they might and learned less effectively.

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

32. The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets statutory requirements. This is an improvement since the last inspection when provision for information and communication technology failed to meet statutory requirements. The school provides opportunities for the teaching of information and communication technology as a subject and the scheme of work provides balance across the various aspects. The school is well placed to teach information and communication technology in subjects as there are detailed plans in place. The curriculum takes good account of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. The school makes use of resources within the community, there are visits in history geography and religious education, which contribute well to pupils' learning. There are good curricular links with the adjacent junior school. During the week of the inspection, some Year 6 pupils helped in an information and communication technology lesson which was taking place within the junior school. Pupils from the school make regular visits to the junior school before transfer and teachers meet regularly. Pupils from the local secondary school carry out work experience in the school. The school has good links with parents. During the week of the inspection a number helped in classes. In the nursery, parents regularly sign up to help.
33. The school has dealt well with the key issue raised in the last inspection to produce schemes of work for all curriculum subjects. Schemes of work are being revised to ensure they cover programmes of study and meet the requirements of Curriculum 2000. In most subjects, this revision is almost complete. In design and technology, the school has decided to use the Qualification and Curriculum Authority scheme of work as an interim measure to ensure compliance with Curriculum 2000 and continuity in pupils' learning. It will adapt this to pupils' needs after a year of implementation. Pupils with special educational needs have good access to the whole curriculum. Curriculum provision enables pupils with special educational needs to make good progress. Teachers plan effectively for pupils' needs identified in individual education plans. The school provides equal opportunities for all pupils. Pupils have access to all subjects within the school, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers adapt the taught curriculum to the needs of the pupils.
34. The school fosters pupils' learning by organising a good range of extra-curricular activities. These include lunch-time activities such as choir, recorder and French lessons, trips in history, geography and science. The curriculum is enhanced by the school's good links with the community. There are visits to churches, mosques and temples as part of religious education. Music and drama groups come into the school and there is an artist in residence regularly.

35. The school makes good provision for personal social, health, moral and emotional education. There is a good scheme of work and teachers carry out regular assessment. Topics include family life, health, relationships, sex education and moral education. The school also promotes a good climate for learning and teachers and pupils form constructive relationships based on mutual trust.
36. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The particular strengths are the very good provision for moral and social development. This is an improvement on the level of provision reported at the last inspection. Collective worship meets statutory requirements and has a greater influence on pupils' spiritual development than previously reported. At that time inspectors felt that insufficient opportunities for reflection were provided. This has been improved greatly:
- in a Year 2 assembly, the time for reflection is indicated by the lighting of a candle (explained as the light of the world) and pupils are challenged: 'How much do you agree that results can be achieved by kindness?'
  - in a whole-school assembly, the candle was lit and pupils were given an explanation about the ritual aspects of lighting a candle. This signified a period of contemplation for the whole school. Importantly it followed explanations about the bible and its contents and the power of story-telling.
37. Provision for spiritual development is good. The school has a coherent set of aims and values that are welcomed and endorsed by the parents. Central to these values is the nurturing of confident, competent pupils who enjoy learning. The school is achieving this aim. Pupils are regularly introduced to situations that require them to reflect on the 'ups and downs' of life, particularly in discussion times. Religious education provides insights into and comparisons between different faiths, such as Christianity and Islam. Young children in the reception classes react with squeals of delight when they are introduced to a star fruit and they are amazed by the makers skills when they are shown some design and technology models. During acts of collective worship, when the candle is lit, pupils reflect on their self-knowledge and the topic, but on these occasions they are not provided with sufficiently clear guidance to develop spiritual awareness more fully. There is a spiritual element in other areas of the curriculum including mathematics and physical education, where pupils reflect on their own and others' creativity and upon the wonders of the natural world, for example the number patterns that emerge following a mathematical investigation.
38. Provision for moral development is very good. The children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Key Stage 1 have clear notions of right and wrong. Consequently, behaviour around the school and especially in the playground is very good. A significant reason for this is that the teachers are very good role-models, and they treat their pupils with great consistency, respect and fairness. Consequently, pupils are thoughtful and sensitive with each other and this is amply illustrated by the way pupils with disabilities are included, in all activities, as equals. The school behaviour policy is sensible and supportive to the basic belief that all pupils must be safe and secure in school and it enshrines the idea that pupils need to be involved in the making of simple rules. Discussions about moral issues are planned for in assemblies, discussion times and lessons such as geography, for instance, when issues relating to the environment are explored. In assemblies, when they are encouraged to think about fundamental issues, such as justice for all, they also gain an understanding of moral values.
39. Provision for social development is very good. A significant number of pupils come to school at three years of age with below average social skills. Teachers in the



Foundation Stage are adept at introducing pupils to the social setting and take all opportunities to do so. For example, at the end of an art lesson in reception the pupils tidied away the materials and during a registration parents freely and comfortably joined their children in the room. Some stayed until their child was fully settled, joined them on the carpet and even sang along. Pupils are expected to take responsibility for their own learning when they work collaboratively in groups and share their findings at the end of lessons. The children are encouraged by staff to mix with each other from entry to school and they soon acquire good social skills. Teachers create a place that is warm and friendly. Each year pupils collect money for those less fortunate than themselves. Developing self-esteem is an important part of the work of the school and this is particularly successful for pupils with special educational needs.

40. Overall, provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The school effectively teaches pupils to appreciate local cultural traditions. Areas of study, such as history, geography and religious education provide awareness of the locality, its richness, diversity, and of the past, that gives pupils knowledge and insight into the values and beliefs of their own culture. For example, they participate in fieldwork in the local park and visitors come in to talk about the locality. In Year 2, pupils are introduced to a study of a more distant locality. In religious education lessons pupils begin to explore similarities and differences in faiths by comparing Christianity and Islam. Reception children are introduced to fruits from far away locations, such as pomegranates, melon and kiwi, in a knowledge and understanding of the world lesson. They also produce Diwali cards. Opportunities for the systematic study of the diversity of other cultures are missed in subjects such as art and music. Nevertheless, in art, pupils paint in the style of European artists, Indian miniaturists and Aborigines. The music scheme of work refers to several European composers, but music from other parts of the world is under-represented. Although the school is active in promoting cultural awareness, the depth and breadth of the provision for multicultural development is unsatisfactory.

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

41. Overall, the school looks after its pupils well and this good care contributes significantly to the rate of pupils' learning.
42. The school has good procedures for both child protection and ensuring the pupils welfare and these have improved since the previous inspection. All teachers have received training in child protection procedures. The headteacher is the named child protection officer. The school has a concise and detailed written policy and an up-to-date incident book. Very good links are maintained with the relevant local authority team. All appropriate documentation is securely locked away in the head teacher's office.
43. The school's deputy headteacher is the experienced health and safety representative. Working with the appointed governor and the caretaker she has produced a very clear, ongoing risk assessment and an adequate health and safety policy. The school holds and records regular fire evacuation exercises and all escape routes from the building are clear and accessible. All fire, portable electrical and physical educational equipment is tested and date recorded. The school has very efficient and clear accident and medicine routines and parents are well informed. No evidence of

dangerous practices in classrooms or elsewhere or inappropriate storage of hazardous substances was witnessed during the inspection. The school possesses several well-trained first aiders and all pupils know where and whom to turn to, as necessary. Good use is made of outside professional help such as the educational psychologist, speech therapist and the school nurse. The latter, for example, helped draw up the policy for solvent abuse and sex education. All pupils receive very effective support at lunch-, play- and going- home-times. The school has very effective and caring links with the local play-groups and the adjoining junior school. This eases the transition for children moving into the school or on to the next stage of their education. Year 6 volunteers come across from the juniors at playtimes and get to know the younger children and look after them. The very wholesome school lunches are transported from another nearby school and are served and consumed in hygienic conditions upon the premises.

44. The procedures within the school for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good and are an improvement on the judgements made at the previous inspection. The school's explicit written Behaviour Policy is well structured, relevant and contains basic school rules and effective rewards and sanctions. Pupils are well aware of the latter and have also helped in formulating their own class rules. Bullying is not a problem within the school. Children are taught in personal, social and health education lessons to report any incident no matter how trivial. Rare happenings are noted in the school's incident book.
45. The school has satisfactory procedures for monitoring and improving attendance and these compare with the previous inspection. There is a clear, written policy. All class registers are maintained and marked in accordance with current statutory procedures and returned to the school office for checking and safe-keeping after every registration. The school has a good range of absence and holiday letters, which it sends to its parents. However, the school does have a problem with an above average number of pupils taking holidays during term-times. The school is well aware of this and does its utmost to try and alleviate this problem. Lateness is not a problem in the school and there are very good procedures for dealing with any occurrences. Good use is made of the educational welfare officer.
46. The school's assessment policy is detailed and gives appropriate guidance to staff. Progress has been made in all subjects on the use of assessment to aid planning and a lot of procedures are in place. Teachers' planning identifies assessment opportunities. Learning objectives are clearly identified on lesson plans and they are shared with pupils. Teachers evaluate progress related to these targets and, in some cases, good use is made of this information for future planning. However, the use of lesson evaluations to target future learning is inconsistent and is still an area of development which is being monitored by the headteacher. The marking policy includes opportunities to set targets for individual pupils' learning. The successful implementation of this system has had a significant impact on pupils' learning and the improvement in national test results. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, detailed assessment sheets are completed for each child every half-term and cover all learning targets to show the knowledge, skills and understanding they have acquired. Effective training has been undertaken to ensure the accuracy and consistency of teacher assessments. Regular meetings are held to agree the attainment levels of work in the core subjects, and pupil portfolios containing examples of work have been compiled to show pupils' progress. Records are kept of each pupil's attainment from nursery, enabling the tracking of progress through school. Information from teacher assessments and from tests is used by each class

teacher, with a member of the senior management team, to set yearly targets in English and mathematics for every pupil. These are reviewed through the year and pupils making insufficient progress can be identified and supported.

47. Detailed assessment procedures are not yet in place for design and technology. Too little attention is paid to the information gained from assessment in information and communication technology. Consequently, those pupils who have already acquired the skills are not being provided with appropriate work to challenge them and help them achieve more.
48. Overall, pupils with special educational needs are well cared for. Teachers know their pupils well and are aware of their needs. Classroom support is well deployed and staff ensure that they monitor pupils carefully and record progress. The annual review process is well organised and meets statutory requirements. Individual education plans are reviewed each term and the progress of individual pupils is assessed every three weeks by the class teacher. These good practices are monitored effectively by the special educational needs co-ordinator who also gives extra support and assistance to new teachers, particularly in the writing of individual education plans.

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

49. Overall, the school has good links with its parents and this compares well with the judgements of the previous inspection team. Such high standards contribute very effectively towards the pupils' learning.
50. The evidence from listening to parents at the pre-inspection meeting, analysing the parent questionnaires, and talking to them during the inspection, confirms that parents think that this is a good school. In particular, parents believe that their child likes the school, behaviour is generally good, teaching is good and the expectation are of pupils high. Most parents said that their children make good progress at school and the school helps the children to become mature and responsible citizens. A high percentage of parents also say that they can comfortably approach the school with any problems or suggestions. However, a significant minority of parents could not agree that:
  - the school sets the right amount of homework;
  - that parents are well informed about their children's progress;
  - the school works closely with parents;
  - there is a sufficient range of activities outside of lessons.None of these points could be substantiated by inspection findings.
51. The quality of information that the school provides for parents is good. All parents receive a copy of the annual governors' report and a prospectus. The annual report conforms to current statutory requirements. Newsletters are sent out regularly to parents. The school has an open door policy to listen to parent suggestions and complaints, and regular meetings are held to discuss pupils' progress and look at work. Curriculum workshops for parents on literacy and numeracy have been well attended. The school is shortly holding one on personal, social and health education. Parents have a helpful information board in the school.
52. Parents make a significant contribution to their children's learning, both at school and at home. The impact of their involvement on the work of the school is a strength of the school. The school harnesses the many skills of its parents admirably. Large numbers of parents arrange and help with lessons in drama, musical instrument,

singing, art and historical and cultural visits. At home, parents appreciate, and utilise well, the home-school diaries and help their children considerably with reading and various projects and topics, such as the history of Sefton Infant School. All parents receive an annual questionnaire on their evaluation of work at home and also contribute significantly to the school development plan. There is a very active and energetic parents association which arranges many social and fund raising events throughout the year, such as a ceilidh, discos and fayres. During the inspection many parents made cakes for the regular tea afternoon, which was extremely well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by parents, grandparents, friends and the children.

53. Overall, the school enjoys good links with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents are involved in identifying need and reviewing the provision for their children. One parent who attended the meeting with inspectors believes the school is making very good provision for their child who has a statement of special educational needs. Inspectors agree with this view. However, another parent is very concerned that their child has not been assessed as needing a statement. Governors and management have listened carefully to the parents' concerns and have taken appropriate action.

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

54. Overall, the leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good. This indicates good improvement from the last inspection when the present headteacher had been in post for a very short period. She has continued the good work identified to be in its early stages in the last report and has led significant improvements in teaching and standards. The very good quality of her leadership and management is based on:
- a strong personal philosophy which is allied to a very good and clear understanding of the needs of pupils and the school overall. This has brought about successful teaching and learning and given the school greater purpose;
  - the good management techniques that confront problems and drive towards helpful and useful solutions;
  - good day-to-day communication with pupils, staff, parents, governors and other interested parties. This is particularly noticeable in the morning as school is starting and many parents gather in the school hall. The headteacher is highly visible and accessible and parents at their meeting with inspectors commented on the value they attach to this way of working.
55. She is supported well by a senior management team that is extremely hard working and includes teachers of high quality. They are good role models for colleagues, particularly those who are new to the profession. Their contribution is particularly strong in:
- the way they set an atmosphere for learning that is interesting, broadly based and relaxed;
  - their willingness to experiment with new ideas, and the vigilant way they retain evidence for review. This is very apparent in the ongoing work on assessment, that now requires pruning and prioritising to achieve the maximum effect.
- The delegation of management responsibilities is sound, but has been constrained by the relative inexperience of some staff. This has led to senior managers taking on wider roles than is ideal. Nevertheless, there is a shared commitment to continue improving and the judgement is that development will continue.
56. The governing body is highly supportive in the rigorous way that it goes about its business. Their impact is seen in significant ways:

- well attended meetings;
- the active committee structure. This encourages individual governors to take a day-to-day interest in the affairs of the school, as seen in the help provided for information and communications technology;
- being a 'critical friend'; through challenging management on its plans for improvement. For example, by communicating with parents and producing their own analyses of test results;
- developing a strong consensus on the aims of the school, which form a clear basis for the shaping of policy and action.

There are areas of statutory responsibility that are not being met: minor omissions from the school prospectus, and the annual school reports do not report separately on all subjects. These have been reported to the school.

57. Overall, the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching have successfully brought about good improvements in practice. The headteacher has kept a very detailed monitoring file since 1997. This file is an excellent, ongoing record of management activity since the last inspection: the focus is clearly on improvement. The importance of this approach cannot be underestimated, given the serious weakness judgements in the last report in areas such as teaching. In addition to the monitoring of teaching, there is conscientious reviewing of staff planning files. The head teacher provides positive feedback, but does not shirk raising issues with individual staff: 'You need to personalise your literacy planning', 'Do you keep your special educational needs plans somewhere separately? The role of subject co-ordinator as monitors of teaching is unsatisfactory, mainly because several staff are young and relatively inexperienced.
58. The match of teaching and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory. Arrangements for performance management are good and will develop quite naturally from existing practice. New staff are inducted well; the headteacher is the mentor meetings are programmed to review progress and set targets, and adequate time away from the classroom is established. Newly qualified teachers feel well supported, particularly in terms of the curriculum of the school.
59. Educational developments are supported well by careful financial planning. The school development plan is appropriately linked to the school aims, costing and the overall pursuit of school improvement. Funding, such as that to support pupils with special educational needs and teachers' in-service training, is spent appropriately and has resulted in raising levels of attainment. Previous strategic planning is reviewed and evaluated and forms the basis of the current plan. The priorities are regularly monitored by the senior management team and discussed fully with the governing body.
60. The headteacher has instituted very effective principles to support the management and use of resources. For example, the management visit other schools to compare standards of teaching and the methods used; it responds to challenges provided by the parents in annual questionnaires; it consults parents through the use of workshops on literacy and numeracy, and they use competitive principles when bringing in good quality in-service training providers.
61. The new special educational needs co-ordinator has provided good leadership in the short time she has been in post. She has completed a new policy, involves parents and pupils in the review of progress and has developed a new and effective monitoring system. She manages the learning support assistants well and has organised training to develop their role. She is well supported by the special needs governor who has played a key role in the strategic direction of special needs within

the school. Prior to her appointment, there had been some instability in the management of special needs within the school, due to the ill-health of the previous co-ordinator.

62. The accommodation adequately supports the curriculum. There are good shared areas and an adequate hall. The lack of a quiet setting for the library is a shortcoming. Externally, the school has good playgrounds that have interesting activities on them. Overall, learning resources are adequate.
63. Given that the expenditure on pupils is high, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. To improve provision and standards further, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

(1) Improve standards in writing by:

- Developing activities in English and all subjects which provide pupils with significant reasons to write;
- Using the information from the judgements of pupils' attainment to plan appropriate written tasks for individuals;
- Re-assessing the balance of time spent on oral and writing activities, so that more time is given to writing. (paragraphs 1, 2, 6, 24, 66, 80, 84)

(2) Increase pupils' progress in information and communication technology and design and technology by:

- Assessing accurately pupils' work to set more challenging tasks;
- Using assessment to provide appropriate work for pupils of differing attainment. (paragraphs 10, 47, 109, 120)

(3) Develop the role of subject co-ordinator more effectively by:

- Increasing the opportunities for them to monitor teaching and pupils' work;
- Providing in-service training that will develop the relevant skills fully.

65. In addition to the key issues above, the following less important areas for improvement areas for improvement should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

Separate the management of pupils learning English as an additional language from the management of special educational needs.

Provision for multicultural development is unsatisfactory. (paragraph 30)

Ensure that the prospectus and annual pupils' progress reports meet statutory requirements. (paragraph 51)

In the current school development plan, the school has appropriately identified the development of English, mathematics, science and information technology as priorities.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	26	42	28	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	182
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		43

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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



### **Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1**

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	40	22	62

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	34	38
	Girls	19	20	20
	Total	53	54	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85	87	94
	National	82	83	87

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	38	39
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	54	58	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87	94	95
	National	82	86	87

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	14
Indian	2
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	103
Any other minority ethnic group	2

*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)	8.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.2
Average class size	30.3

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	151

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26:1

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	27

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	405332
Total expenditure	405322
Expenditure per pupil	2100
Balance brought forward from previous year	6613
Balance carried forward to next year	6397

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	262
Number of questionnaires returned	117

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	26	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	32	3	0	7
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	41	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	28	9	2	13
The teaching is good.	63	30	2	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	40	16	1	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	30	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	39	1	0	8
The school works closely with parents.	43	43	8	1	5
The school is well led and managed.	44	36	4	3	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	37	2	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	27	25	5	23

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

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

66. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Children enter the 52-place nursery when they are three years old and transfer to reception classes at the school or elsewhere at start of the term in which they are five. The entry assessments for 2000 indicate that attainment on entry to the reception year is average overall, but a significant proportion of children have below average writing and social skills. However, the school focuses very well on these aspects and plans well to the recommended early learning goals so that children make good progress generally. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, the majority are likely to exceed the expected standards in language, communication, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

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

67. Many children enter the nursery at the age of three with below average personal and social skills. They have difficulty in selecting activities independently, demonstrate limited powers of concentration and play in isolation rather than relating to each other. However, good progress is made as children become used to the class routines and the daily life of the school. They begin rapidly to establish relationships with adults and with each other. This was evident when a group of children became totally involved with their teacher when helping to clear away spilt sand, using a dustpan, brush and funnel.
68. When they enter the Foundation Stage, children aged four years are able to tidy up after themselves and are learning to select activities and toys when playing. Most children are able to undress and dress themselves independently for outdoor play, although a few still need assistance; not enough attention is given by teachers to formally recording the requirements of children who have special educational needs. Generally, the children are becoming aware of others around them, and they are learning to take turns effectively when playing in the home corner and outside.
69. By the time they leave the Foundation Stage and move to Year 1, most children are likely to achieve the expected early learning goals. This is due to the very good quality of teaching overall, which is sometimes excellent in one reception class. A very caring and kindly ethos is fostered by all adults and children are managed very well. Specific activities are planned for the development of children's personal and social skills and staff provide plenty of opportunities for children to increase their confidence. For example, the excellent rapport between adults and children during registration and 'circle' times helps children to settle quickly and feel highly valued. The secure, safe environment within the Foundation Stage classes provides a warm welcome to parents and their children.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

70. Children make good progress and are likely to exceed the early learning goals in speaking, listening and reading skills by the time they reach the end of the foundation stage. In both the nursery and reception classes, the children enjoy listening to stories and do so intently. They readily share books with each other and most children know that print conveys meaning and that texts are read from left to right.

71. The quality of teaching is good overall. Elements of the Literacy Framework are used well by practitioners in all classes and a good understanding of phonics is developed through well-known stories and rhymes. For example, the children are good at exploring the sounds of letters to help them build up new words in games such as 'Marachagogo'. Excellent opportunities are provided for promoting children's awareness of languages other than their own. For example, the teacher and the children in one class sing registration in Italian. This has a very positive effect on promoting multicultural development and provides good opportunities for children who learn English as an additional language to share their knowledge of their mother tongue. However, while the majority of children achieve well in speaking skills, their achievement in writing is less good. Although a few children write simple words legibly, many do not form their letters well and do not recognise a purpose for writing. This is because teachers miss opportunities in their planning to identify clearly what skills the children will learn in any given writing activity. Nevertheless, very good relationships have been established between adults and children and this has resulted in a happy, relaxed atmosphere that is conducive to effective learning.

### **Mathematical development**

72. Children make good progress and will exceed the expected early learning goals by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage. Most children in the nursery show an interest in counting as they join in number rhymes and counting games. By the time they reach the reception classes, they can count reliably up to twenty, and back, and know the correct sequence of numbers. As children cut out squares, triangles and circles and construct models from junk materials they are beginning to identify the common two- and three- dimensional shapes. Children make comparisons between sizes when they investigate 'treasure chests' of items and give reasons for their choices when solving practical problems.
73. The teaching is mainly good, and sometimes very good. The children are organised well and lessons are carefully planned so that activities are well suited to individual children's needs. Plenty of good quality resources are used well to successfully motivate children, for example when puppets are used to help with counting. Children are encouraged to understand the importance of mathematics in every day life as for example, they help to count how many children are having hot dinners and how many are having packed lunches.

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

74. Children are beginning to gain a good understanding and knowledge of the world about them through a wide range of activities and the good provision of stimulating resources. They will reach the expected early learning goals by the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage. They are given good opportunities for exploratory play as they investigate wet and dry sand and water. From their early experiences in the nursery to their investigations in the reception classes, children build well on their skills and are likely to exceed the expected learning goals by the time they enter Key Stage 1. For example, they find out about the taste and smell of exotic fruits such as pomegranates, melons, passion fruit and star fruit during nursery snack-times; whilst in the reception classes, they are able to extend their understanding to conduct simple scientific investigations on using the five senses. Practitioners make very good use of questions to help the children to think about what they see, touch and taste. Prompts such as, 'What does the mango feel like?' and 'Can you describe what the kiwi fruit tastes like?' encourage children to think carefully about their

experiences. They know, for example, that they must not eat their playdough 'sweeties', even though they have similar smells and colouring to some of the fruits.

75. As a result of the very good teaching, learning is fun for the children and lessons are often filled with squeals of delight and great enjoyment for adults as well as children. Resources are very well prepared in advance of the activities and staff work very well together to ensure that learning is briskly paced and well structured. All adults treat the children very kindly and respectfully. This has a very positive effect on the way children react because they imitate the strong role models provided by the staff and learn quickly the standards expected of them.

### **Physical development**

76. Children make good progress and will exceed the standards expected by the end of the Foundation Stage. The secure outdoor play area affords nursery-aged children good opportunities to develop their skills when using wheeled toys, balancing bars and large construction kits. A significant number of children demonstrate poor fine motor skills when they first enter the nursery, but the good quality teaching guides them well and helps them to master skills in a practical way. For example, they demonstrate how to hold paintbrushes and pencils correctly and help them to balance on tricycles when outside.
77. By the time they enter the reception classes, most children are able to curl or stretch different parts of their bodies in response to instructions and their skills of balance and co-ordination show good control. They are taught well by an excellent team of adults who work together very well to provide indoor and outdoor activities designed to increase children's creative use of space and imaginative play. The resources for outdoor play are sufficient overall, but there is a lack of large equipment, such as road signs, to encourage children to use their literacy and numeracy skills in practical ways.

### **Creative development**

78. Children show increasing competence with a range of media and materials, so that by the time they come to the end of the foundation stage, attainment exceeds the expected early learning goals. From finger and hand-printing, making Diwali cards and painting shape pictures in the nursery, most children in the reception classes can recognise and name primary and secondary colours. They mix paints together confidently before producing highly colourful pictures of the human figure and jungle prints. Children build well on their skills and practice cutting and sticking as they design and make model planes, cars and toys from junk materials. They enjoy musical activities and perform with simple untuned percussion instruments to make soft and loud sounds. Children sing sweetly and tunefully with their teachers to produce a pattern of different sounds in songs such as 'Little Green Frog'. Adults model this sort of creative ability very well and lessons are often filled with singing, particularly in one reception class. This helps the children to enjoy their learning and encourages them to respond enthusiastically to their teachers. For example, at tidy-up time, the teacher sings the instructions and the children sing the response eagerly before joining in.
79. Children of all abilities are well managed and receive good support from adults in their activities. The good quality teaching enables them to learn quickly. Activities are well planned to include plenty of good opportunities for role-play in the home corner and imaginative play. The centrally located shared area between the two reception

classes is managed very well by the staff who provide good resources for practical activities. Both the nursery and the reception classes are filled with very colourful, stimulating displays of photographs and children's work, including the current jungle displays. This presents a very welcoming environment for the children and their parents, and one in which it is clear that all children are highly valued as individuals.

## ENGLISH

80. Overall, standards in English have improved well since the last inspection, and are above average for the typical seven-year-old. Results in the 2000 national tests show that standards in reading were well above those found in all schools nationally and in schools catering for pupils from similar backgrounds. Results in writing were close to those found nationally and compared with similar schools. A significant concern in the last report was the standard achieved by higher-attainers and the evidence of the result in 2000 is that the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was very high compared with all schools nationally (in the top five per cent). Results in writing were close to the national average. Test results in reading have risen well over the last five years at a rate exceeding the national trend. Results in writing are less consistent and remain similar to those in 1996. Boys achieve very marginally higher standards in reading and writing. Inspection findings generally reflect the test results in reading and writing.
81. When children enter the school they have average skills in speaking, listening and reading. However, writing skills are weak, with many not able to form letters appropriately and also they are unsure of the reasons for writing. These limitations are only partially addressed by the teaching, because planning misses opportunities to clearly set out the skills that the children will learn in the activity. Overall, pupils achieve very well in reading and satisfactorily in writing.
82. By the age of seven, pupils' speaking and listening skills are above expectations and these standards reflect the 2000 teacher's assessments. Teachers provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to reflect on their views and provide examples of their feelings. This was seen in Year 1, when pupils confidently expressed their views:
- 'I feel sad when I leave my Mum';
  - 'I feel happy when it is snowing'.
- In Year 2, pupils have built successfully on earlier experiences and use a wide range of vocabulary. Whilst talking about playtimes, pupils respond positively and accurately to the teacher's question: -
- 'If we take the balls away.' by providing possible solutions such as: -
  - 'Let's use soft balls'.
- In another lesson in Year 2, pupils show that they have the skills, knowledge and understanding to provide the class with ideas about:
- being a positive class member;
  - how pupils can collaborate in class.
83. Given the average reading standards of pupils on entry to the school, they achieve well to attain the well above average standards by the time they are seven. All pupils know letter sounds well and this provides them with the necessary tools to tackle unfamiliar words successfully. One lower-attainer illustrated this amply by sounding out the word 'programme'. Good attitudes to reading are common, and it is particularly noticeable that the parents of higher-attainers provide good role-models. Pupils read with increasing fluency, accuracy and understanding. The vast majority of seven-year-olds can talk about the plot and characters in a range of books and many can name their favourite authors and give reasons for the choice. Most pupils in Year

2 have satisfactory skills, knowledge and understanding of the workings of a library and know what the contents and index pages of a book are for.

84. Standards in the writing seen during the inspection are above those achieved last year in the national tests. However, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 is noticeably less than in reading, speaking and listening. This signifies satisfactory achievement for the majority of pupils. By the age of seven, the higher-attainers are writing well. They have legible, neat and joined handwriting and their use of grammar is good. They invariably write interesting stories, using language that is illustrative and helpful to the reader. Pupils are using different forms of writing appropriately, for example:
- in science, describing the explorations of how a circuit works;
  - in religious education, profiles of Jesus and Sikhism;
  - in geography, providing reasons for a good place to live.
- Average attainers can also write interestingly, with their audience in mind:
- 'When it was morning I went down to have breakfast and the fish were dead'.
- However, their writing does not always have fully rounded endings:
- 'And they never went fishing again'. The majority of pupils spell accurately and although the lower-attainers have weaknesses, they are improving.
85. Teaching is satisfactory, overall. One in four lessons were good and the rest were satisfactory. In other lessons, where speaking and listening skills were of paramount importance, for instance in personal, social and health education, one in three were very good and the rest satisfactory. Teachers have stronger skills, knowledge and understanding in the teaching of reading and in the way they get pupils to speak. Consequently, pupils achieve more in these aspects. This is not to say that teachers have weak skills in the teaching of writing but there is a greater emphasis on verbal English and that means opportunities for writing are insufficient for higher-attaining pupils to reach higher levels in their writing. This is reflected in the national test results. However, where teaching is good in Year 2 the strengths enable pupils to achieve well:
- good questioning promotes pupils confidence in sharing ideas and responses;
  - the teacher recorded ideas on the board which helped pupils use language that was interesting and developed ideas in a chronological way;
  - individual learning targets enable pupils to achieve higher standards, for instance, lower-attainers using full stops more accurately.
86. Across the school, planning is coherent and extensive. Pupils are generally clear about the standards expected of them, although in a few lessons lower-attainers and those with special education needs are not sufficiently challenged. This was apparent in a Year 2 lesson when the learning support assistant and parent helper tended to do the work for the pupils.
87. Management is satisfactory. The literacy co-ordinator has a good grasp on standards and is aware of the areas of weakness:
- lower expectations in writing;
  - shortcomings in teaching skills, most particularly the match of appropriate tasks to meet expectations.
- She has come to these conclusions through classroom observations, monitoring teachers planning and using assessment procedures. Overall, these assessment procedures are having an impact on standards in all aspects of the subject. There is a need to review the large number of procedures in order to identify the most useful for future use. The school has a clear policy and a scheme of work that promotes consistency in teachers' planning and a generally wide range of opportunities for



pupils to achieve more. This is a significant improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Overall, resources are adequate, but the library is in need of upgrading in terms of the range of stock and as an inviting area. Statutory requirements are met.

## **MATHEMATICS**

88. Pupils' attainment has improved since the last inspection. The school has worked hard to ensure that all pupils make at least satisfactory progress in mathematics from entry into school at the foundation stage. Results of national tests in mathematics in 2000 show attainment to be well above the national average with more than half of all pupils achieving the higher level three. In comparison with similar schools, attainment is above the national average. Trends over the last three years indicate steadily improving standards. Evidence gained throughout the inspection reflects this picture and shows attainment overall to be above the average expected nationally.
89. Overall, pupils achieve well over time and in the lessons seen. Pupils are able to explain their mathematical understanding, select appropriate strategies to solve simple problems and demonstrate their mental processes by explaining a technique to members of their class and the teacher. Pupils can order and count to numbers up to 100 and beyond. By the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils record numbers accurately and are beginning to record their work using methods that are more formal. They know and use a good range of mathematical vocabulary and this helps them to understand tasks and carry out investigations to add to their knowledge of number, mathematical patterns and shapes. Pupils are aware of place value for two-digit numbers and can count backwards and forwards from a given number. Higher attaining pupils have sound understanding of place value for three-digit numbers. Pupils recognise lines of symmetry and can place them accurately on 2-dimensional shapes.
90. Lower-attaining pupils make satisfactory progress in understanding new concepts and are supported well by adult helpers in their classes. Higher-attaining pupils quickly apply new learning and move on to more challenging tasks. Pupils' mental agility advances with daily mental arithmetic. By the age of seven, pupils know that numbers get bigger counting forwards and smaller counting backwards. They use their knowledge and understanding of number in everyday contexts, such as time and monetary transactions. They demonstrate their knowledge by adding five coins of different values to make 38p and then carrying out an investigation to discover what combinations of coins are possible between zero and forty using these five coins. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to prior attainment.
91. Pupils behave well and show an interest in mathematics. They sustain concentration and listen carefully to their teachers. They join in class discussions with enthusiasm and are eager to answer questions and to suggest their own ideas. They respond very well to the challenges set by their teachers and ask relevant questions that help them to advance in their learning. The younger pupils in the key stage work with a noisy enthusiasm, but most of them are applying themselves to the task. When required, pupils of all ages work well independently, in pairs and in groups. If required, they readily accept the responsibility to distribute and collect resources.
92. The quality of teaching is good overall, with a significant proportion of very good teaching being seen. The teachers plan their lessons well for a range of pupils with differing prior attainments and manage the activities and resources well. They explain the lesson objectives to the pupils and link learning effectively to previous lessons.

Teachers know their pupils and have suitably high expectations of them. By using an empty one hundred square, teachers encourage pupils to visualise number patterns work and out operations involving addition and subtraction. The pupils' work is assessed effectively to ensure that standards are improving and to set targets for pupils to achieve through future learning. Samples of work kept in pupils' individual assessment books provide evidence of improvement in the subject and indicate when targets have been met. The cohort of pupils taking the 2000 national tests achieved the targets set for them. Work is appropriately marked with encouraging and constructive comments to help pupils make further improvements in their work. Learning support assistants are briefed well beforehand and work effectively to promote the achievement of lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has impacted very positively on the quality of teaching. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching throughout the school has significantly improved. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during this inspection.

93. Teachers do not set formal homework for pupils, but inform parents of the learning outcomes for each topic to enable them to work with their child at home. Generally, pupils are well supported at home and voluntarily bring into school the evidence of research completed at home.
94. The school provides good coverage of all aspects of mathematics. The co-ordinator ensures that the subject is very well managed and has identified areas of focus for the future that include the development of whole-school assessment procedures for tracking pupils' achievement and wider use of information and communication technology to support a range of learning objectives. Resources are well managed to ensure that sharing between the classes is effective. The National Numeracy Strategy is effectively extended to include a weekly mathematics investigation in each class to extend and consolidate pupils' learning. Additional time is allocated for mathematics teaching to enable teachers to provide fully for investigations related to each unit of study. Medium-term planning and weekly planning reflect the vision that the co-ordinator has for the development of the subject. The school analyses test and assessment data to identify areas for further development. Overall, management of the subject is very good.

## **SCIENCE**

95. In 2000, standards in teacher assessments at Key Stage 1 were well above the national average. Since the last inspection, there has been an improvement in standards.
96. This report is based on teaching in Year 1, teachers' records and planning and extensive examination of pupils' work, particularly in the present Year 2 from the previous Year 2. Teacher assessments in science have been well above the national average for the past two years. Throughout Key Stage 1, most pupils attain standards in their lessons and work that are at least in line with the national average. The higher attaining pupils achieve standards that are above the national average. Pupils attain the full range but there are more pupils attaining the higher grades. All pupils have some understanding of how to carry out a scientific enquiry. In previous work, most Year 2 pupils make predictions and devise a simple test to compare the movement of a range of objects on a ramp. Higher-attaining pupils devise a fair test by putting the objects on the same place on the ramp and using the same force to let go. Year 2

pupils also identify the similarities and differences in a range of materials. They describe ways in which heating and cooling changes materials and the higher-attaining pupils knew that some changes such as water freezing, could be reversed.

97. Pupils' attainment in scientific enquiry is as strong as other aspects of science, and in 2000 was stronger than their knowledge of materials. In all lessons, pupils' achievement is at least equal to that expected. They make at least satisfactory progress. Evidence from pupils' work indicates pupils' achievement is good by the end of Year 2. When they entered the school, pupils' achievement was above the national average and they sustain this throughout their time at the school. Girls and boys perform equally well. Lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress and pupils with English as an additional language make good progress.
98. Pupils' attitudes to work are nearly always good and never less than satisfactory. Pupils are well motivated, settle quickly and work hard. Pupils enjoy science and their learning is at least satisfactory. In one lesson the pupils listened very carefully and then quietly organised their own work. In another lesson, initially the pupils listened to the teacher, then became so enthusiastic about how they could alter sound that the teacher found it difficult to provide pointers to connections and deeper understanding particularly for the higher-attaining pupils. Pupils have good relationships with the teacher and work effectively on their own. Lessons include a good variety of activities which stimulate pupils' interest. The celebration of pupils' work in the good science display promotes learning in science effectively.
99. Teaching in science is good. Teachers have sufficient knowledge of science and can teach a wide range of abilities confidently. Teachers provide interesting activities and use a good range of methods. For example in a Year 1 lesson, after a clear demonstration from the teacher, the pupils investigated how they could alter sounds in an instrument they had made previously. As a result the pupils improved their skills of testing questions that they had raised and consolidated their understanding of how to make a sound louder or quieter. Teachers introduce the lesson clearly, work at a good pace and draw together the main points at the end of the lesson. Teachers manage the pupils well. Pupils have a good understanding of what they know through regular oral feedback and marking. Teachers are aware of pupils' special needs; they work with the learning support assistants to support these pupils.
100. The science curriculum is broadly based and balanced and is being revised to meet the new statutory requirements. Teachers use information and communication technology in data handling and there are plans to increase use in line with Curriculum 2000. There is satisfactory planning of continuity within topics. There are regular assessment procedures in place with pupils assessed at the end of each topic. Teachers mark pupils' work on a regular basis. They know their pupils and provide support and help pupils to improve their work. They match work accordingly and many plan for the wide range of pupils in each class. However, there are some inconsistencies. Some teachers use assessment to plan different work in science for different pupils. At present, there is no consistent planning at different levels based on the pupils' prior attainment in science. There are regular opportunities for teaching scientific enquiry, which is an improvement since the last inspection.
101. Leadership and management are good. Since the last inspection, standards and teaching have been improved; a scheme of work for science has been developed. A newly qualified teacher has recently taken on the role of science co-ordinator. In this time, she has made a good start in organising resource. She has started to revise the

planning for science and has produced a new recording sheet. The co-ordinator plans to monitor pupils' work and teachers' planning. At present, the headteacher carries out other leadership functions such as the tracking of pupil progress and the monitoring of teaching.

## ART

102. The attainment of seven-year-olds is in line with that expected for their age. This is a similar judgement to the one given at the last inspection. Parents views, expressed at their meeting with inspectors were highly supportive of the fact that the school has maintained provision when other subjects are being emphasised more. However, the school has identified the subject for development and the co-ordinator is very keen to ensure that this comes about.
103. By the age of seven, pupils' illustrations, observational drawings and paintings are interesting, accurate and use colour vividly, as seen in activities such as:
- painting in the style of block Mondrian, Kandinsky and Picasso;
  - colour mixing which is challenging; using diagonal lines of symmetry; painting in different cultural styles, for instance aboriginal art and Indian miniaturists.
- The majority of pupils manipulate different media well, explain the choices they make of materials and discuss well their own and classmates work. These characteristics were prominent in the Year 2 lesson where pupils were making choices about materials to use for rubbings: 'I liked using the pastel last week so I chose to use it for the rubbing this time.' There is still room for improvement in the pupils reflective skills and their ability to use their ideas to move their performance on still further.
104. Insufficient teaching was seen to make secure a judgement about the overall quality. In the one lesson seen in Year 2, the quality was good. The strengths were:
- effective, coherent planning which naturally progressed from the original lesson: exploration of materials to investigation. This led to pupils being able to make informed choices and talk about them well;
  - staff support pupils well through questioning, advising and suggesting. This is done sensitively so that creativity is not stifled;
  - a very good selection of resources, including an interesting range of artefacts to rub. Pupils learn from the wide variety and begin to form strong opinions of their likes and preferences.
- There are sound links with information and communication technology, for instance when using present paint programs to produce pictures in the style of Mondrian.
105. Discussions with pupils show that they value the opportunities provided and they respond well. They are very disciplined in the way that they assist in the clearing up at the end of lessons. Pupils are generally confident in their own ability and keen to do well.
106. Management is satisfactory, but the opportunities to monitor teaching and learning have been unsatisfactory. However, forward planning has led to several important initiatives:
- an arts week, including collage, printmaking and tapestry work;
  - use of visiting specialists, such as a photographer and a sculptor;
  - links with the information and communication technology co-ordinator to develop a trolley of resources which links the subjects;
  - bids to the education action zone for the money to fund visiting artists, visits and staff development.

Assessment is satisfactory. Classrooms are well organised and shared areas are used well.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

107. There was insufficient evidence provided by the school to judge pupils' standards at the end of Key Stage 1. Teaching was observed in Year 1, but not in Year 2. There were no teacher records and little evidence of pupils' work to judge attainment.
108. Since the last inspection, there has been some improvement, although there is a long way to go. During the last year, the co-ordinator for design and technology had to take on responsibility for Early Years due to the ill health of a key member of staff. This meant that he was unable to complete the planned scheme of work. The school's recent adoption of the Qualification and Curriculum Authority scheme of work means the school is well placed to improve the provision for design and technology. There is evidence that the school has appropriate plans to assess pupils' work at the end of the unit of work in design and technology.
109. Standards of attainment in Year 1 are in line with expectations. Pupils can design, cut and join materials to make a musical instrument. The higher-attainers write their intentions, whilst other pupils draw their intentions. One pupil evaluated and redesigned her shaker to improve its sound. There are a few examples of work completed during last year. In one good example, the pupils had devised a device to prevent Goldilocks coming back. A higher-attaining pupil's design was based on a bell ringing when Goldilocks entered and completed the circuit. However, last year, the school had insufficient emphasis on a planned programme of teaching and assessment in design and technology. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make similar progress to the rest of the class.
110. The standards achieved in Year 1 result from satisfactory and good teaching. The planned activity encouraged pupils to design. As a class, pupils shared ideas and then made their design of a musical instrument using both words and pictures. The pupils improved their skills of joining materials. One pupil evaluated her rain shaker and decided to improve it because 'it did not sound right'. The teacher then provided additional opportunities for the class to evaluate and change the design in science. In this lesson, pupils changed the sound of their musical instrument. Pupils enjoy designing and making and most work sensibly. Pupils work safely. Accommodation for design and technology is good and resources are satisfactory.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

111. At the time of the last inspection, standards in geography were below national expectations. Since then there have been improvements to bring standards into line with expectations by:
- improving planning, including a scheme of work which was absent at the last inspection;
  - developing a broader curriculum which includes field trips, visits from local people to speak about the locality and a greater emphasis on developing inquiry skills.
112. By the age of seven, pupils have gradually extended their knowledge from familiar places close to home to studying comparative locations further afield. They develop good skills in reading and drawing maps. Pupils compare and contrast attractive and unattractive features in the local environment. In discussion, they express thoughtful opinions about how undesirable features can be improved and provide interesting

views on improvements they would like to see included in local amenities. There are good links here with art, because they produce well-illustrated plans that include swimming pools and roller-coasters! Most pupils draw simple plans using symbols and keys. They use directional language accurately when describing their visit to the park, or when finding their way through a maze. Higher-attainers draw maps that include distinctive playground furniture and describe accurately physical features such as slope and hill.

113. Although it was not possible to see any teaching, teachers' planning, the scheme of work and scrutiny of pupils' books provide ample evidence of at least satisfactory teaching. The strengths are:
- work is matched well to pupils' prior attainment in order to move them on;
  - relevant blocks of work are taught which reflect the requirements of the National Curriculum, for instance using the school environment in the foundation stage, the local area in Year 1 and the contrasting area of Portishead in Year 2;
  - teachers make good use a fieldwork to provide pupils with first-hand experiences.
114. Management is satisfactory. There is an effective scheme of work which provides good guidance and it is reviewed by staff at the end of each block of work and amendments made, if necessary. Assessment is satisfactory and the use of pupils' portfolios of work is helpful in the matching of work to the individual child. The co-ordinator monitors planning, but the monitoring of teaching is unsatisfactory. Resources are adequate.

## HISTORY

115. The small number of lessons observed during the inspection and the analysis of pupils' work indicate that pupils are achieving good standards in history. Overall, pupils' attainment in relation to national expectations is above expectations, indicating good progress since the last inspection.
116. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound understanding of times past and understand how their lives change with time. They are helped to understand the passing of time through the construction of time lines using old and newer toys. All pupils contribute effectively to whole-class discussions and are able to compose sensible questions to interrogate a wide range of sources, which include books, pictures, photographs and to ask visiting speakers. During lessons, pupils are encouraged to think of past events in terms of their everyday life and so realise that artists, photographers and newspapermen would attend the launch of the *SS Great Britain*, as would the press cover an important event today. Pupils develop keen observational skills from inspection of artefacts and soon come to appreciate the differences between photographic and artists' sources of evidence. Pupils have good reading skills and so are able to scan texts to find the key facts, for example of the life of Isambard Kingdom Brunel.
117. During their study of history, pupils develop good speaking and listening skills, but overall, insufficient attention is given to fostering writing for historical purposes. There is little evidence of written work over the last academic year, although orally pupils have good historical knowledge, sound and good recall of facts and a very good ability to think clearly about past times. Visits to places of interest enhance the curriculum and enable pupils to develop good research skills.

118. In the lessons observed, the teaching of history was good overall. Teaching, which was deemed unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection is now good overall. Teachers have suitably high expectations of their pupils and plan challenging activities to enable them to make good progress. Pupils use their developing research skills at home to extend their knowledge, although no formal homework is set. Good support from classroom assistants and teachers enables those with lower attainment and special educational needs to complete tasks set and to make satisfactory gains in knowledge and understanding. In all lessons, pupils are well behaved and therefore most concentrate well and apply themselves to class discussion with interest and enthusiasm.
119. Teachers assess their pupils' work at the beginning and end of units of work in order to prepare plans and to measure success against learning outcomes.
120. The subject leader provides clear educational direction for the development of history. Since the last inspection, standards have been raised and pupils now make good progress in relation to prior attainment. Currently, written work is not regularly undertaken, and there is no consistent record of the development of work through a topic or of the experiences and preparation for visits to places of historical interest. The need to address the presentation of pupils' work is identified in the school development plan. The school has a new scheme of work that meets the requirements of curriculum 2000. Teaching of history successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and enables pupils to experience their own culture in past times. Resources are satisfactory and augmented by teachers and pupils to meet the needs of the different areas of study. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

121. Since the last inspection, standards in information and communication technology have improved. Overall standards meet expectations. Pupils' attainment in discrete information and communication technology lessons is in line with national expectations. Year 2 pupils use a mouse and keyboard to type their name. They type sentences correctly and correct mistakes. Previous work indicated that pupils could create a picture using computer graphics and select and use a variety of tools such as brush, spray and flood fill. Their picture was based on the work of Mondrian and Kandinski. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology across the curriculum is inconsistent. Pupils attain good standards in art; they have experience of data handling in science and can programme a Roamer. Throughout Key Stages 1, there are firm plans in place for pupils to use information and communication technology across the curriculum.
122. Overall, achievement is satisfactory, but there is some evidence that pupils in Year 2 are being taught similar work to the same standard to that completed in Year 1. For example, pupils in Year 2 were taught simple word processing skills that many had achieved in Year 1. This provided consolidation for the average and below average pupils, but there were inconsistent opportunities for the more able pupils. Achievement for pupils with low and average computer skills is good, but for pupils who use computers at home achievement is unsatisfactory.
123. When using computers, pupils are motivated and work hard. Pupils persevere very well and enjoy using and improving their skills. When sharing computers the pupil who is watching can become restless.

124. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. Teaching is constrained by inadequate resources. The school uses the junior school facilities, which allows every pupil to have a computer lesson every two weeks. However, the pupils cannot save work on the network, they have to save it on a disk. In one Year 1 lesson, the teacher demonstrated to the class the use of 'My Amazing Dictionary'. Although she managed this difficult situation well and the pupils paid attention, they were unable to practise using this programme, which affected standards. In Year 2 lessons, both the teacher and the assistant corrected mistakes and carefully judged when to intervene to help the pupils to solve the problems to avoid frustration. Learning for pupils with low computer skills was good. Learning for other pupils with good word processing skills was unsatisfactory. In this lesson, there were not enough computers for the whole class. The teacher managed this situation, but too few computers affected pupils' learning. In one class where the pupils were watching they became restless. Teaching of discrete information and communication technology is established in the school and the teachers of these lessons have sufficient knowledge to teach the basic skills. They provided straightforward and effective demonstrations.
125. Teaching is helped by a new scheme of work, which will allow pupils to make steady progress as they move through the school. Curriculum provision is satisfactory overall. Pupils are now being taught a comprehensive curriculum which includes all aspects of the subject. The scheme of work will help teachers to plan work and help continuity in learning from year to year. The weekly specialist lesson provides a firm foundation for the development of pupils' capability.
126. Overall, assessment is satisfactory. Teachers have started to formally assess and record pupils' capabilities. There are plans for all teachers to provide evidence of assessment. However, at present, there is no evidence that teachers are using assessment to plan what they teach. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher had limited expectations of what pupils can achieve and did not plan for pupils who have developed high computer skills at home.
127. Management is satisfactory. There have been some key improvements since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has developed the schemes of work and a recording sheet. She supports colleagues in the classroom. The co-ordinator is managing successfully the training of teachers and there are plans for staff training. Resources are unsatisfactory. The school has recently bought a new computer, but the number of computers available for pupils is well below average. Although co-operation with the junior school helps provision, it has limitations. There are insufficient resources for a whole class and pupils cannot immediately consolidate skills taught by the teacher. There are firm plans in place to buy new and relevant software.

## **MUSIC**

128. Pupils attain the standards expected for their age. This is a similar judgement to the one made at the last inspection. Music continues to play a central role in the life of the school and parents at the meeting with inspectors expressed their gratitude to the school for this.
129. By the age of seven, pupils clap appropriate rhythms of varied pace in time to music. They feel and respond to the changing beat in the 'Animal Song': slow pace for 'Nellie the elephant'; medium pace for 'Leo the lion' and fast pace for 'Charlie the cheetah'. Higher-attainers are able to maintain the beat in the slow/quick pattern while singing the song. Lower-attainers also clap in fast and slow rhythms, however, they cannot



sing and clap to different rhythms. In discussion, pupils are keen about their music and clearly enjoy composing their own pieces and playing percussion instruments. They recognise that music is capable of promoting calm, for instance when entering the hall for collective worship. Pupils enjoy singing and their performance of hymns in assembly is tuneful.

130. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection and so no overall judgement of teaching can be made. However, discussions with staff and pupils, the scrutiny of planning and scheme of work and the one lesson indicate that music continues to be a vibrant force in the school. The lesson was judged to be good because:
- the teacher confidently showed skill and commitment in her planning and teaching which encouraged the pupils to have a go and consequently make progress;
  - good questioning promoted thoughtful responses from pupils about the rhythm and pace of the music;
  - the teaching methods employed promote full involvement from pupils;
  - good opportunities are provided for pupils to further their learning through using instruments to play the beat. Overall, the lesson was organised well, moved with good pace and provided ample opportunities for pupils to work independently.
131. In addition to lessons, provision includes:
- singing assembly;
  - recorder club for Year 2 pupils;
  - a visiting musician; this year a flamenco guitarist;
  - musical performances for parents. There are also appropriate links with other subjects such as art (pupils painting pictures after listening to Vivaldi), dance and literacy. Management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is clear about shortcomings and lays plans to overcome them, for instance in developing the well-used stock of instruments. The parents are highly involved, either as the audience at singing assemblies and performances, or in raising money to augment the stock of instruments. The subject plays a significant part in pupils' cultural development through singing songs from a variety of countries such as Japan, Africa and Jamaica. However, the range of instruments from other cultures is unsatisfactory. The coordinator monitors teachers planning, but the monitoring of teaching is very limited. Assessment procedures are satisfactory.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

132. The pupils make good progress in physical education throughout the school. In the lessons observed, the standards achieved were good in gymnastics and dance. Good progress has been made since the time of the last inspection when standards were judged satisfactory.
133. Pupils develop increasing control in gymnastics lessons and improve their posture and movement responding well to signals to change direction. They move in a variety of ways to travel along the floor and in response to stimuli in dance lessons. The younger pupils in the key stage demonstrated swift changes in movement to emulate fireworks and combined three or four movements to perform a short sequence to illustrate the fireworks display. Older pupils combine twists and turn when travelling in straight lines or curves during gymnastics lessons. All take a pride in demonstrating their work and evaluate their own and others' work sensitively. In this way, they learn to improve their work. Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated into physical education lessons and make good progress alongside their peers.

134. Insufficient attention is given to the games aspect of physical education. The school has no access to a grassed area and this has a negative effect on the opportunities for games provided by the school. In this respect, there is an imbalance in the curriculum. Sports day and the annual obstacle day provide opportunities for pupils to participate in non-competitive sports activities.
135. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen was good. Teachers identify what they expect pupils to learn and ensure that resources are available. Good use is made of praise and encouragement and all teachers have very good relationships with pupils. Lessons consist of quality warm up sessions, which include helping the pupils understand the effect that exercise has on their bodies. Teachers provide clear explanations and demonstrations to ensure that pupils learn new movements and skills. Learning support assistants are well deployed and provide good support for pupils with special educational needs. Resources are good and well used. Pupils behave well, but in some classes where pupils do not change for physical education and wear daytime skirts and trousers, there is an element of danger in lessons and a lack of hygiene.
136. The co-ordinator is new to the school and has had insufficient time to assume the full role of management of the subject. Provision for development of physical education and monitoring of classroom practice are in place and at present overseen by the head. Physical education support pupils, spiritual, moral, social and cultural education effectively.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

137. During the inspection, only one lesson was observed. Evidence was gathered through observation, assemblies, scrutiny of work and talking with staff and pupils.
138. Pupils' attainment at the end of the key stage is in line with the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus, 'Being and Believing'. Pupils' achievement in relation to what might be expected of them is good. Since the last inspection there has been an increase in standards and pupils now make satisfactory progress.
139. By the age of seven, pupils are aware that different people hold different beliefs and that people worship in different places and with varying observances. They are aware of some of the similarities and differences between two major religions: Christianity and Islam. Visits to places of worship enhance their knowledge and understanding. Most pupils know that Jesus is the Son of God, have good understanding of Bible stories and Jesus' teaching. Pupils have satisfactory understanding of the bigger questions that relate to living skills.
140. Insufficient lessons were seen to enable a secure judgement to be made about the quality of teaching. During the one lesson observed, pupils' learning was good. The listened attentively to a Bible story and asked searching questions to clarify its meaning. The task set by the teacher was appropriate to their needs and enabled them to make progress in the understanding of Christian teaching. There was no opportunity during the lesson to promote writing skills. All pupils made satisfactory progress during the lesson.
141. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They listen to their teacher and to the ideas of others and are keen to learn about faiths, customs and beliefs. They join enthusiastically in whole class discussion.

142. Sufficient time is devoted to religious education and the subject is satisfactorily led by a temporary co-ordinator. The curriculum is based on the locally agreed syllabus. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are satisfactory and the co-ordinator has identified where these can be improved to enable higher-attaining pupils to achieve higher standards. The teaching of religious education successfully contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and enhances their learning in personal, social and health education. Resources are adequate and are well used. The school has identified a need for a greater variety and number of books to support children's work in religious education.