

INSPECTION REPORT

SPRINGFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sheffield

LEA area: Sheffield

Unique reference number: 107073

Acting Headteacher: Mr. Huw Thomas

Reporting inspector: Mr. Jean-Pierre Kirkland
4483

Dates of inspection: 9th -12th October 2000

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Broomspring Lane Devonshire Quarter Sheffield
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. Rita Brent
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd September 1996

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		Geography	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		Music	Teaching and learning
		Special educational needs	Leadership and management
		English as an additional language	Key Issues for action
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			Pupils' welfare, health and safety
			Partnership with parents and carers
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		English	
		Art and design	
		History	
		Religious education	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Springfield Primary School is located very close to Sheffield City Centre. It is a multi-ethnic school with 206 pupils on roll, slightly smaller than most primary schools. This includes the full time equivalent of 28 children who attend the Nursery, some on a full-time and some on a part-time basis. One hundred and sixty-three pupils have English as an additional language, a very high figure when compared to all primary schools nationally, with 41 of these pupils at an early stage of language development. Much of the surrounding area has been subject to city centre regeneration, and social and economic circumstances for many pupils are unfavourable. Sixty per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, a very high figure when compared to all primary schools. Forty-one per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, a figure twice the national average. There are currently 9 statemented pupils, whose needs range from emotional and behavioural problems to specific speech problems and other serious difficulties. A further 18 pupils are awaiting statutory assessment or are involved with outside specialists. A very large number of pupils enter the school between key stages, and a similar number move on to other destinations. On entry to the school, attainment is very low, especially in literacy and communication skills. Management is currently in transition, with the departure of the head and one of the deputy heads at the end of July, leaving the school with an acting headteacher and deputy for the autumn term.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school and it is effective in raising standards. Children enter the school with very low levels of attainment, and due to good teaching, a well-balanced curriculum and decisive and clear management, make good progress throughout the school. Results in national tests at Key Stage 2 have been improving over the past few years, and this is confirmed by inspection findings. Although pupils achieve levels below national averages in English, levels of attainment are in line with national figures in science and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2. This is also despite a very large change in the composition of the classes between the beginning of Key Stage 2 and the end. As a result of these factors, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Enables all pupils to make good progress in learning the subjects of the National Curriculum throughout the school, with above expected levels of achievement in music and design and technology at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Provides good teaching with work very well suited to pupils' capabilities, especially in literacy and numeracy.
- Ensures and encourages very good behaviour, positive attitudes to work and harmonious relationships which add greatly to the climate for learning.
- Gives its pupils a very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural framework within which to learn, and which promote outstanding levels of respect for each others' feelings, values and beliefs.
- Assesses pupils very well, using the information to create effective lesson plans and targets for pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
- Provides very good levels of leadership and management at all levels, including governors.

What could be improved

- Standards in English overall, and by paying more attention to the quality of pupils' handwriting.
- The quality of educational provision in the newly created Foundation Stage for pupils under the age of six.
- Standards in information and communications technology (ICT) and physical education, by focussing on skills development in both subjects and improved facilities for gymnastics.
- The presentation of pupils' work.
- The health and safety aspects of the playground yard for children in the Foundation Stage.

There are also two minor points for the governors to consider. These are: improving the time-tabling of physical education in the hall in order to minimise disruption to classes, and continuing to improve levels of attendance and punctuality.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvements since it was previously inspected in 1996. All the Key Issues raised then have been addressed. Standards have risen substantially, schemes of work have been written and assessment is now very good. It is used effectively in English, mathematics and science in helping pupils make good progress. Curriculum time has been reviewed giving adequate coverage to all subjects. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching, which is now good, and in the quality of leadership and management, which is very good, with much improved levels of monitoring and evaluation. The positive learning atmosphere has also been improved throughout the school. The school is now well placed to continue to build on its strengths.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	E	E*	E
mathematics	C	D	D	B
science	C	D	C	A

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Overall standards have been showing a rising trend during the past four years in English, mathematics and science. Compared nationally, the school has very low results in the Year 2000 in English, below average in mathematics and average in science. Inspection findings show an improvement in that standards are now meeting national averages in mathematics and science, with standards in English below the national figure. In comparison to pupils in similar schools, levels of attainment are still well below average in English, but above average in mathematics, an improvement since last year, and well above average in science, a significant improvement since 1999. The school has to contend with relatively small numbers of pupils entering the tests each year at the end of Key Stage 2. There is also a very high level of movement in and out of the school during Key Stage 2, which often seriously affects results, especially when pupils arrive with little or no English close to the date set for the tests. For those pupils who have been in the school since the start of compulsory education,

(approximately half those entered for the end of Key Stage 2 national tests), good progress is made in English, mathematics and science. Children enter the Foundation Stage aged 3 plus with very low levels of skills in literacy and numeracy. Their personal and social skills are also very low. They make good progress but are still well below national averages in English, and below average in mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 1. This good and sometimes very good progress continues throughout Key Stage 2, so that standards improve in all subjects except physical education. In design and technology and music, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above national expectations; in art and design, history and religious education, standards are generally in line with expectations but are below in physical education and ICT.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils love coming to school and enjoy their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good throughout the school and a significant strength in helping pupils to learn effectively. The number of exclusions is very low.
Personal development and relationships	Very good and a further strength, especially the very positive relationships throughout the school.
Attendance	Below the national average although unauthorised absence is better than the national picture. Punctuality is a problem for the school to continue to address.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Good	Good

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

Teaching is good overall. Nineteen per cent of lessons were judged very good or better, thirty-six per cent judged good, and forty-one per cent judged as satisfactory. Four per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is at least satisfactory overall with some good and very good lessons, notably in numeracy. A secure basis is laid for future skills development. Teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2 is good and there are examples of very good and excellent practice. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is good throughout both key stages, and the teaching of ICT skills is improving and is now good following the recent appointment of a new subject co-ordinator. The best lessons are characterised by high challenges, very good pupil groupings with appropriate work in each group, and teachers building very successfully on pupils' interest and attitudes. As a result, lessons move with a good pace and pupils learn effectively. The teaching of music is particularly good, with stimulating and interesting lessons so that pupils enjoy learning and reach high standards. The needs of all pupils are met effectively in lessons, including the pupils who come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds as well as those with special educational needs. The school has not identified any pupils who are especially gifted or talented. However, higher attaining pupils are not always challenged as effectively as they might be.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A good well balanced curriculum overall, providing a good backcloth for learning. The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good, with especially effective early identification of problems enabling good support to be provided and suitable work to be set.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good throughout the school. Especially effective is the literacy provision for pupils who enter the school during key stages with little knowledge of English, and the reading initiative at Key Stage 1.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good, with outstanding provision for cultural development and very good provision in moral and social areas, especially in groupwork in lessons and through clear moral messages in assemblies. The school is a harmonious community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good provision. All staff and assistants know the pupils very well, and attend to all their needs effectively.
Partnership with parents and carers	The school has a good working relationship with its parents, who are made welcome and who are valued by the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good – the temporary arrangements of an acting head and deputy are working very well. There is clear educational direction and vision, shared by all the staff who work very effectively as a team. Immediate attention needs to be given to the serious hazard in the form of dangerous piles of rubble with inadequate fencing inside the Foundation Stage playground.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very effective governors work extremely hard to ensure the school runs and functions efficiently.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school development plan, plus other interim initiatives enable strong planning and good prioritising to take place. Governors seek to ensure the very best value for money is obtained in all spending decisions.
The strategic use of resources	Good overall. ICT resources need further development, and the school is working hard on this. The school makes very good use of other resources, including its support assistants.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like coming to school and they make good progress • Behaviour is good • Teaching is good with a high expectation that children will be encouraged to succeed • The school is well led and works well with parents • The school promotes good moral values and attitudes with personal, social and health education standing out as a strength • Improvements since the last inspection include a much better Nursery, better ICT facilities and after school and lunchtime clubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More support teachers, especially those with bi-lingual talents • Homework should be designed to meet individual needs

Inspectors fully endorse the positive views of parents. Inspectors found that the current level of support from classroom assistants was good, and they are very effectively deployed. Inspectors acknowledge also that the school is aware of the need to provide as much bi-lingual support as possible, and this is kept under constant review. The levels of homework set were found to be generally appropriate, and inspectors noted that the school is also keeping the homework issue under review.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Inspection findings show that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are below national averages in English, and in line with national averages in mathematics and in science. These findings do not confirm the latest national test results for the Year 2000, which showed standards to be very low in English, average in science and below average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in the tests over the past three years has been below average in English, close to average in mathematics and improving from below to close to average in science. When compared to schools where the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is similar, then the results show pupils achieving well below average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. The results in mathematics and science are a good improvement on the previous year. The statistics, however, are not wholly reliable due to a number of very significant factors:

- The numbers entered for the tests each year are small, and always below twenty, so that one pupil entering or leaving causes a five per cent or six per cent change in the overall figure
- There are very significant numbers of pupils entering and leaving the school during the key stage – in 1999, for example, of the seventeen pupils who took the end of key stage tests, only ten had been in the school since the end of Key Stage 1. Such a high rate of transience places even more doubt on the reliability of the statistics.
- Some pupils enter the key stage with very little or no English and this seriously affects their progress and rate of learning.

Over time, there has been an improvement in the results of eleven year olds in national tests, and at a greater rate of improvement than the national rate. The table below compares the results achieved by the pupils who took the national tests at age eleven with how they did four years earlier in the national tests for seven year olds. Pupils are expected to improve by two levels during this time, and this constitutes satisfactory progress. Three levels improvement is good and four levels very good.

2000 national tests: pupils entered: 17						
2000 national tests: pupils who were in the school in 1996: 10 (59% of original)						
Subject/ progress over time	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Progress in lessons/work analysis	Overall progress
English	11%	11%	67%	11%	Good	Good
Mathematics	30%	40%	20%	10%	Good	Good
Science	10%	10%	80%	0%	Good	Good

2. The table above shows that by tracking those individual pupils who remain in the school for the complete key stage, some very good and good progress is made, with almost all pupils making at least satisfactory progress. Work examined indicates good progress overall. The table also shows the high pupil mobility, adding further doubt to the reliability of purely statistical data in analysing results.

3. On entry to the Nursery, levels of attainment are low in all areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. The children make satisfactory progress both in the Nursery and Reception class, but on their entry to National Curriculum at the age of six, their levels of attainment remains low when compared with other children nationally. Children have a wide range of experiences in language and literacy, communication, mathematical development, creative work, and knowledge and understanding of the world and improve their skills in all areas. They are encouraged sensitively to improve their skills in personal, social and emotional development. Less successful is their progress in outdoor play as the facilities are unsatisfactory and there are few suitable resources.

4. Results in the national tests for pupils at Key Stage 1 in 2000 show pupils to be well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments in science show results to be broadly similar to the national picture. Although results in reading are well below national averages, there has been a considerable improvement over the past three years. In writing, the improvement has been even more substantial, even though standards are well below average. There has been a significant improvement in mathematics, especially for the proportion of pupils achieving Level 2. However, few pupils achieve the higher Level 3 and this places the school well below the national picture for all three subjects. When compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the school is achieving broadly average results. Bearing in mind the very low linguistic levels of pupils, the fact that over sixty per cent of the pupils entered for last year's national tests were on the special educational needs register, and the high number of pupils joining the school after the start of the key stage, progress is good.

5. Standards in reading are below average at both key stages, although pupils make good and sustained progress throughout the school. Most pupils enter the school with very low reading ages, and a majority are on the register of special education needs at some time during Key Stage 1. Similarly, pupils with little or no English find reading hard. However, early progress is enhanced through adults sharing reading with pupils at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, pupils improve as they learn to extract information from books and read a wider range for enjoyment.

6. Standards in speaking and listening are well below average at both key stages, although some higher attaining pupils become reasonably fluent by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils are encouraged to speak in most lessons, especially in the opening and closing sections through well-structured question and answer sessions. This is important in improving confidence. By age eleven, pupils are able to explain themselves using appropriate technical language, and this technique, for example, is widely used in mathematics, effectively extending the use of literacy across the curriculum. In other subjects, such as music, pupils are encouraged to listen to each performances and comment upon the quality of the sounds created, thereby developing further the skill of critical awareness.

7. Writing, including handwriting, is the area where greatest improvement is needed since the majority of pupils make little more than satisfactory progress in this area. This is partly due to teachers adopting their own techniques and not adhering to the school policy. For example, in Years 5 and 6, pupils are still using a mixture of pen and pencil in their written work, despite policy statements to the contrary. There is insufficient attention paid to developing good posture when writing, and as a result, pupils at Key Stage 1 begin to develop

poor pencil control, which improves only slowly later in the school. Spelling is often unsatisfactory and sentence construction sometimes poor. Standards of writing are in need of attention as they are well below average throughout the school.

8. In mathematics, progress is good and standards rise from well below average in Year 1 to in line with the national average by Year 6. The very good introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has been responsible for much of the recent improvements in mathematics. Pupils learn to become more agile in their mental calculations from an early age. They receive lots of practice in addition and subtraction at Key Stage 1, and these skills are then enhanced through creative problem solving and more complex sums in the rest of the school. The setting arrangements at Key Stage 2 enable teachers to plan more effectively to meet the needs of all pupils, and progress is enhanced as a result. By age 11, most pupils are able to convert fractions to decimals accurately, they know and understand measurement and shapes, and they construct simple yet accurate bar graphs from statistics.

9. In science, attainment is below average according to teacher assessments at Key Stage 1, and close to average in the national tests at age 11. Progress is good at both key stages for all pupils, as a result of good teaching. Good emphasis is placed on learning new vocabulary. Basic principles, such as the understanding of the requirements of fair testing, are learnt effectively through investigation and good quality teacher led discussions.

10. Attainment is in line with expected levels at the end of Key Stage 1 in art and design, geography, history, ICT, music, physical education and religious education. It is above expected levels in design and technology at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils develop a good grasp of the design process and complete a number of moving and static models with good levels of accuracy. At Key Stage 2, attainment is in line with expected levels in art and design, geography, history and religious education. Standards are above expected levels in music, where performing, listening and critical awareness are well developed. Standards do not reach expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2 in physical education, especially in gymnastics and swimming, and in ICT. Here, the development of skills has not been consistent enough over time, and some pupils are still working at a similar level to those in Key Stage 1. A new co-ordinator has already begun to raise standards.

11. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make good progress. The vast majority of the pupils in the school have English as an additional language; over two fifths of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational need. Lower attaining pupils are well supported and this accelerates their general progress through individual and small group attention. Initiatives to raise literacy levels are particularly effective for these pupils at Key Stage 1. However, lower attaining pupils find writing hard, their pencil control is often poor and they struggle with technical vocabulary. The school has not identified any talented or gifted pupils. Higher attaining pupils make good progress in a number of areas, such as recognising bias in writing, and by becoming swifter in mental calculations in mathematics. Their progress in science is good.

12. The national test results show differences between boys and girls at both key stages. However, these change year on year and no specific trend can be identified over time. The school is particularly aware of these variations, and keeps a watchful eye on performance, while recognising that late entry to the school will have a significant effect on attainment, irrespective of gender. Appropriate targets are set in English and mathematics, and agreed with the local education authority. At any one time, these can only reflect the current group of pupils on role, and this figure changes each year, sometimes dramatically. Targets for the Year 2000 were not met in English, due largely to pupils with low levels of English joining the group since the original targets were set. Targets were reached in mathematics. For the

current group of pupils, the targets are realistic, sufficiently high and achievable.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and respond very positively to all school activities. They show very high levels of respect for teachers and other adults. Parents report that their children like coming to school. Almost all pupils take an interest in their work and generally enjoy it. For example, in a Year 1 design and technology lesson, pupils were engrossed in what they were doing. Many pupils show a real enthusiasm for learning and take pride in their work. Almost all pupils sustain their concentration well and try hard to complete the work set, aided by the good level of challenge in lessons. They respond very well when they have the opportunity to work with others in small groups and are given many opportunities to do this. In addition to the opportunities built in to the literacy and numeracy lessons there are good opportunities for pupils to work together in design and technology, science and personal and social education lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language share the positive attitudes that pervade the school and try hard to complete their work. Pupils in the Foundation Stage are confident and happy. They enjoy their activities but a significant number find it difficult to concentrate for long on the same task.

14. Pupils respond very well to the high expectations teachers have of behaviour, both in lessons and at breaks and lunchtimes. They understand the system of rewards and sanctions, and respond to both, earning the former and avoiding the latter. Almost all pupils understand what is expected of them, aided by the simple but effective school rules. The rare incidents of bullying are dealt with promptly and firmly. In lessons behaviour is usually good. In none of the lessons observed during the inspection was behaviour less than satisfactory. At Key Stage 1, behaviour is generally good or better; and in two lessons seen it was exemplary. At Key Stage 2, behaviour is very good in half the lessons observed. Behaviour at breaks and lunchtimes was also very good. Pupils are almost always polite to one another and to adults. They take good care of their own property and show due respect for the school's books and other resources. Parents state that behaviour in the school is good and that pupils of different ethnic origins mix very well together. At the time of the previous inspection the rate of exclusions was high but in the last year there were only two fixed term exclusions: this represents a significant improvement.

15. The quality of relationships throughout the school is very good; this is a significant strength. Pupils form very positive relationships with one another, with teachers and other adults. Some of the pupils for whom English is an additional language form particularly good relationships with staff who speak their first language. Pupils generally work well together and share resources in a friendly way. They listen well to other pupils and to their teachers. They show exceptionally high levels of respect for the views of others and consider their feelings carefully. The school is a very harmonious community in which all cultures and faiths are valued. Pupils often offer to help others spontaneously when needed and enjoy applauding the good efforts of others. Pupils respond positively to the opportunities provided them by the programme of personal and social education (PSE) to explore their feelings. The very good attitudes to work and play, very good behaviour and very good relationships make a significant and positive contribution to pupils' learning and achievement.

16. Pupils are willing to take responsibility when they are asked to do so. For example, they return registers to the office and help to tidy up the classroom. In some classes, particularly in Key Stage 2, pupils are offered a wide range of opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and they rise enthusiastically to the challenge. This is effective in some lessons at Key Stage 2, and in particular in music and mathematics in Year 3 and in Year 4. In these lessons, pupils worked independently with little supervision, composing their own patterns of sound, or solving mathematical problems through addition or measurement.

17. Attendance remains below the national average, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. However, the majority of absence is due to illness and to the high numbers of families who go on extended visits to their country of origin, sometimes for as long as three months. Attendance figures are also affected adversely by the mobility of the population. Levels of unauthorised absence are consistently below the national average and most pupils are keen to attend school. However, punctuality is unsatisfactory despite recent improvements. The habitual lateness of a significant number of pupils has a negative effect on their learning and achievement and this is an issue for the school to continue to address.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. Teaching is good overall and this supports the view of parents. In the Foundation Stage, teaching was judged to be satisfactory, but with examples of good and very good teaching in some lessons. At Key Stages 1 and 2, teaching is good overall, with examples of very good and outstanding practice. During the inspection, nineteen per cent of teaching was judged to be very good or better, thirty-six per cent was judged to be good, forty-one per cent judged satisfactory, and four per cent unsatisfactory. This is an overall improvement since the previous inspection, especially the higher proportion of teaching that is good or better.

19. Teachers have satisfactory knowledge of the new Foundation Stage and are working effectively as a good team in order to introduce the children to a curriculum which reflects the requirements of this stage for children under six years of age. Teaching in the Foundation Stage, while being satisfactory overall, lacks the focus that lessons in other stages usually contain. Teachers do not always spend sufficient time with one group to ensure that consistent progress is made; sometimes challenges are too hard, and children do not always know what is required of them. For example, technical language was introduced at a level well above the current understanding of most children, who then could not complete the work. By contrast, in a good lesson, the teacher used time and resources well, so that children focussed on a book and its language, and learnt new terms and words effectively. In other good lessons, teachers use their assessment knowledge of children well when asking questions, and have arranged good quality worksheets challenging all children effectively. In the best lesson in numeracy, for example, the teacher used singing as a warm-up, with the song incorporating numbers. Using a drawing of a ladybird as a large visual aid, the teacher introduced counting through the spots on its back. Children quickly grasped the principle, and were then able to work relatively independently on different sized copies appropriate to the needs of each group. Overall, the teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory, and all children make appropriate progress throughout the stage in acquiring basic skills of communication and number recognition.

20. Teaching throughout Key Stage 1 and 2 is good. There are many examples in both key stages of very good teaching with an example of outstanding teaching at Key Stage 2 in numeracy. All teachers share with pupils what they about to learn at the start of lessons. In the best practice, these are clearly displayed on the whiteboard, and are referred to again when new learning is reviewed before the lesson ends. This effective strategy, very prominent in literacy and numeracy, provides pupils with a good quality visual focus and

enables them to think about their learning throughout the lesson. The best lessons contain high challenges which focus on including all of the wide range of pupils in each class. During group work, good lessons incorporate planning which makes use of worksheets that have been modified appropriately to provide more straightforward tasks for lower attaining pupils, or more complex ones for higher attainers. Some teachers spend time during the group work with the lower attaining pupils, those with special educational needs or those with limited language. At other times, support assistants fulfil this role very well. In both cases, the individual attention and more intricate explanations enable greater learning and progress to take place.

21. The teaching of literacy is generally good throughout the school, with the National Literacy Strategy having been effectively introduced and adopted. Teachers plan well and use the structure of each lesson to encourage the full range of speaking, listening, writing and reading. In mathematics lessons, planning is very good, with all of Key Stage 2 in ability sets. Teachers raise pupils' interest and enthusiasm very well in brisk and well paced mental sessions. They plan for the learning of an appropriate range of skills in problem solving, number work, measuring and simple graphs. A concluding session in both English and mathematics enables teachers and pupils to assess learning successfully.

22. Most of the pupils in the school have English as an additional language. Further, over forty per cent of the school's pupils are on the register of special educational need. Generally, teachers plan very well with these pupils uppermost in their minds, using assessment information very well, and using the good quality individual education plans to guide their planning. The good use of assessment for all pupils is a further strength within teaching and an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers also ensure that basic skills are well taught. This varies from lesson to lesson, but it is particularly effective when key technical words are written up for all pupils to see and use. This occurs effectively, for example, in Year 5 and Year 6 geography and in science lessons at both key stages. The learning of basic skills is further enhanced in all numeracy lessons in the opening mental sessions when pupils are focused on number charts, or when teaching the recognition of symbols in ICT lessons. The use of a 'language train' to enable pupils to learn a basic vocabulary quickly when they first enter the school, or additional help with reading in the 'Reading Recovery' scheme are specially helpful in moving pupils forward. Pupils enjoy these activities and show good levels of interest and enthusiasm and learn well as a result. Teaching of gymnastics skills is insufficiently well developed.

23. A great strength in teaching, at both key stages, is in the management of pupils. Classes are well organised with many interesting and stimulating activities. Good learning takes place when pupils have time to experiment or investigate. This is a strong feature of many lessons in music when the focus is on performance, or in religious education when pupils are asked to explore their own feelings in relation to a story with a moral theme. Teachers have very good strategies for gaining full attention, such as holding up hands or clicking fingers, and pupils' response is rapid and no time is lost. The good and often very imaginative use of resources increases the pace of learning by firing pupils' imagination successfully, for example, effective in design and technology teaching in Year 6.

24. Homework is set when appropriate and the quality and quantity are satisfactory. Tasks are usually specific to a pupil's individual need. Work is marked appropriately, although teachers do not always follow the school policy of correcting key technical words. This is unsatisfactory as it does not demand a high enough standard from pupils, who sometimes and too often, present their work untidily and with poor spelling.

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

25. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught and meet statutory requirements. At both key stages the curriculum offers a good range of learning opportunities relevant to pupils' needs. Although generally well balanced there is some imbalance on occasions due to timetable planning. One class has both swimming and gymnastics on the same day. The school makes suitable provision for pupils' awareness of drugs misuse and there is a draft policy for sex education. Schemes of work are now in place and have been planned with care. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Planning resulting from the schemes is good with clearly stated learning programmes and objectives, and many links between subjects. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good and the requirements of the Code of Practice are met in full. The effectiveness of the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is very good. This is seen in pupils' progress in reading and in speaking and listening. Similar effectiveness is resulting from the school's very good application of the National Numeracy Strategy, with pupils making good progress overall through the school.

26. Curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage children in both the Nursery and Reception classes is satisfactory, apart from the lack of appropriate outdoor play space and equipment. This is an issue for the school to address. All pupils have full access to the whole curriculum throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and teachers ensure that all pupils are fully included in their planning. Pupils who have arrived very recently, including some from very different environments are settled and happy in the school. Pupils are well supported with additional language teaching wherever possible, through the 'Reading Recovery' initiative at Key Stage 1, and the 'language train' throughout the school. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Some science lessons are planned for this and there are also specific lessons in all classes. Activities are provided extra to the planned curriculum. Some pupils choose to be in the school choir, the 'Spices Club', providing a good and well-managed range of personal and social activities, is most active. There is a homework club operating in the late autumn until the national tests in the spring and summer.

27. The school is a central part of the local community and links are good. Volunteers from a local church have helped with football activities. A good link exists with a local bookshop so that pupils visit there to meet with authors. There are strong links with the University through students in training and through research projects. Smooth transition to the high school is enabled by teacher visits, particularly for English and mathematics. The curriculum is further enhanced by pupils visiting educational sites to study the environment and for outdoor pursuits, and to the theatre. Pupils are involved as actors when the Shakespeare Company makes regular visits. There is good liaison with the local police who, as the Crucial Crew, provide guidance on various aspects of health and safety.

28. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development and very good provision for moral and social development. Provision for cultural development is excellent. All staff are very good role models and demonstrate to pupils through their actions and relationships how best to treat others. They treat pupils with respect and receive respect in return.

29. Provision for spiritual development is good. The quality of assemblies is good and the school pays good attention to the diversity of faiths within its community. Many assemblies, particularly those taken by the head, are characterised by the rapt attention of all pupils. Most assemblies provide time for pupils to reflect briefly on their lives and how they can help others. Circle time, religious education and personal and social education lessons provide effective opportunities for pupils to learn about and reflect on the world they live in.

30. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Teachers and other adults routinely reinforce appropriate moral and social codes, so that pupils quickly learn the difference between right and wrong. Teachers make very effective use of praise to promote very good moral and social attitudes, and to build pupils' self esteem and confidence. In lessons, there are frequent opportunities for pupils to work together in pairs or small groups, and this enables them to co-operate well and to share resources fairly. In assemblies, circle time and personal and social education there are frequent references to themes such as friendship, kindness and respect for others. The result is a positive and harmonious learning environment, fostering good progress and strong interdependence.

31. The provision for cultural development is excellent and a substantial improvement since the previous inspection. The school pays great attention to reflecting the diverse cultural background of its pupils and values this diversity very highly. In religious education and assemblies, pupils begin to learn about major world faiths, and the major religious festivals are celebrated in school. The school uses its diversity of cultures very effectively to foster in pupils an understanding and respect for religious and cultural differences. The success of this work is reflected in the racial harmony that pervades the school. In art and design, music, English, geography and history, pupils are given the opportunity to explore a wide range of cultural experiences. The school provides a good range of visits into the community and welcomes such visitors as writers and artists. The recent initiative of displaying pupils' work on the school web site and encouraging e-mail communication with relatives abroad is a very positive one and is already valued by the pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The school provides a safe haven where pupils can work productively. It is a friendly and caring community in which pupils feel valued. Teachers and other staff set high standards for pupils and act as very good role models. They have a clear understanding of pupils' academic and personal progress and very effectively promote high standards of discipline and good behaviour.

33. The school ensures that the welfare of pupils is very good. Arrangements for first aid and for medicines in school are good and appropriate records are kept. There are good arrangements to ensure pupils' health and safety. Regular health and safety checks are carried out and documented. The caretaker undertakes the checking of all portable electrical appliances on a regular basis. However, there is one major health and safety issue outstanding. The surface of the playground used by the Foundation Stage pupils is in an unsafe condition and the presence of builders' rubble, although fenced off, is a significant danger to pupils. Teachers pay good attention to safe practice in lessons and pupils are taught to be aware of their own safety and that of others. Procedures for child protection are very good. The school has an appropriate policy and procedures comply with requirements. The deputy head teacher is responsible for child protection. Liaison with outside agencies is effective.

34. The school has put in place a wide range of strategies for successfully monitoring and assessing pupils' academic progress. These strategies are very good and a great improvement since the previous inspection. In addition to national tests for Years 2 and 6

there are regular progress tests in English and mathematics. Various levels of assessment are in place for all subjects and specific checks are made, for example, on pupils' acquisition of English. Early identification is made of any special educational needs and individual plans are drawn up. Every pupil has a personal assessment booklet for English. Test results are analysed and information obtained is used when planning for future lessons. Most work is well matched to pupils' ability. Recent staff training has concentrated on assessing the effectiveness of teachers' use of the system and taking any necessary action. Assessment is used well by all teachers in planning the next stages in pupils' learning.

35. Procedures for monitoring behaviour and for promoting good behaviour are very good and firmly based on a positive approach. There is a high level of consistency in the application of behaviour management. Teachers' emphasis is on praise and reward, used most effectively to motivate pupils. The school has some pupils with challenging behaviour but they are almost always kept on task in the classroom. When behaviour is unacceptable, teachers work hard to ensure that pupils understand what they have done wrong, and how to put it right. Staff have very high expectations of behaviour and pupils rise to them. Some pupils attend the Spice lunchtime club, where the positive management of behaviour is a strong feature. Pupils enjoy the activities and are motivated well by the rewards they receive for good effort and behaviour. Throughout the school little bullying occurs and pupils are confident that there is always an adult to turn to in time of need. There is an extremely high degree of racial harmony throughout the school, fostered by the respectful attention the school pays to all the cultures and faiths represented within it.

36. The school monitors attendance well. The expectations for the reporting of absence are made very clear to parents and most comply with them. Procedures for following up unreported absence are thorough and the school involves the educational welfare service appropriately in cases of concern. However, there is confusion about the time registers close. The school policy is that registers close at 9.10a.m., but many teachers do not take the register until 9.25a.m. This is unsatisfactory. The school promotes the importance of regular attendance strongly to parents but this is not having a significant effect in levels of absence. The school has appropriate procedures in place to monitor punctuality. However, these are not yet working effectively, as a significant number of pupils manage to by-pass the late system. Parents of those pupils who do sign in late are contacted and the importance of punctuality discussed with them.

37. Teachers know pupils and their families very well and use this knowledge effectively to guide their pastoral care. Pupils are confident to approach staff with any problems and feel valued in school. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language receive well-targeted help and support. This enables them to make good and sometimes very good progress. The high ratio of adults to children in many lessons, especially in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, allows all pupils to receive good levels of individual support and this ensures that they benefit fully from the educational opportunities provided.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Parents express very positive views of the school and are supportive of it. They particularly value the good quality of teaching that enables their children to make good progress. They also appreciate the good standards of behaviour and the moral values and respect for others fostered by the school. Parents state that the school is well led and works closely and effectively with them to ensure the best for their children. Inspection evidence fully supports these positive views of the school. Some parents would like to see an increase in the number of support staff, particularly those who speak pupils' first languages. However, the level of support, including bi-lingual support, is good and of a high quality. A number of parents were unhappy about the homework provision. Inspection evidence shows that the levels of homework provided are appropriate, but the school is keeping homework under review.

39. The school provides a good range of well-presented information for parents as well as providing many formal and informal opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress with teachers. All staff, including the acting headteacher, are readily available to talk with parents and this is a strength of the school's work. The prospectus and annual report of governors to parents are clearly presented and both contain the most of the information required. However, neither contains detail of the attendance figures. Attendance at parents' evenings and other school events has improved significantly since the time of the previous inspection and is now generally good. The annual reports are of satisfactory quality. They provide a very clear picture of the child but do not consistently indicate the progress they have made, particularly in subjects such as art and design, history and design and technology. Targets for improvement are provided, mainly in English, mathematics and science, but these are not always well related to the text of the report. Pupils have space to comment on their year in school. Attendance figures are provided in all reports and teachers make relevant comments if irregular attendance or poor punctuality is having an effect on the pupil's progress.

40. The school arranges a number of workshops for parents about issues such as literacy and numeracy. These are well attended. Twice a year a parenting skills course is organised and this attracts good numbers. Parents who attend the course speak highly of it. Attendance at the special assemblies, such as the 'One World' assembly has improved steadily over recent years and is now good. The Governing Body promotes the annual meeting of governors and parents effectively and this results in high levels of attendance and good debate on important issues. In partnership with a national charity, the school runs a well organised after school club every afternoon, without charge to the families. This provides children with a wide range of interesting and enjoyable activities and is very much appreciated by parents.

41. At present there are no parents helping in school, for example by hearing pupils read or assisting with design and technology or art and design lessons. However, parents help on trips and outings. The school seeks to involve parents actively with their children's work at home and most parents listen to their children read and complete the reading records regularly.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. Leadership and management of the school are very good, a significant strength and a substantial improvement since the school was previously inspected. Leadership by the acting headteacher and acting deputy is consistently very good in all areas, and serves as inspirational for some teachers. There is a clear educational direction for the work of the school embodied in a worthwhile mission statement, aims and objectives for the school. All subjects and aspects of the work of the school reflect these aims very well so that the school is united in its continual search for improvements and higher standards. Staff work very well together as a team. The strength of the teamwork comes from the senior management, with very good involvement from governors and support assistants, all of whom know and understand the ethos of the school well. Subject co-ordinators undertake their delegated responsibilities well, and have set appropriate targets for improvement of the curriculum, resources and standards. Targets set in main subjects of English and mathematics, and by staff in other areas are appropriate and realistic. There are good plans to develop target setting further, in order to meet pupils' individual needs.

43. Despite the considerable upheaval caused by the departure in July 2000 of the former headteacher and one of two deputies, the school has continued to build on its many strengths while managing the change effectively. The acting headteacher leads by example. He inspires many staff through his knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and issues of assessment. He is equally at home on hands and knees in assemblies inspiring the pupils to strive for the best, or when urging them to perform better as he plays his guitar in whole school singing. As a result, staff and assistants have fully delegated powers, and they get on with their jobs very well, leaving time for much needed planning and administration. Monitoring of the quality of teaching is satisfactory, and subject leaders have recently begun to undertake classroom visits. However, much of this has been aimed at raising the profile of assessment, rather than at the criteria which constitute effective teaching. Nevertheless, the monitoring of assessment has been extremely successful, and assessment is now a strength of the school. Its effective use, following advice after classroom visits, is responsible for helping to raise standards in many classrooms, especially in numeracy and literacy.

44. Governors have become very active in the school, and they bring with them much needed expertise and strong evaluative skills. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Apart from attendance figures missing from the school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents, statutory requirements are met. This includes the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs, with a linked governor and effective co-ordinator in the acting deputy head. Very secure levels of financial understanding and management ensure that all specific grants, including those for pupils with English as an additional language are spent appropriately. This enables support to be targeted where it is needed most, and pupils with these needs make good progress following early identification of any problems. A further strength is the way in which staff and governors work together to ensure the best value for money. Recent evaluative exercises measuring the effectiveness of the spending and deployment of classroom assistants has resulted in some changes to the benefit of pupils with limited language, or with special educational needs. Governors, therefore, have a clear role in understanding the needs of the school, and in helping to plan effectively for the future. They are a great asset to the school in this capacity.

45. The school development plan plus other interim planning documents are of very good quality and improved since the school was previously inspected. Action planning shows very clearly where the problems are, how and when they are to be tackled, by whom, and what the likely cost is. There are clear educational priorities, based on good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses, under the watchful eye of the Governing Body. Arrived at through full consultation, and with interim evaluations currently in progress, the development plan assures competent and effective change over time. The school is currently tackling government initiatives on staff performance effectively, with plans that set appropriate targets and strategies for the future. This in turn is designed to lead to more effective monitoring of teaching throughout the school.

46. The school both benefits and suffers from its building. It is old and beginning to decay in places, and this currently constitutes a serious health and safety issue in the Foundation Stage playground, a problem requiring immediate attention. The hall on the middle floor is insufficiently large for some physical education activities, and lessons there are constantly interrupted by pupils and staff passing through to reach other parts of the building. This is a weakness which could be overcome by revising the time-tabling arrangements. By contrast, the school benefits from good-sized classrooms allowing all areas of the curriculum to be taught effectively, with further advantages from smaller side rooms, used effectively for selected small group work to promote language development, reading initiatives and lunchtime and after school clubs. The staff are well qualified to teach the range of required subjects, and many have recently undertaken recent training in areas such as literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology, thereby raising the quality of teaching in those subject areas. Newly appointed staff are well supported, and the school has been paying particular attention to Key Stage 1 currently, where the greatest turnover of staff has been. This has led to more effective teamwork there from an early age.

47. Support assistants are plentiful, and used very effectively. They work extremely well alongside teachers, plan jointly with them, have clear roles and responsibilities, and as a result, their overall effectiveness has a marked impact on raising standards throughout the school. They often sit with lower attaining pupils, and help to give them some of the confidence they need in order to succeed. Of special value are the bi-lingual assistants who take a full and active part in lessons at all key stages, targeted where the need is greatest. Further developments are planned in this area. As a result, pupils with English as an additional language are effectively supported and make good progress in their learning. Resources in the school are adequate overall, and good in some subjects such as English, mathematics and art and design. There is currently a shortage of appropriate outdoor play equipment in the Foundation Stage and the resources in that area do not allow sufficiently well for the expected progress young children should make.

48. Given the very low levels of attainment on entry, the good curriculum and good quality teaching, the good and sometimes good progress pupils make, rising standards in many subjects, very good leadership and management, set against relatively high costs, the school provides good value for money. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of educational provision, the school should now:

- (1) Raise standards further in English and in literacy across the curriculum by:
 - Extending and encouraging the use of writing in literacy lessons and in all subjects across the curriculum;
 - Improving the overall quality of pupils' handwriting by ensuring pupils adopt an appropriate posture when writing and hold pencils and pens appropriately;
 - Ensuring all staff adopt a consistent approach using the school's policy on handwriting;
 - Insisting on higher standards of punctuation and spelling in all written work, including the spelling of important key words in different subjects.(Paragraphs: 4, 7, 24, 65, 67, 95)
- (2) Raise the status of the Foundation Stage through:
 - Ensuring that further training incorporates assistance with planning to meet the new early learning goals;
 - Fostering improved links with the rest of the school, and especially Key Stage 1;
 - Ensuring resources meet the needs of the children as they progress throughout the stage;
 - Providing a safe and adequately resourced outdoor play area;
 - Establishing a linked governor to keep the whole Governing Body informed of developments and needs in this area.(Paragraphs: 33, 47, 50, 51, 58)
- (3) Improve standards in ICT especially at Key Stage 2, by continuing to focus on the development of appropriate skills.
(Paragraphs: 10, 107, 109)
- (4) Improve standards in physical education by:
 - Improving the teaching of gymnastics;
 - Ensuring all pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the age of eleven.(Paragraphs: 10, 22, 46, 116, 118, 119)
- (5) Ensure that the Foundation Stage playground area is made safe, as it constitutes a serious hazard to children's health and safety.
(Paragraphs: 33, 46)

Other issues which should be considered by the school:

- Plan to time-table physical education lessons in the hall more effectively so that the current levels of disruption are minimised.
- Ensure that the persistent lateness and poor attendance by some pupils is tackled continuously by closing registers at the appropriate time and recording lateness accurately.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	55
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	17	36	41	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	28	178
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	124

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7	84

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	163

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	75
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	75

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	18	15	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	13	14
	Girls	9	11	11
	Total	20	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	61 (65)	73 (75)	76 (75)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	14	14
	Girls	10	11	12
	Total	25	25	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (75)	76 (65)	79 (65)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000			

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	5	11	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	29 (45)	65 (55)	94 (75)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	11	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (68)	76 (69)	76 (57)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Where the number of boys or girls in the year group is less than ten the individual results are not reported.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	9
Black – African heritage	44
Black – other	32
Indian	2
Pakistani	6
Bangladeshi	6
Chinese	1
White	35
Any other minority ethnic group	20

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	1	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.1
Average class size	26.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	272.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	14
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	477 210
Total expenditure	483 202
Expenditure per pupil	2 147
Balance brought forward from previous year	15 852
Balance carried forward to next year	9 860

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	206
Number of questionnaires returned	26

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	84	16	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	34	4	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	37	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	42	25	0	4
The teaching is good.	59	37	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	44	4	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	38	0	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	44	4	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	58	38	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	65	35	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	33	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	56	22	4	0	18

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

50. Children are admitted to the Nursery class as three-year-olds on a part-time basis. They attend either a morning or afternoon session. Occasionally children are offered full-time Nursery provision if special circumstances prevail. The Nursery class has an open plan classroom area, and its own outside play area. Each day every child experiences group time, a planned focus activity and undirected activities. These activities allow opportunities for exploratory play as well as more direct teaching times. The Reception class is housed adjacent to the Nursery class and they share many resources as well as the same outdoor play area. This class is also housed in an open plan class area, organised to allow whole class or group activities. Almost all the children in the Reception class have experienced some Nursery provision with the majority attending the school's own nursery. Overall the provision in the Nursery and Reception classes is satisfactory but there is room for improvement both in the planning and the layout of the classrooms. The outdoor accommodation is unsafe; it is a serious health and safety risk and in its present condition gives very little opportunity for any physical development. The area is small, the floor surfaces are uneven and there are piles of building rubble, which are insecurely fenced. The school is seeking to address this issue urgently. Because of the introduction in September 2000 of the national Foundation Stage for learning for children of this age, the school is reviewing the provision in both the Nursery and Reception class as part of its development plan. Work on appropriate reorganisation of provision and the refurbishment of resources is planned.

Teaching and learning

51. In the majority of lessons the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The teachers are working effectively to introduce the new foundation stage curriculum. The nursery and reception teacher are planning work together and sharing resources carefully between the two-year groups so that there is some development in skills over the two year period. New planning systems have yet to be fully implemented. The contribution of the support assistants is very good and it helps the children to settle well in their new school environment. Together the teachers and support assistants make a good staff team. Assistants are used effectively to support the teachers in all the areas of learning, and they act as interpreters when this is necessary. The teachers have satisfactory knowledge of the new foundation stage and are participating in further training to ensure that their knowledge is secure. Teaching of basic skills is good. In all lessons teachers managed their pupils well. Organisation of the classroom and time-tabling arrangements are under review, so those children can access all curriculum areas. Initial formal assessment takes place, and also teacher assessment, to monitor children's progress during the school year. There is insufficient use made of these assessments to plan the next stages of learning, with the exception of children with special educational needs who are identified early and supported effectively. These children have good quality education plans in order to provide them with an appropriate curriculum.

Communication, language and literacy

52. The majority of children begin in the Nursery class with little or no spoken English. Their overall attainment in language and literacy is very low on entry to school. The main curriculum focus is on improving communication. Progress in language and literacy is satisfactory for all children, including those with English as an additional language as well as those with special educational needs. The nursery staff plan a range of language and literacy activities for the children. During each session the children meet in a small social group where they spend a few minutes chatting together with the teacher about their day's activities. Nursery nurses and interpreters encourage children to talk as they play. For instance the children improved their understanding about the mathematical terms of full and

empty whilst they had fun pouring coloured water into a mixture of containers. In the Reception class children are encouraged to ask for equipment and explain the reason why they need these materials. Children are encouraged to listen to stories and to participate in rhymes and action songs. They enjoy talking about pictures or playing with puppets. In a good lesson in the Reception class, the teacher cleverly uses a puppet of an owl as the children share a story about an owl called 'Hoot'. Children's concentration levels are good, and children learn new words such as soft and feathery as they describe the feel of the owl puppet. Several children are encouraged to talk about the owl's home in a tree, and higher attaining children begin to learn that an owl is a nocturnal animal.

53. In writing, children in the Reception class are beginning to learn how to form their letters, but many of them have insufficient control of a pencil and find this task difficult. They enjoy writing letters on a white board with coloured pens. As yet very few children have recognised that writing conveys a message. Children are beginning to sort and match words, and a few recognise their own names. Children have many opportunities to practise writing letters and are making good progress in learning how to form letters properly.

Mathematical development

54. Children's learning in mathematics is satisfactory in the Nursery and good in the Reception class. When the children enter the Nursery they have little knowledge of number or shape. They begin to count how many of their friends are present each day. Every child has the opportunity to be the 'helper' to find the number present each day on a teddy number chart. Children enjoy working with numbers and especially enjoy singing number rhymes together, such as 'five little speckled frogs'. As they sing these songs and talk about the numbers they are beginning to understand mathematical terms such as 'more' or 'less'. Some children thread beads matching the colour and shape of the beads accurately. In the Reception class the children use numbers more readily in their play. They recognise numbers to five and some children recognise numbers to ten. They are beginning to count accurately matching one to one with numbers up to three, and a few children matching numbers to five. Children explore shape and size as they build houses out of different boxes and tubes, learning the names of the shapes as they build. They are beginning to understand such terms as 'large' and 'small'. Most children sort by colour, although they cannot always name the colour. Some sort more accurately matching not only colour but also the shape of the object. The children enjoy using the computer programs to help improve their counting skills. Progress is good across the key stage.

Personal, social and emotional development

55. Nursery children make good progress in the development of their personal, social and emotional skills. Most are happy and confident as they start each session or full day. They are happy to leave their parents and participate in school activities willingly. Good relationships are established between the children, their families and the staff of the nursery. Children develop a very good understanding of classroom routines putting on their coats or tidying equipment away sensibly. Many approach adults confidently for help and advice. Although they find it difficult to share the teacher's time they respond well to requests to listen to others and take turns. A few children find it difficult to play with others and will choose to play alone. However with adult encouragement, they are beginning to join more readily with bigger groups of children. In the Reception class, the children are more eager to

participate and they generally show interest in everything that they do. They treat equipment and the classroom environment, making satisfactory progress overall.

Creative development

56. Children's creative development is well below that expected for their age. Children enter school with poorly developed skills of creativity. In the Nursery, children experiment with materials in structured and less structured play. Some children paint but for many, these are new experiences. Similarly, some children quickly learn how to cut and stick but the majority are still finding hand and eye co-ordination skills difficult and they find these tasks difficult. A few children are not yet able to recognise the difference between paint and glue and so if undirected are unable to use the correct materials themselves. In the Reception class, some children are beginning to express their ideas in drawings and painting, and most children are now able to use paintbrushes and chunky crayons to make marks on paper. All children enjoy painting but have poor observational skills. They show good levels of perseverance and concentration. They enjoy using materials to make collage pictures. During the inspection the children created a good collage in the reception year. It showed animal homes with creatures made and added to the collage each day. Children worked hard to cut out their own materials, to glue on wool or fur to give a more realistic appearance to their work. Progress is satisfactory, and children show tremendous pride in their results, which reflect the effort they make in their model making.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

57. The children have little understanding of the world when they enter the Nursery class, although their basic knowledge is better. Only a few speak with any confidence about the places they have visited. The teacher is aware of these difficulties and in class and group sessions she sensitively encourages the children to offer what they can to discussions. A broad range of activities is provided around a central theme, for example 'autumn'. Children look at leaves and examine branches and logs. They learn that the leaves are falling off the trees. In the Reception class the theme is extended and children think about animals in autumn and decide where they may go to hibernate. Although the children recall experiences of their own, they often lack the vocabulary to describe what they see and know. Small group activities are used to advantage to encourage children to learn new vocabulary. Children are curious to learn and often amazed by their discoveries. Overall, progress is satisfactory in this area.

Physical development

58. On entry to the Nursery class most children have poorly developed physical skills for their age. Although many can run and some can jump, only a few children can hop or skip. They have little experience of climbing and crawling on, under or over apparatus, and have very limited knowledge of the need for personal space by each individual. Opportunities to improve these skills are limited in the cramped outdoor play area, which is made available for the nursery children. This is affecting the standards and progress they make. For children in the Reception class their outdoor play is supplemented by play with small apparatus in the large hall. Most children in Reception find it difficult to control a ball or balance a beanbag. They have little understanding of directional throwing or rolling of a large ball. The reception children also have some access to larger apparatus, which is appropriate for their age on which they can climb, crawl and slide. They enjoy these experiences and make good progress in learning to move along, under and over on the different levels of the apparatus. Very few children have any understanding of personal space. As they enter the National Curriculum at the age of six very few children will have reached expected levels of attainment.

ENGLISH

59. Standards of attainment in English are well below national averages for pupils at the age of seven and below the national average for the pupils at the age of eleven. Although standards do not yet match the national averages at either key stage, there has been an improvement in standards over time for all pupils. This improvement is not consistent each year but represents a gradual trend upwards. However, it is very difficult to make any meaningful judgements from these results, as the high levels of pupils entering and leaving the school, the high levels of pupils in the school with special educational needs and the small year groups all cause significant annual variations in the test results. When the school results are compared with similar schools, the performance of pupils at seven is broadly average. Overall, standards at Key Stage 2 in the Year 2000 national tests are very low when compared nationally, and well below average when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings confirm the national test results for 2000 for pupils aged seven. At Key Stage 2, inspection findings show some improvement, with pupils below the national average rather than very low as the Year 2000 results indicated. For these older pupils although writing remains well below the expectations for pupils of this age, there has been good improvement in speaking and listening and in reading.

60. The National Literacy Strategy and other school-based initiatives are having a positive effect on raising standards. 'Reading Recovery' initiatives, additional literacy support and booster groups have been introduced in an effort to raise attainment further. In all areas of the English curriculum the school has recognised the importance of addressing the language needs of all its pupils, with the result that the majority of pupils make good progress. Good provision is made for the pupils with English as an additional language. As several different languages are represented in the school, English is for many pupils the common language and this gives an added significance to the importance of developing communication skills. Good provision is also made for the pupils in the school with special educational needs ensuring equality of access to the curriculum for all.

61. The quality of teaching overall is at least good and sometimes it is very good. The teachers have a good understanding of the literacy strategy, of reading recovery, and of all other initiatives, which the school uses. Teachers' expectations of pupils of all abilities are high. Planning is clear with good development in all lessons. Assessments are very good. They give good indications of any difficulties, which may have occurred as well as providing evidence of the progress all pupils are making. Very good use is made of assessment to inform future planning of lessons. Lessons all have a clear structure and development. Teaching of basic phonic skills is good in both key stages. Less well taught are presentation skills. Although the school has a handwriting policy and scheme there is little consistency of approach across the school. Similarly standards in marking are not applied consistently. Although teachers generally mark pupils' work, there is a general lack of understanding among the pupils of teachers' expectations of them in terms of improvement.

62. Standards of attainment in speaking and listening are well below national averages by the time pupils are seven years of age. They enter the National Curriculum with a very limited range of vocabulary in English and have poor listening skills. Although they can make their own needs known and have a developing receptive vocabulary most pupils still communicate in single word utterances or simple phrases. During Years 1 and 2 pupils learn how to express their thoughts and feelings. With sensitive support and encouragement pupils develop some appropriate vocabulary to communicate in each subject of the curriculum. By the age of seven although many pupils are still developing the ability to use extended sentences most pupils will talk together in English both in lessons and in informal occasions. In Key Stage 2, although standards are still below average, pupils have made good progress and are more confident in their discussions and will participate willingly. By the age of eleven the pupils are able to use some subject specific vocabulary in each subject to explain their ideas, which some accomplish well. For example, in Years 5 and 6 in mathematics, most

pupils are able to explain clearly how they have reached their answers. This is an example of the good use of literacy in other curriculum areas.

63. Standards in reading are improving but remain below average levels in both key stages. The school is making good use of the literacy hour to introduce new material to the pupils. Shared reading introduces skill development and helps pupils improve their reading skills. In Years 1 and 2 good attention is given to ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to share a book with an adult. The effective use of good assessment and recording systems by the teachers ensures that each pupil is challenged appropriately in the discussions that take place about their book. The pupils enjoy traditional tales both from their own culture and from England. Tales such as 'The Three Little Pigs' or 'The Three Bears' are great favourites. As a result of good teaching, by the age of seven many pupils are able to read a simple story. All pupils have made good progress in learning sounds and blends of sounds, and some use these skills independently of the teacher to help in their reading. However some pupils are still only at the initial stages of reading and are just discovering the pleasure of reading a picture book. In Years 3 and 4 pupils are introduced to a wider range of literature and learn how to read play-scripts and poetry together. By the age of eleven they are able to describe the works of some well-known authors and express preferences when choosing books. They extract information about characters and understand the conventions of a book. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to understand the relevance of bias in writing and are beginning to judge the effectiveness of these techniques.

64. Most pupils enjoy the enrichment activities in reading, which the school introduces. The visits of the English Shakespeare Theatre and the workshops by the Crucible Theatre are popular. Many pupils can remember the plot and characterisation of some of the plays of Shakespeare with the play of 'Macbeth' a favourite. Visiting authors and book weeks all help to give this area of the English curriculum excitement for the pupils and this is having a positive effect on raising standards.

65. Progress in writing is generally satisfactory in both key stages. Both the pupils with English as an additional language and the pupils with special educational needs find this area of the English curriculum the most difficult. The teachers ensure that all pupils have many opportunities to write and that they develop their understanding in learning how to write for a variety of audiences. They introduce a wide range of different teaching methods to ensure that pupils' interest is maintained. When pupils enter the National Curriculum many are still developing their pencil control. They practice letter formation. By the age of seven higher attaining pupils are able to write a few sentences unaided to tell a story or make a report. They are beginning to use description in their writing, for instance in describing the actions of a toy that swings backwards and forwards saying "that it looks like a boy doing gymnastics". Other pupils can write two or three sentences but do not use any punctuation. Some pupils at the age of seven are just learning to write and copy-write. These pupils are still finding pencil control difficult.

66. In Years 3 and 4 pupils are beginning to write more complex sentences and to think of the audience in their work. There is more use of writing in other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils are beginning to express their own feelings in their writing. For example pupils in Year 3 explaining why they are special said "I am special, because I am free". By Year 5, many pupils are able to plan their own stories and consider characters and setting. Most still write in the present tense. They find it difficult to write within a specific timed lesson. By the age of eleven most pupils can express their own ideas when writing for different audiences but writing often remains limited in content and sometimes is disjointed.

67. Throughout school the presentation of written work is of poor quality. The pupils practice handwriting in most classes and there is a policy and scheme of work in place for its

introduction. However there is no common practice adopted across the school and pupils are confused about the teacher's expectations of them. By the age of eleven there is still a mixture of pen and pencil in use, letter sizes and are not consistent and pupils show very little pride in producing work of good quality. Insufficient attention is paid by staff to appropriate posture as an aid to improving writing. These factors are affecting adversely the progress of pupils in all subjects, and it is an issue for the school to address. Spelling is also a weakness in the school. Although the teachers have introduced some initiatives to improve spellings and the pupils have spelling tests each week there are very few examples in independent writing of pupils making use of the skills they have learnt.

68. The response of pupils to their work in English is good. Behaviour in most lessons is very good. Pupils are eager to please, enjoy listening to stories and are co-operative in discussions. Some pupils are developing satisfactory levels of independence although the majority still needs adult intervention in their work. With a high level of adult support steps towards independence are increased gradually as the pupils gain in confidence.

69. There are two very good co-ordinators, who work together very effectively to improve the standards of attainment in this subject. Their commitment to succeed is excellent. They make a very good analysis of all test results to help pupils improve and also to identify any weaknesses in provision. Pupils are encouraged to set targets for their own improvement. Good attention is given to the resourcing of this subject, although more books, especially non-fiction, are needed.

MATHEMATICS

70. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly in line with national averages for pupils aged eleven. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with levels of understanding that are well below average at age six. By the end of Key Stage 1, there has been some good progress, although standards remain below the national average. During both key stages, progress is good, and for some pupils, progress is very good. The average standards achieved by the end of Key Stage 2 show a marked improvement since the school was last inspected. Inspections findings show an improvement in performance on last year's national test results, but these statistics are likely to change, sometimes significantly, as pupils enter or leave the school, even during Year 6. The school achieves average results at Key Stage 1 when compared to schools with similar numbers entitled to free school meals, and in 1999, the school achieved better results than comparable schools at Key Stage 2. Results for the Year 2000 show a similar picture.

71. The good and sometimes very good progress is due largely to good teaching in mathematics. Staff have all had recent training, especially since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, and this enables them to tackle their teaching with confidence and enthusiasm. As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons, settle down well and quickly in class, and work very well together in groups in all lessons. Behaviour is always very good, with pupils learning to share resources fairly, while supporting one another in problem solving sessions.

72. Teaching is good at both key stages. Teachers have all prepared very good quality mental mathematics sessions at the start of lessons. These vary considerably in style and content, and they provide all pupils with appropriate ranges of challenges. For example, one teacher uses a measuring stick to enable pupils to develop their skills of estimating proportions and fractions. Another teacher has the whole class counting upwards in twos, while another teacher challenges pupils to work out percentages. The brisk and snappy opening sessions capture the pupils' attention very well, and get most of them enthusiastic and willing to have a go at answering questions. Having got full attention, teachers then vary the questions to make them harder and more challenging. This is very effective when teachers combine the questioning with lots of encouraging praise for correct answers. This motivates all pupils to have a try at answering and a shower of eager hands with muffled cries of 'miss' or 'sir' are regular accompaniments at the start of lessons.

73. The outstanding teaching occurs when assessment is used throughout the lesson to challenge all pupils effectively, including pupils with special educational needs, explanations are crystal clear, problems for groups to solve are effectively matched to pupils' capabilities and the lesson ends with a thorough checking out of understanding. Pupils' interest is stimulated and motivation is good, especially among higher attaining pupils who make good progress as a result. Measuring around the room in metres and then converting to centimetres was another very good way of heightening pupils' awareness of distances, while giving them a good sense of proportion.

74. Good groupwork follows these sessions at both key stages. Teachers plan this sort of work with great care, so that all pupils, whatever their levels of ability in numeracy or language development, will have appropriate and challenging work, and all will be included in the sessions. Support staff are employed very well to support those pupils with limited language or those with special educational need. The teacher usually works with one group of pupils in order to provide support, while assessing the achievements of pupils. This then enables subsequent lessons to be as challenging and worthwhile learning experiences as the current one.

75. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have begun to learn their tables, although not all have reached the expected level. Some pupils find it hard to apply their learning when solving problems, and often guess answers, rather than work them out. Staff, conscious of this, use the end of lesson sessions very effectively to test out deeper understanding in order that they may help those experiencing difficulties. This very good use of on-going assessment, the analysis of test results and other tests carried out periodically, has enabled teachers to plan far more effectively and cater more appropriately for the needs of all pupils. As a result, standards have continued to rise as pupils are supported and aided in their learning of basic skills. Pupils generally recognise mathematical shapes and know their names; pupils enjoy challenges in lessons and like to try to solve problems, including working out the hours of the day or the change received after spending a set amount of money.

76. All the teaching of mathematics at Key Stage 2 is done in sets, which combine all four years in some cases. This has enabled teachers to adapt their planning far more readily to the pupils' needs, and then to focus on more specific learning problems within the sets. This has been another significant factor in raising standards. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are competent in converting fractions to decimals. They quickly grasp the principle of adding fractions and learn new technical language as they work together. Almost all pupils know and understand the differences between denominator and numerator. Pupils

construct bar charts and learn the skills of estimating accurately, as well as learning the theory of probability to an appropriate level.

77. The subject is very well led and co-ordinated by two staff, one from each key stage. Planning and training have been focussed more sharply by the Numeracy Strategy, and team work plays an important part in raising staff awareness of new teaching methods. Teachers are keen for pupils to succeed, and encouragement and praise are constant features of all lessons. Resources are used well in lessons to help capture pupils' interests, and targets set in the subject are realistic and appropriate for the group of pupils currently in Year 6. The use of ICT is currently insufficient.

SCIENCE

78. Teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment in 1999 in Key Stage 1 shows that they are well below the national average for pupils achieving Level 2 and above. The proportion assessed at the higher Level 3 is in line with the national average. Assessments for the year 2000 show a similar picture. National tests of Key Stage 2 pupils show attainment in 1999 to be well below the national average at Level 4 and above, and at the higher Level 5. The results for 2000 show significant improvement, and when compared to similar schools, pupils are achieving well above average. This is a significant improvement.

79. Inspection findings are that attainment in Key Stage 1 is below the national average. This reflects the many pupils who have limited spoken and written language. Attainment at Key Stage 2 is close to the national average. Frequent movements of pupils into and out of the school makes it very difficult for teachers to ensure that they are always building on previous knowledge and understanding. Bearing in mind pupils' attainment when they enter the school and the high level of communication problems, good progress is made at both key stages.

80. One of the strengths of the subject is the way it is taught throughout the school. Investigations and observations provide the basis for all learning. This is particularly appropriate in this school. Teachers highlight specific vocabulary and emphasise it. In a Year 6 lesson the teacher made repeated reference to 'pitch' so that all pupils ultimately acquired the use of the word rather than 'loudness' that some had used previously. Interesting tasks are set, so that pupils are fully engaged in them and teachers in Key Stage 2, particularly, seek to encourage more independent learning. Year 5 pupils also investigated sound. They tested and ordered a range of materials through which sound travels. Most pupils applied themselves to the task and good sharing of learning took place. Management of pupils is good throughout school. Teachers handle inappropriate behaviour so effectively that these pupils very often go on to make a good contribution to lessons.

81. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are well supported by adults. Consequently the pupils are kept on their tasks and learn well. They recognise a number of fruits and flavoured crisps by their smell and confirm their ideas through tasting. Pupils show great excitement, particularly when they are correct, and this continues on to their recording task, drawing and naming fruits. No pupils are required to record at a higher level than this. On occasions too many worksheets are used for Key Stage 1 pupils.

82. Teaching overall is good. Teachers plan well and, in lessons, show secure knowledge of the subject. Support staff in Key Stage 1 have prompt sheets, which ensure that enquiries proceed clearly. Good teamwork is seen from all adults involved. When Year 5 pupils investigate the teacher discusses effectively the aspect of fair testing with the pupils. They show good understanding of how to conduct the test. Vocabulary is highlighted and stressed orally in lessons. However this is not reinforced when pupils record their work. On

occasions, higher attaining pupils are not required to explain their understanding in a sufficiently ordered and detailed way. Misspellings of specific science vocabulary are often uncorrected. In the best example seen of good marking, the Year 5 teacher poses questions and requires pupils to think again. In Key Stage 2, the end of lesson review is used particularly effectively when pupils consider the evidence obtained. The Year 6 teacher ensures that the learning objective is achieved. She involves pupils actively by asking some of them to play musical instruments, asking them to predict whether notes would be higher or lower. She introduces new vocabulary when referring to 'altering the tension'. The variation in tasks and full involvement of all pupils, including some with barely any English, leads to accelerated learning.

83. There are good links with other subjects such as music and design and technology. However higher expectation in recording tasks would provide better support for pupils' writing skills. Producing more graphs and tables could also employ and reinforce numeracy skills. Presentation of work is unsatisfactory, particularly at Key Stage 2. There is no evidence of the use of ICT. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinators are aware of the need to raise standards further and provide good role models for teaching the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

84. There were very few observations of lessons in art and design during the inspection, and evidence has also been taken from an analysis of pupils' work, displays around the school and photographic evidence. By the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, when the pupils are seven and eleven years of age, their attainment in art and design is at levels expected for pupils of this age. Progress is good throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress and achieve well in line with expectations. There has been an improvement overall in standards since the previous inspection.

85. In Key Stage 1 the pupils undertake a good range of experiences using a variety of methods and techniques. They learn how to use tools, how to mix colours and how to make patterns. They make portraits of themselves with crayons and paints and use materials to make collage pictures with materials. Art is often used as a means of recording information to support work in other subjects and teachers use this opportunity to consolidate techniques, which the pupils are learning.

86. In Key Stage 2 the strength of the subject lies in the good quality art appreciation, which takes place. The pupils have good knowledge of the techniques used by different artist and have undertaken work of their own in these styles. Due to restrictions in teaching time allocation the pupils have only limited opportunity to try out these techniques. However as with the younger pupils the teachers use opportunities for recording in other subjects to reinforce pupils' knowledge and skill in art techniques. In Year 3 and 4 pupils study the work of Paul Klee and make their own designs using lines and curves. The older pupils then use this technique to interpret the music 'Mars' by Holst to create other pictures. Most pupils make a good effort to use colours to represent peace and war and use shape effectively to show differences in sharp and languid music. More able pupils also give good consideration to the link between these shapes and colours in their designs. Pupils study the work of African artists and recreate their work in pastel so that they have some understanding of perspective. They have made 3 dimensional models from willow and papier-mâché to learn the techniques of sculpture. By Years 5 and 6, pupils are able to consider line and texture in their designs. In some work in Year 6 when learning the techniques of pointillism, the pupils showed that they know that the depth or distance between the dots on the paper can create light and shade. They have studied the work of George Seurat and also the work of impressionists who have had an effect on his work.

87. A particular good piece of work undertaken by the whole school was a project on the picture 'The Haywain' by John Constable. In social groupings, made up of pupils of different ages, the pupils worked together to cover many curriculum areas through the study of this picture. For example, work included embroidery, model making, oil painting techniques, peg rug making and bread making. The pupils talked enthusiastically about this work and the activities they had undertaken in geography, history, science, art and design and music. When completed a portfolio of their work was sent to the National Gallery in London as part of their 'Take One Picture' projects for schools.

88. Other activities to enrich the curriculum include visits to local art galleries and museums. Pupils have good understanding of the use of light in these places of interest and can describe the effect the lighting can have on our feelings and opinions as we view various works of art. A local artist works in school periodically and gives good support both to the teachers and pupils as they participate with him on various projects.

89. Pupils are enthusiastic about their art and design work. Pupils concentrate well. They are proud of their work and welcome the opportunity to talk about their achievements and share their knowledge with others.

90. The teachers plan lessons carefully with a satisfactory mixture of teaching new skills and allowing pupils the freedom to make choice and create their own version using the skills and techniques that they learn. The policy and scheme of work for this subject are due to be reviewed shortly. At present it does not reflect the knowledge and development of skills which are to be taught in each year group.

91. There is a temporary co-ordinator for this term who has some plans for the development of the subject. The school development plan has clear priorities for this area, which are to be addressed at a later date.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

92. Standards in design and technology at the end of both key stages are above those seen in the majority of primary schools. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress. The curriculum provides a wide range of experiences and a scientific approach is taken to the teaching of the subject. Pupils examine the construction and workings of commercial items and then design and plan to make products of a similar type. When their product is completed they evaluate it.

93. In Key Stage 1 good links are made with both music and science when pupils make their own musical instruments. Having investigated various types of instruments they plan to make their own, bearing in mind the strength, sound and suitability. Year 1 pupils make simple percussion instruments whereas those in Year 2 make guitars. Pupils have each done their own designs as a variety of shapes and sizes are created. Skills in cutting and assembly of materials are similar to those usually seen at this age. However, pupils are well aware of the purpose of the product, have planned sensibly and are developing the process of evaluation well. When pupils in Year 2 work with commercial construction kits most of them show good ability to follow the plans accurately. Skills in construction develop well in Key Stage 2. A selection of work gathered throughout the school shows a high quality of finish to a wide range of products from dolls' clothes to hydraulically powered rockets.

94. Teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers plan and organise lessons well. In Key Stage 1 support staff are well briefed and there is good teamwork with pupils taught in small groups. They are kept on task and the adults encourage them to talk about what they are doing. In Year 6 the teacher explains clearly how to use cutting aids and reminds pupils

about safe practice. When they saw their doweling it is done neatly and accurately, so that they produce well made frameworks with neat joints. Planning entails pupils moving on to power their wheeled vehicles by employing their knowledge of gears and electrical circuits. Pupils enjoy this challenge and work effectively individually, whilst acknowledging others' efforts and helping each other when necessary.

95. There is a positive approach to the subject, with a newly appointed co-ordinator. Good learning is taking place overall but there is a lack of structure to the way pupils set out their plans as they move through Key Stage 2. Good use is made of numeracy skills. Year 6 pupils measure accurately so that wood is then cut to the correct lengths. Further development of written plans and evaluations would provide support for and reinforcement of literacy skills. This is an area for development. No evidence is seen of the use of ICT. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection.

GEOGRAPHY

96. Standards and provision have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Geography is now taught to all pupils as a discrete subject. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards meet national expectations. Pupils make good progress throughout the school, and acquire a good range of geographical skills due to the good quality teaching and effective use of resources.

97. Pupils' work at Key Stage 1 shows an increasing awareness developing of where places are and how, for example, cities differ from the countryside. Field excursions enable many pupils to begin to appreciate the different landscape of the countryside, and they understand specific features such as rivers, valleys and hills. A comparative study with life in the Caribbean enables pupils to recognise the differences between living in Britain and a tropical climate. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are generally reaching expected levels in knowledge and skills.

98. During Key Stage 2, the good foundations are built upon consistently as teachers use a good range of appropriate strategies to raise awareness. In Years 3 and 4, pupils begin to learn how to interpret maps. They understand the various sections of the British Isles, and are able to name major cities. They recognise the physical features of rivers and how they affect settlement patterns. They then build well on this by creating their own imaginary maps using appropriate symbols from Ordnance Survey maps to show settlements, contour lines and associated features. As a result, learning is good, especially in basic skills. One pupil in Year 6, for example, was able to recognise that the land would be vertical if contour lines met, showing he had acquired a very good understanding of the basic principle. Similarly in Year 5, some pupils are able to copy major roads and river patterns accurately on sketch maps with a guideline grid, and they are comfortable with four-figure grid references. The curriculum has also been enhanced by Year 3 and Year 4 pupils working collaboratively on a community environmental project in the immediate locality.

99. Although no direct teaching was observed at Key Stage 1, the lessons observed at key Stage 2 showed that teachers have good subject knowledge and understand well how to help pupils learn basic skills. Expectations are generally high and lessons challenge the different groups of pupils well. Pupils are very well managed, they behave very well and have keen attitudes to their work. Teachers help greatly by inspiring confidence in ensuring that all pupils are included in questions at the start or end of lessons, and with this added motivation, pupils tackle their work very enthusiastically. Coupled with the good collaborative skills that teachers encourage in their groups and the good use made of resources such as maps and globes, pupils make good progress and enjoy their lessons.

100. The subject is well led by a new and enthusiastic co-ordinator; a trawl of resources has already taken place in order to identify any gaps, and bringing ICT and more audio-visual resources into use in classrooms are current improvement targets. The scheme of work is now under revision to incorporate the early learning goals for the Foundation Stage. An exciting future development to enhance learning in the subject is to establish a school website. This will enable former pupils of the school, resident in all five continents, to correspond with current pupils so direct learning of differences and similarities might take place from first-hand experience.

HISTORY

101. Standards in history are in line with expected levels at the end of both key stages and have been maintained since the previous inspection. In Years 1 and 2, most of the work undertaken is practical. In Years 3 and 4, pupils begin to develop their written recording skills well, and this enhances their progress appropriately. By Year 5 and 6, recording skills are improving, knowledge and understanding have improved, and pupils are beginning to access information independently.

102. Pupils make good progress over time in both key stages. When they start the National Curriculum at the age of six, many pupils have a lack of knowledge and understanding of the world around them. By the age of seven, pupils are able to recognise changes, which have taken place in their lives, and have some understanding of the passage of time. They describe events from their babyhood and compare these with their experiences today. They enjoy stories of famous people, for example about the life of Mary Seacole as a nurse in the Crimean War. Valuable new learning takes place as the pupils study pictures looking at the bonnets and dresses the ladies wore at the beginning of the century, comparing them with fashions today, so that they can decide if the story is recent or a story from history.

103. In Key Stage 2, pupils have satisfactory subject knowledge of the main people and events of the periods they have studied, and use a wide range of materials to research for information. They record in pictures, reports and stories. For instance, they use a large collage of three street scenes from the last three centuries to explain the improvements brought about overtime by various inventions. They show in pictures how by the year 1900AD, the people benefited through the invention of gas street lighting, and then how by the year 2000AD the benefits of the motor car have improved communication. During Key Stage 2 pupils learn about Invaders, about Tudors and Victorians. They create a time line explaining the developments of history from 600BC to the present day. They are beginning to learn about the importance of cause and effect. Less secure is their ability to undertake independent historical enquiry using first hand evidence. Although good progress is made, insufficient opportunities are provided by teachers for pupils to handle artefacts and other materials, and this slows down the rate of progress.

104. Pupils with special educational needs and those having English as an additional language make good progress in most lessons when supported in class. Teachers take good account of their ability in providing appropriate work, which sets a realistic challenge for improvement.

105. Pupils enjoy history. In Key Stage 1 they are curious about the past and love to study famous people. In Key Stage 2 pupils are enthusiastic about practical history lessons. They described in great detail their visits to museums and curriculum centres. They enjoyed dressing up for work in a Victorian workshop and particularly enjoyed their visit to a Victorian schoolroom. Behaviour in lessons is very good.

106. Although there has been improvements in the quality of planning between year groups, the current two-year programme is inadequate. There is little attention to the development of historical skills alongside the learning of historical facts. Satisfactory assessments take place of the progress made by pupils, but this information is not regularly used to improve the quality of the planning. Good links are made between history and other subjects of the curriculum. The lack of artefacts and sufficient reference books for pupils and teachers is having a detrimental effect on the pace of progress. The school is aware of this issue and is seeking to improve provision, as history becomes a priority subject. The present policy and scheme of work is also under review by the co-ordinator.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

107. Standards of attainment in ICT are in line with national expectations for pupils of seven years of age. At the age of eleven, standards are below the national expectation. Much improvement has taken place in the subject recently. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection in both standards and provision. The recent appointment of a knowledgeable and highly skilled subject co-ordinator reflects the school's priority to further improve the subject. Good progress is now being made overall at both key stages.

108. Pupils are given opportunities to learn basic skills in a progressive way and then to apply them to realistic situations. Teaching of skills in the subject is good. Teachers are confident and pupils know this. They have confidence in their teachers. When pupils use the computer suite they are eager, try extremely hard and treat the resources with respect. This reflects the expectations of the teachers. Planning is good and it is made very clear to pupils what they have to do. Most pupils lack confidence, so that teachers are continually in demand. Few own their own computer, and practice in school is therefore very important. They cope very well so that best use is made of the time available. Year 2 pupils are divided into 3 smaller and appropriate groups, each with an adult. They are organised and managed well. This results in exceptionally good behaviour and application so that very good learning takes place. Pupils on computers control the mouse satisfactorily to draw a picture. They then use the appropriate skills to colour it and save their work. One pupil explains his understanding of how he could print it if required. Pupils working with a programmable toy quickly learn to programme and direct it forwards and backwards according to specific criteria.

109. Some Key Stage 2 pupils are working at a similar level to those in Key Stage 1, as they have not had the advantage of earlier learning. There is a wide range of ability, including a few pupils who have had no previous experience. This makes it difficult for teachers but they organise and manage lessons effectively. Correct fingering on the keyboard is taught so that ultimately pupils will use it efficiently. Opportunities are taken to use information from other subjects as a basis for applying skills. Year 6 use data from a science lesson to present it as a graph. Year 5 work effectively on spreadsheets using a formula. Most of them grasp this by the end of the lesson. One higher attaining pupil changed the data successfully

so that an exact amount of money was spent. Teachers try to build pupils' confidence and encourage them to carry out operations of which they are still unsure. In the Year 2 lesson one pupil struggled to locate the paintbrush. When she eventually succeeded she glowed with pleasure at her own achievement. Pupils with special educational needs often work with pupils of higher ability. Pairings are arranged thoughtfully. This benefits not only learning on the computer but also makes a good contribution to pupils' social and personal development. Good use is made of the computers to support pupils new to the school to whom English is a new language. A support assistant works effectively with one pupil, coaxing him to speak a simple sentence. He uses the computer to illustrate the names of certain animals and the concept of big and small.

110. All elements of the curriculum for ICT are covered. Literacy is reinforced well and there are good links with numeracy in data handling. At present ICT is not seen in the planning of other subjects.

MUSIC

111. Standards in music at the end of Key Stage 2 are above nationally expected levels. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, with music a strength of the school. This is due to good teaching, a well-balanced curriculum, the stalwart work of the enthusiastic co-ordinator, and the high profile accorded the subject by senior management. As a result, progress in acquiring basic skills is good at Key Stage 1, and improves to very good, especially in composing and performing, at Key Stage 2, both in lessons and over time.

112. Pupils do not have much musical skill when they enter Key Stage 1. Teachers recognise this well and plan to develop basic skills through practical lessons focussing appropriately on performing and listening. At Key Stage 1, teaching of music is linked effectively to design and technology, so that each pupil in Year 1, for example, has made their own percussion instrument. These are then used effectively in lessons to teach the skills of recognising high and low notes, and loud and soft sounds. By using their own attractively designed drums and shakers, pupils are very eager and keen to show their skills in performance, which they do with great enjoyment and enthusiasm.

113. The teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and 2, with some examples of very good teaching at Key Stage 2. Teachers have good subject knowledge overall, teach basic skills well, and re-inforce literacy appropriately by focussing on key words in lessons, such as rhythm, loud, beat and grid. Planning and expectations are good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. Here, teachers pace their lessons very well, encourage all pupils to a lively interest and structure the lessons so that all have a role in performance. At both key stages, management of pupils in lessons is very good. This creates a positive learning atmosphere where pupils enjoy their musical experiences and take delight in performing simple and more complex patterns that they learn to compose.

114. Pupils have positive attitudes to music. Nowhere is this more apparent than in whole school singing, when all pupils come together as a corporate group to perform in an atmosphere of harmony and calm. Diction is clear and progress in learning new songs is very good. This is due to the very good levels of listening skills, appropriately encouraged in all lessons. Pupils learn to sing well in two-parts, with appropriate attention to timing and to rhythm. An optional extra is the very high quality school choir, which performs locally and further afield on regular occasions. Regular rehearsals, including attention to posture and appropriate breathing techniques result in rapid improvements, so that pupils produce tuneful well-phrased singing.

115. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. This helps and encourages

other staff to become more confident, thereby raising the standards of teaching generally. Resources are adequate and well used to promote good rehearsals and performances in lessons. The subject makes a significant contribution to the development of the school's community spirit, with everyone in the school taking a decisive and effective part, from the acting headteacher through to children new to the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

116. Overall standards in physical education are below national expectations. However, in Key Stage 1, standards in games are similar to those expected of pupils of this age. In Key Stage 2, standards are below expectations except in swimming where they are well below. There is insufficient progress being made in the development of essential skills across the full range of physical education activities in lessons and over time.

117. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are well managed and most of them respond well to the teacher when she adopts a brisk approach, with brief instructions, during an effective and lively warm-up games lesson. They enjoy their work very much and try hard to achieve success. Skills in throwing and catching large balls are well in line with what is seen at this age. Pupils' co-ordination is good and, as a result of the teacher's prompting, they keep their eyes on the ball. The teacher makes good use of pupil demonstration in this activity and when moving on to controlling the ball with feet. A handful of pupils show good close control when running with the ball at their feet.

118. Swimming takes place in Year 5. Records show that only around fifty per cent of the pupils are able to swim a minimum of twenty-five metres when they leave the school. A few swim distances beyond this. This is well below the expected level attained.

119. Teaching of gymnastics is unsatisfactory. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, there is a lack of pace so that pupils are active for only a small amount of the time. Consequently they lose interest and have insufficient time to investigate ways of rolling. The use of a whistle in this lesson does not produce the required response. Although much of the time is spent observing others perform individually no one is asked to comment about the work. Year 6 pupils are managed effectively and the teacher emphasises strongly the quality of performance with a clear start and finish to their movements. Most pupils try to achieve this but their control and co-ordination is poor. The teacher encourages positive work with partners, to observe and comment to each other. However, pupils have insufficient evaluative skills and find this work hard. In the Key Stage 2 lessons seen, many pupils show a lack of real application and a general apathy towards the subject. Physical education is not making any real contribution to pupils' social and personal development

120. Facilities for physical education do not provide effective support for teachers. There is no grassed area. The hall is narrow and limiting on extensive movements and vigorous activity for the larger classes. Apparatus stored around the perimeter further restricts the space. On a number of occasions lessons are disrupted when another class passes through the hall. A new and experienced subject co-ordinator has been appointed recently, who is aware that the subject is an area for considerable development. Progress since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

121. Standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus for pupils at the age of seven and eleven years of age. Progress is good over time, and standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. A good balance is achieved between Christianity and the other world faiths represented in the school with good consideration given to respecting the beliefs of each faith. The school works well to include many aspects of moral and social issues in lessons so that pupils understand value and respect the opinions of others.

122. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are introduced to a range of stories which are common to Christianity, Islam and Judaism. They learn to recognise the main festivals of each faith. During the inspection the pupils in Year 2 heard the story from the Old Testament of 'Daniel in the Lion's Den'. They listen intently to the story and then enjoy drawing pictures to represent different parts of the story eventually joining their work together to make a class book to share. Younger pupils in Year 1 draw pictures and talk about possessions and people who are special to them. This work makes a good link to support work in literacy where they are encouraged to improve their speaking and listening skills.

123. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to think about special things and are encouraged to appreciate friendships and consider the feelings of others as well as themselves. This work makes a good link to the curriculum for personal and social education. By the age of eleven the pupils have studied Christianity and other world faiths. They consider the traditions, beliefs and cultures of each faith. They look at pictures of places of worship of Muslims, Christians, Jews and Sikhs and discuss successfully the similarities and differences between a mosque, church, synagogue and temple. This work is given particular relevance as pupils describe their methods of worship to other members of their class. By the end of the key stage, pupils have good recall of previous learning and they describe vividly important rituals associated with worship and prayer for each faith. Pupils with special educational needs participate alongside all other class members, provision for them is good and they make good progress.

124. The quality of teaching in each key stage is satisfactory. The teachers have appropriate subject knowledge and they deal sensitively with discussions about each faith. Although the Agreed Syllabus gives teachers the structure for religious education in the school, there is no scheme of work. As a result there is some repetition of information and little planned progression. Most work in this subject is oral. Although it is important for pupils to discuss ideas together, insufficient opportunity is provided, especially in Key Stage 2, for pupils to work alone. Insufficient opportunities are provided for them to consider ideas, which they may wish to share with others. There are a few resources and books in school, but these are generally insufficient for whole class use. The lack of artefacts is also restricting progress in helping pupils to appreciate the important features of each faith.

125. Relationships and behaviour are good throughout the school. The pupils are attentive and responsive and have a positive attitude to their work. Older pupils show a keen interest in learning about the beliefs and customs of other world faiths and listen intently during these discussions. Younger pupils enjoy stories. They respond sensitively when listening to the explanations of other class members about customs associated with special festivals.

126. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory.